

The Evangelistic Zeal of George Whitefield by Stephen Lawson, Reformation Trust (Div of Ligionier Ministries: Sandford, FL). 2013, pgs.156. (88 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols)

1. Whitefield – Spurgeon’s model.

“Other men seem to be only half-alive, but Whitfield was all life, fire, wing, force. My own model, if I may have such a thing in due subordination to my Lord, is George Whitefield. With unequal footsteps must I follow his glorious track.” – Charles Spurgeon [p. 1]

2. Ministry Wide-reaching from America to the British Isles.

“Reaching from the other side of the Atlantic to the other, the expensive ministry of George Whitefield (1714-1770) remains unmatched to this day. Relentless in drive and fervent in soul, this ‘Grand Itinerant’ was the chosen instrument in the hands of our sovereign God for the ingathering of untold thousands into His kingdom. Reaching the British Isles from London to Edinburgh and the American colonies from Boston to Savannah, this anointed herald of the gospel was the force behind the British Evangelical movement and the First Great Awakening.” [p.1-2]

3. Whitefield Well-known in Colonial America.

“In his thirty-four years of ministry, Whitefield preached some eighteen thousand sermons, often to multiplied thousands. If informal messages are included, such as in private homes, this number easily increases to thirty thousand sermons, perhaps more. Three sermons a day were common; four were not uncommon. Conservative estimates are that he spoke a thousand times every year for more than thirty years. In America alone, it is estimated that eighty percent of the colonists heard him preach. This means that Whitefield was seen by far more American settlers than was George Washington. Whitefield’s name was more widely recognized by colonial Americans than any living person’s except for those of British royalty. It is believed that Whitefield preached to more than ten million people over the course of his ministry, a staggering number.” [p. 2]

4. Ryle Thought Whitefield Greatly Qualified.

“The greatest preachers of history have been the strongest admirers of Whitefield, J.C. Ryle, a note preacher and author, asserted, ‘I believe no English preacher had ever possessed such a combination of excellent qualifications as Whitefield ... Whitefield, I repeat my opinion, stands alone.’” [p.3]

5. Spurgeon Thought Whitefield as Chief of Preachers.

“The undisputed Prince of Preachers, Charles Spurgeon, testified: ‘Often as I have read his life, I am conscious of distinct quickening whenever I turn to it. He *lived*. Other men seem to be only half-alive; but Whitefield was all life, fire, wing, force. My own model, if I may have such a thing in due subordination to my Lord, is George Whitefield; but with unequal footsteps must I follow his glorious track.’ Spurgeon’s only mentor in preaching was Whitefield. On his personal copy of Whitefield’s sermons, he wrote, “C.H. Spurgeon, who admires Whitefield as Chief of Preachers.” [p. 4].

6. Whitefield – A Voice for the Kingdom.

“As with Moses in Egypt, Paul in Rome, or Luther in Wittenberg, God places His chosen servants in decisive eras of history when a voice is needed to advance the cause of His kingdom. In the powerful revivals of the eighteenth century, a season of spiritual renewal unlike any in church history, Whitefield was this voice, rousing the church from its spiritual slumber and fortifying her faith in the living God.” [p. 4-5]

7. The Power of the Gospel to Change Lives.

“On February 17, 1739, Whitefield preached for the first time outdoors at Kingswood, in a field on the outskirts of Bristol. He stood on a little hill in the countryside and preached to a relatively small gathering of coal miners and their families, some two hundred in attendance. Whitefield declared the grace of Jesus Christ, and those in attendance were struck by the power of the gospel. He remarked on that event:

Having no righteousness of their own to renounce, they were glad to hear of a Jesus who was a friend of publicans, and came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. The first discovery of their being affected was to see the white gutters made by their tears which plentifully fell down their black cheeks, as they came out of the coal pits. Hundreds and hundreds of them were soon brought under deep convictions, which, as the event proved, happily ended in a sound and thorough conversion. The change was visible to all, though numbers chose to impute it to anything, rather than the finger of God.” [p. 12]

8. Benjamin Franklin Confirmed Numbers Preached To.

“Benjamin Franklin, a close friend of Whitefield, documented what he described as ‘enormous’ numbers. Estimating the area covered by the crowd and allowing two square feet for each person, Franklin wrote, ‘I computed that he might well be heard by

more than thirty thousand. This reconciled me to the newspaper accounts of his having preached to twenty-five thousand people in the fields.’ These vast numbers covered more than a dozen city blocks, and souls were impacted for eternity.” [p. 17]

