

Religion in america

Religion



The Awakening The article from the Washington Post d " Bush Tells Group He Sees a 'Third Awakening'" has caused a serious discussion about the first and second 'Great Awakening' in the religious history of America, and it raises questions regarding whether there is a " Third Awakening." This question can only be answered in the lights of a profound understanding of the so-called " First Great Awakening" and " Second Great Awakening." First of all, the First Great Awakening, commonly called the Great Awakening, refers to a period of sharp religious activity which has brought about drastic changes in American colonial society, and it primarily happened during the 1730s and 1740s in the United Kingdom and its North American colonies. " The Great Awakening, America's first major religious revival, was the most important religious event of the colonial period. Rocking the Atlantic seaboard in the middle decades of the 18th century, it established revivalism and emotional conversion as central features of American life, lowered denominational boundaries, challenged traditional social patterns, and generated perceptions and conflicts that would inform the American Revolution." (Carroll, 2000, 56). Therefore, the " First Great Awakening" has been one of the most influential events in the colonial America which has touched various aspects of the society and, in particular, it has resulted in the revival of slavery, the American Revolution, and the essential changes in the religious landscape. Significantly, the Awakening was a result of the colonial importation of Pietism which emphasized intense, personal, and 'experimental' contact with God and the first manifestations of the Awakening mainly appeared among the Pietists in the middle colonies in the 1720s. The Great Awakening has been an important event in the sense that it challenged the existing structures of religious and social authority. Most

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importantly, the First Great Awakening has brought about essential changes in the religious landscape of the colonial America. " The Great Awakening by itself did not bring about the changes from a Puritan style of religious life to an evangelical style, but it had much to do with facilitating that shift, and thus it contributed forcefully to the shape of later religious life." (Noll, 1992, 105).

The Second Great Awakening, which happened between 1790s and 1840s, can be realized as a period of great religious revival in the United States which extended into its antebellum period and it resulted in extensive Christian evangelism and conversions. Similar to the First Great Awakening, it brought about essential religious revival. " The Second Great Awakening was the most influential revival of Christianity in the history of the United States. Its very size and its many expressions have led some historians to question whether a single Second Great Awakening can be identified as such. Yet from about 1795 to about 1810 there was a broad and general rekindling of interest in Christianity throughout the country. This revival, in turn, provided a pattern and an impetus for similar waves of revival that continued throughout the nation until after the Civil War." (Noll, 1992, 166). Therefore, the Second Great Awakening was an important event in the religious history of America and it brought about the revival of religion in relationship to slavery, the Civil War, and changes in the religious landscape.

It is in this background that the article " Bush Tells Group He Sees a 'Third Awakening'" should be understood. In this article, Bush maintains that the nation's struggle with international terrorists should be regarded as a " Third Awakening" of religious devotion in the United States. " Bush told a group of <https://assignbuster.com/religion-in-america/>

conservative journalists that he notices more open expressions of faith among people he meets during his travels, and he suggested that might signal a broader revival similar to other religious movements in history. Bush noted that some of Abraham Lincoln's strongest supporters were religious people 'who saw life in terms of good and evil' and who believed that slavery was evil. Many of his own supporters, he said, see the current conflict in similar terms." (Baker, 2006). However, a reflective analysis of the history of " First Great Awakening" and " Second Great Awakening" in comparison with a possible " Third Awakening", it becomes lucid that Bush's remark is not true of fact and the strong and serious causes of the previous Awakenings simply does not exist today. In short, George W Bush's arguments concerning a " Third Awakening" in the contemporary context of the nation cannot be proved right in a historical survey of " First Great Awakening" and " Second Great Awakening."

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