

## Week 12

### Second Great Awakening Revival and Revivalism Class Handout

#### Changes in 19<sup>th</sup> Century America

- Expansion And Freedom In 19th Century America
- Absence Of European Christendom Propels Evangelism
- Departure From the Calvinistic Consensus

#### Second Great Awakening

- Series of revivals from 1780s to 1830s
- Reserved, Calvinistic Revivals give way to Emotional, Arminian Revivals
- Revival At Cane Ridge, Kentucky (1801)

#### Theological Changes and Controversies

- Old Side - New Side Controversy (18<sup>th</sup> century)
- Old School - New School Controversy (19<sup>th</sup> century)
- New England Theology
- New Haven Theology

#### Charles Finney and Revivalism

- Youth and Conversion
- Ordination in Presbyterian Church in Western New York
- First Experiences with Revival
- Finney Starts Calling for Immediate Response in Meetings
- Finney's Theology and Methods
  - Salvation = changing your will
  - Goal of Preaching = convince hearers to change their mind
  - Key to Revival Is "New Measures", suited for the times
  - Physical Response = conversion

#### John Nevin and Criticism of Revivalism

- Nevin is German Reformed minister in Pennsylvania
- Concerned that emotional revivals and calls for immediate, physical response produce false conversions
- Nevin's published his critiques in *The Anxious Bench*
- Nevin advocates "ordinary means of grace" for conversion
  - The Word Of God
  - The Sacraments
  - The Church
  - The Family
  - The Pastoral Office

### Revival and Revivalism Today

- Differentiate between work of the Spirit of God and the use of certain methods
- How Should We Seek Conversions? 2 Options:
  - 1) Crisis conversion and novelty / excitement
  - 2) Ordinary means of grace

### Recommended Resources

John Woodbridge and Frank James, *Church History, Volume Two: From Pre-Reformation to the Present Day: The Rise and Growth of the Church in Its Cultural, Intellectual, and Political Context*, Zondervan Academic: Grand Rapids, 2013.

- 800+ pages, detailed account

Iain Murray, *Revival and Revivalism: The Making and Marring of American Evangelicalism, 1750-1858* (Banner of Truth: Edinburgh, 1994)

- Hands-down, the best history of true and false revival in 19<sup>th</sup> century America, helping the reader to see the roots of 20<sup>th</sup> century evangelical and fundamentalist altar call evangelism. Highly recommended.

Andrew Bonar and Bennet Tyler, *Asahel Nettleton: Life & Labours* (Banner of Truth: Edinburgh, 1996)

- Engaging 19<sup>th</sup> contemporary biography of Calvinist revival preacher Asahel Nettleton who is a historical example of how you can consistently apply Calvinist theology in preaching and see a revival, contrary to Arminian and Pelagian critics who claim Calvinist theology is incompatible with evangelism and revival

Karl Dahlfred, *Theology Drives Methodology: Conversion in the Theology of Charles Finney and John Nevin* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing: Scotts Valley, Calif., 2013)

- This book is the fruit of my Master of Theology thesis research and compares Finney's Pelagian revival methodology with the more traditional means-of-grace approach of German Reformed pastor John Nevin. The title of the book is derived from the conviction that what we believe has a direct impact on how we do evangelism.
- Paperback and Kindle eBook editions available via Amazon.com