9. Jonathan Edwards and Whitefield Were God’s Instruments in Great Awakening.

“Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), the recognized leaders of the first wave of the Great Awakening, invited Whitefield to Northampton, Massachusetts, where he preached four times in October 1740. This would be the only time that the leaders of this powerful movement would meet. On October 19, Whitefield recorded in his *Journals*, ‘Preached this morning, and good Mr. Edwards wept during the whole time of exercise. The people were equally affected.’ Edwards reported that Whitefield’s preaching brought ‘a great alteration in the town.’ Whitefield and Edwards became twin instruments God used so mightily during the American Great Awakening. As Perry Miller so aptly put it, ‘Jonathan Edwards had already put a match to the fuse, and Whitefield blew it into flame.’” [p.18]

10. Whitefield Used as an Instrument of Revival.

“...Whitefield preached a total of 175 times within seventy-five days and traveled nearly six thousand miles. He was divinely used as an instrument for rekindling the fires of revival that began several years earlier under the preaching of Jonathan Edwards. Not since New Testament times had the world witnessed such explosive energy and extensive outreach in evangelistic preaching.” [p. 19]

11. Physically Attacked for Preaching.

“Facing mounting attacks in the press and hecklers at his open-air meetings, he persevered in preaching throughout England. He remained undaunted in the face of opposition: ‘I was honored with having a few stones, dirt, rotten eggs and pieces of dead cats thrown at me.’ Once, a man tried to take Whitefield’s life by attempting to stab him. On other occasions, drummers and trumpeters were hired to drown out his preaching. He was even physically assaulted and beaten: ‘I received many blows and wounds; one was particularly large, and near my temples. I thought of Stephen I was in great hopes that like him I should be dispatched and go off in this bloody triumph to the immediate presence of my Master.’” [p. 20]

12. God Protected Whitefield.

“Further difficulty came when Whitefield survived a well-orchestrated assassination plot in which he was attacked while in bed at night. Recognizing God’s sovereign protection, he would later say, ‘We are immortal until our work on earth is done.’” [p. 21]

13. Death of Whitefield.

“Whitefield preached his last sermon in Exeter, New Hampshire, on September 29, 1770. It was a souls-searching exposition that would last two hours, and was titled *Examine Yourself*, from 2 Corinthians 13:5. As he stepped forward to preach, Whitefield uttered a silent prayer, ‘If I have not yet finished my course, let me go and speak for Thee once more in the fields, seal Thy truth, and come home, and die.’

“Afterward the drained evangelist rode south by horse to Newburyport, Massachusetts, where he was to preach the next day at the Old South Presbyterian Church. Upon arriving, he addressed a large gathering at the pastor’s parsonage on Saturday evening. Having suffered all of his life with severe cardiac asthma, he found it difficult to breathe. On Sunday morning, September 30, 1770, at approximately 6 a.m., George Whitefield breathed his last and entered into the presence of Him whom he had so faithfully proclaimed. Biographer Sir Marcus Loane wrote, ‘At the age of fifty-five, the Prince of English Preachers was dead, a prince that hath no peers.’” [p.27]

14. Close Fellowship with the Lord.

“But the reasons for Whitefield’s grand success in preaching lay far deeper than his unmatched powers in the pulpit. Greater than his thundering voice was his towering affection for the glory of God. His unparalleled effectiveness as an evangelist cannot be grasped until one sees the depth of his close communion with the Lord.” [p. 29-30.]

15. Serious About Holy Living.

“Whitefield was, as Lloyd-Jones identified, ‘a pietist, that is, one who saw practical devotion to the Father and the Son through the Spirit as always the Christian’s top priority.’ Mark Noll explains, ‘Pietists are serious about holy living and expend every effort to follow God’s law.’ To this end, Whitefield earnestly prayed, ‘God give me a deep humility, a well-guided zeal, a burning love and a single eye, and then let men or devils do their worst.’” [p. 30]

16. God Honored Whitefield.

“There should be little doubt as to why God so unusually honored his preaching ministry. Whitefield was able to stand before men because he first kneeled before God.” [p. 31]

