

Week 2 Documents – The Great Awakening

. . . I remember in the lot as I went I saw strawberries and these thoughts passed through my mind. “I may as well go to picking strawberries now as not, it’s no matter what I do, it’s a gone case with me. I fear I have committed the unpardonable sin and now [am] hardened.” But as I was going home I considered at last. I turned and went to the meeting. Soon after meeting began the power of God came down. Many were crying out [on] the other side of the room, “What shall I do to be saved?” I was immediately moved to press through the multitude and went to them. A great melting of soul came over me. I wept bitterly and pled hard for mercy, mercy. Now I was brought to view the justice of God due to me for my sin. It made me tremble, my knees smote together, then I thought of Belshazzar when he saw the hand writing against him. It seemed to me I was sinking down into hell. I thought the floor I stood on gave way, and I was just going, but then I began to resign, and as I resigned, my distress began to go off till I was perfectly easy, quiet and calm. I could say, “Lord, it is just if I sink into hell.” I felt for a few moments like a creature dead. I was nothing, I could do nothing, nor I desired nothing. I had not so much room say “seek and you shall find, come to me all you that are weary and and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” I began to feel a thirsting after Christ, and began to beg for mercy, free mercy for Jesus’s sake. I thought I saw Jesus with the eyes of my soul stand up in heaven. A lovely god-man with his arms open, ready to receive me, his face was full of smiles, he looked white and ruddy and was just such a savior as my soul wanted, every way suitable for me. Oh how it melted my heart to think he had been willing all this while to save me, but I was not willing, which I never believed before now. I cried from the very heart to think what a tender-hearted savior I had been refusing. How often I turned a deaf ear to his gracious calls and invitations. All that had kept me from him was my will. Jesus appeared altogether lovely to me now. My heart went out with love and thankfulness and admiration. I cried “why me Lord? And leave so many?” Oh what a fullness was there in Christ for others if they would come and give up their all to him. I went about the room and invited people to come to him.

Source: From Barbara E. Lacey, Ed., *The World of Hannah Heaton: The Diary of an Eighteenth-Century Connecticut Farm Woman* (Dekalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003) 6-7, 9-10.

The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some detestable insect, over the fire, detests you, and is dreadfully provoked: His wrath towards you burns like fire; He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be thrown into the fire; He eyes are too pure than to bear to have you in His sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in His eyes, than the most hateful venomous snake is in ours. You have offended Him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince: and yet, it is nothing but His hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. It is to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell last night; that you were allowed to awake up again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep. And there is no other reason to be given, why you have not dropped into hell since you arose this morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given why you have not gone to hell, since you have sat here in this church, provoking His pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending His solemn worship. Yes, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you do not this very moment drop down into hell. . .

. . . And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day where Christ has thrown the door of mercy wide open, and stands calling, and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners; a day where many are flocking to Him, and pressing into the kingdom of God. Many are daily coming from the east, west, north, and south; many that were very lately in the same miserable condition that you are in, are now in a happy state, with their hearts filled with love to Him who has loved them, and washed them from their sins in His own blood, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

Source: Edwards, Jonathan, *Sinners in the hands of an angry God. A sermon preached at Enfield, July 8th 1741. At a time of great awakenings; and attended with remarkable impressions on many of the hearers.* Boston: S. Kneeland and T. Green, 1741. Early American Imprints, Series 1, no. 4713 (filmed) pp13-16, 22-25.

First as to the Man himself, whom we look upon as an Enthusiast, a censorious, uncharitable Person, and a Deluder of the People ; which Things, if we can make, out, all reasonable Men will doubtless excuse us, tho' some such, thro' a fascinating Curiosity, may still continue their Attachment to him. . .

. . .But lastly We think it our Duty to bear our strongest Testimony against that Itinerant Way of preaching which this Gentleman was the first promoter of among us, and still delights to continue in : For if we had nothing against the Man either as an Enthusiast, an uncharitable or delusive reason, yet we apprehend this Itinerant Manner of preaching to be of the worst and most pernicious Tendency.

Source: *The Testimony of the president, professors, tutors and Hebrew instructor of Harvard College in Cambridge, against the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield, and his conduct.* (Boston: Thomas Fleet, 1744) 3-15.

Humility, self-diffidence, and an entire dependence on our LORD, will be our best defense. Let us therefore maintain the strictest watch against spiritual pride, or a being lifted up with extraordinary experiences and comforts, and high favors of heaven that any of us may have received. We had need after such favors, in a special manner, to keep a strict and jealous eye upon our own hearts, lest there should arise high thoughts of ourselves, as being now some of the most eminent of saints and peculiar favorites of heaven, and that the secret of the lord is especially with us, and that we above all are fit to be improved as the great instructors and censors of this evil generation: and in an high conceit of our own wisdom and discerning should as it were naturally assume to ourselves the airs of prophets or extraordinary ambassadors of heaven..

Source Jonathan Edwards, *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God.* . . (Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1741, Evans 4711) 89-91.