17. Immersed in Scripture.

“Whitefield’s spiritual devotion was established upon his immovable commitment to the Bible. Once he was converted, Scripture immediately became his necessary food and fueled the fire in his soul for God. The more he immersed himself in the Bible, the deeper he grew in his dedication to know God and to advance His kingdom.” [p. 31]

18. A Great Student of the Word of God.

“Dallimore writes, ‘We can visualize him at fine in the morning in his room over Harris’ bookstore. He is on his knees with his Bible, his Greek New Testament, and a volume of Matthew Henry spread before him.’ With books open before his willing heart, Whitefield gazes back and forth from the English Bible to the Greek to Matthew Henry’s commentary, seeking to discern and digest Scripture’s divine truths.” [p. 32]

19. Scripture Fueled His Love for Christ.

“Whitefield confessed how his daily devotion to the Scripture became like fire upon the altar of his soul, fueling his love for Christ.” [p. 32]

20. Whitefield Prayed Over the Word.

“After reading the text, young Whitefield prayed over, ‘every line and every word’ in both English and Greek, feasting his mind and his heart upon it till its essential meaning became a part of his very person.” [p. 32]

21. True Knowledge from God’s Word.

“The Word of God became so all-consuming in Whitefield’s daily life that he confessed to having little time to read anything else: ‘I got more true knowledge from reading the Book of God in one month, than I could *ever* have acquired from *all* the writings of men.’” [p. 33]

22. Preeminence of Scripture in Whitefield’s Life.

“Whitefield devoured the divine revelation. He grieved over the eclipse of Scripture in his generation, boldly asserting, ‘If we once get above our Bibles and cease making the

written Word of God our sole rule both as to faith and practice, we shall soon lie open to all manner of delusion and be in great danger of making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.’ Whitefield resolved that nothing would displace the preeminence of Scripture in his life.” [p. 33]

23. Be Much in Secret Prayer.

“Moreover, Whitefield was devoted to God in earnest prayer. Through time spent on his knees, his heart for God was further deepened and developed. The real secret of his public ministry was not found primarily in his vivid vocabulary, dramatic skills, or Oxford education. The true source of his power in his preaching lay far deeper. It was discovered behind closed doors in time alone with God. He urged, ‘Be much in secret prayer. Converse less with man, and more with God.’ Whitefield poured out his heart to God in prayer, and he was effectively used before men.” [p. 34]

24. Spent Regular Time With God.

“Whitefield was much *for* God because he was much *with* Him. From the moment Christ dawned in his heart, Whitefield was absorbed in intimate prayer. He knew a servant could not fulfill his assignment without a regular audience with his Master.” [p. 34-35]

25. List Used to Examine Self.

“Whitefield understood that prayer was a necessary spiritual discipline for the grounding and growth of his soul. Whitefield’s diary begins with a list of criteria he regularly used as a basis of examining himself and his actions. This list is as follows:

“Have I,

1. Been fervent in private prayer?
2. Used stated hours of prayer?
3. Used prayer every hour?
4. After or before every deliberate conversation or action, considered how it might tend to God’s glory?
5. After any pleasure, immediately given thanks?
6. Planned business for the day?
7. Been simple and recollected in everything?
8. Been zealous in undertaking and active in doing what good I could?
9. Been meek, cheerful, affable in everything I said or did?
10. Been proud, vain, unchaste, or envious of others?
11. Recollected in eating and drinking? Thankful? Temperate in sleep?
12. Taken time for giving thanks according to [William] Law’s rules?

13. Been diligent in studies?
14. Thought or spoken unkindly of anyone?
15. Confessed all sins?

Prayer is mentioned in six of these fifteen maxims, more than any other spiritual discipline. Here, the importance Whitefield placed upon prayer can be clearly seen. He saw time alone with God as the catalyst that brings ‘God and man together.’” [p. 35-37]

26. Be Much in Secret Prayer.

“Whitefield exhorted others, ‘Be much in secret, set prayer. When you are about the common business of life, be much in prayer.’ He was insistent that our infinite God is acutely aware of the pleas of even the poorest and weariest of souls.” [p. 37]

27. True Love Was the Person of Jesus.

“Stephen Mansfield described this obsessive fixation that Whitefield had with his Savior when he wrote:

His one true love was always the person of Jesus. The risen Christ was the fixed star of his life’s voyage, the sole object of his affections. It was for Jesus for whom he lived, Jesus whom he sought to please, and Jesus in whom he hoped to find his rest ... Indeed, as Whitefield understood, passion for Jesus is the personal renewal from which greater revivals spring.” [p. 38]

28. Christ Is in All of Scripture.

“The magnifying lens through which Whitefield saw Christ was Scripture. He maintained, ‘Look, therefore, always for Christ in Scripture. He is the treasure hid in the field, both of the Old and New Testaments. In the Old you will find Him under prophecies, types, sacrifices, and shadows; in the New, manifested in the flesh, to become propitiation for our sins as a priest, and as a prophet to reveal the whole will of his heavenly Father.’ Every stone in Scripture, he believed, must be overturned in search of Christ.” [p. 38-39]

29. Whitefield Saw Christ in both Old and New Testaments.

“The Old Testament served as a dark glass through which Whitefield beheld Christ in part, while the New Testament reveals Him in His fullness.” [p. 39]

30. Strong Devotion to Christ Needed.

“Since Christ was the core of the gospel, Whitefield believed he must have a strong devotion to Him in order to be effective in preaching Him.” [p.39]

31. A Most Humble Man.

“Throughout his ministry, Whitefield never lost sight of the fact he was a wretched sinner saved by grace. He was, in the words of Lloyd-Jones, ‘a most humble man.’ J.C. Ryle adds, ‘Certainly, there was no more humble man.’ Still, Whitefield repeatedly confessed, ‘I am less than the least of all saints, I am the chief of sinners.’ He viewed himself as ‘less than the least of all.’ Despite attaining celebrity status, this preeminent evangelist remained possessed with a lowly state of mind.” [p. 40]

32. A Mere Servant of His Master.

“John Gilles, an early biographer of Whitefield, noted that he possessed ‘the deepest humility and self-abasement.’ This gifted preacher would not allow a Christian institution to be named after him. Neither would he allow any movement bear his name. He never sought the limelight or applause. To the contrary, Whitefield pursued the honor of Jesus Christ in the salvation of lost souls. He never forgot that he was a mere servant enlisted into the service of his Master. This sober realization created within him a ‘humble, thankful, and resigned heart.’” [p. 40-41]

33. Strained Relationships with the Wesleys.

“But perhaps the supreme example of Whitefield’s humility concerned his theological difference and strained relationships with the Wesley brothers. For the sake of peace, he chose to resign his leadership role in the Methodist movement, which he had helped to start. He assumed a lesser place, even to the point of appearing as John Wesley’s ‘assistant.’ A self-deprecating man, Whitefield was willing to submit to those outside his own theological convictions. The inner heart cry of Whitefield remained, ‘God give me a deep humility.’ This was a prayer that God chose to answer. As Whitefield humbled himself before God, he became the chief catalyst in launching the trans-Atlantic revivals of the eighteenth century.” [p. 43]

34. Strove to Separate Himself from Sin.

“Holiness cannot be obtained, he maintained, as long as one clings to sin. Whitefield, therefore, knew that he must be constantly striving to separate himself from sin.” [p. 44-45]

35. Integrity and Purity Must Be Present.

“Whitefield’s own repentance would transform his heart from being lifeless and lukewarm to being vibrant and fervent for God. If he was to preach with power, Whitefield knew such integrity and purity must be present within him.” [p. 45]

36. Holiness Never Fully Realized on Earth.

“Throughout his Christian walk, Whitefield recognized holiness as a progressive transformation from one degree of glory to another (2 Cor. 3:18). Moral perfection, he contended, was not ultimately attainable until he entered the heavenly realm. This understanding was diametrically opposed to the perfectionism taught by the Wesleys, who asserted that a believer could cease sinning. Whitefield countered that perfect holiness could never be fully realized upon this earth. His sanctification was a continual process, realized through the spiritual disciplines of Bible study and prayer. These pursuits, in turn, produced humility and holiness within him.” [p. 45]

37. Whitefield as an Example for Today’s Church.

“May Whitefield serve as an example to a new generation of soldiers in the army of Christ to become more immersed in Scripture, saturated with prayer, focused on Christ, cloaked in humility, and striving for holiness. May God give His church such sanctified servants.” [p. 47]

38. Understood the Doctrines of Grace.

“Whitefield possessed a very real understanding of the doctrines of grace, not as an abstract system of thought, but as the teaching of the Scriptures and as basic principles of his daily Christian life.” – Arnold Dallimore [p. 49]

39. Sovereign Grace and Evangelistic Zeal Both Core Values from Whitefield.

“George Whitefield was arguably the most prolific evangelist since the time of the Apostles. Yet, at the same time, he was also a staunch Calvinist. Undergirding his passionate gospel preaching was an unwavering belief in God’s sovereignty in man’s salvation. It was the doctrines of grace that ignited his soul with holy compulsion to reach the world with the message of Christ. Some argue that these two realities – sovereign grace and evangelistic zeal – cannot co-exist. But nothing could be further from the truth.” [p.49]

40. Beliefs Came from Scripture, Not Calvin.

“Though a strict Calvinist, Whitefield nevertheless derived his theological convictions, not from reading John Calvin, but from studying Scripture itself. The hours he spent pouring over the Word led him to passionately embrace the clear teaching of sovereign grace in Scripture.” [p.50]

41. Convictions Drove Whitefield's Message.

“The doctrines of grace gave him fire in the pulpit to cry out and warn men of wrath to come and to flee from it into the loving arms of a wonderful Savior.’ The theological convictions of Whitefield emboldened him in all that he practiced and proclaimed.” [p. 51].

42. Everything Whitefield Believed and Preached Came from the Doctrines of Grace.

“Whitefield drank deeply from the well of the doctrines of grace, and it proved to be the spring of all he believed and preached. Each tenet of Calvinism shaped and molded him into a zealous evangelist. When Whitefield stood to preach, he was gripped with an enormous confidence in God, believing His eternal purposes were moving forward with unalterable certainty.” [p.53]

43. Everyone Fatally Plagued by Sin.

“Every faculty of every person – mind, affections, and will – is fatally plagued by sin. The entire fallen race cannot, by its own moral efforts, save itself. Neither does any sinful creature have faith to believe in Christ. Whitefield believed that man is utterly dead to sin, and his will is held captive in bondage.” [p. 54]

44. All People Sinners.

“He further affirmed that it ‘can never be denied by anyone who believes that St. Paul’s epistles were written by divine inspiration; where we are told that ‘in Adam all died’, that is, Adam’s sin was imputed to all.’ Precisely as Scripture teaches, Whitefield believed all people are, by nature, ‘sinners and children of wrath.’” [p. 54-55]

45. Doctrine of Total Depravity Marked Whitefield's Preaching.

“Whitefield’s understanding of total depravity indelibly marked his preaching. Virtually every sermon Whitefield preached pointed man to his desperate condition in sin. He confronted his unconverted listeners: ‘You are in a state of damnation...I tell thee, O man, I tell thee, O woman, whoever thou art, thou art a dead man, thou art a dead woman, nay a damned man, a damned woman, without a new heart.’ He preached that man must acknowledge his utter helplessness before he can recognize the need to embrace Christ as his only hope.” [p. 56]

46. Whitefield Embraced Unconditional Election.

“Whitefield likewise embraced the doctrine of sovereign election. He maintained that before time began, God the Father freely chose those whom He would save out of the whole of the fallen race. These chosen ones were elected not on the basis of anything good foreseen in them, certainly not for any foreseen faith in Christ. God chose to set His sovereign love upon certain individuals for reasons known only to Himself. Whitefield speaks of this truth as ‘a doctrine whereby God is eminently glorified and His people greatly edified and comforted.’ He believed God has chosen a people by himself and for Himself who are predestined to be saved by Christ.” [p.57]

47. Relish in the Glory of a Sovereign Redeemer.

“In Whitefield’s day, as in ours, the doctrine of unconditional election remained a doctrine of disdain. However, Whitefield viewed this teaching with sheer delight and pleasure, seeing within it the shining of the glory of God. Rather than seeing it as an irrelevant detail, Whitefield believed election is a life-altering truth that produces humility: ‘I cannot see how true humbleness of mind can be attained without a knowledge of it; and though I will not say, that everyone who denies election is a bad man, yet I will say . . .it is a very bad sign . . .for, if we deny election, we must partly at least, glory in ourselves.’ Those who do not adhere to this precious truth risk finding themselves in a dangerous bog of self-love and self-glory. Yet, Whitefield asserted, the one who embraces unconditional election relishes the glory of his sovereign Redeemer.” [p. 58]

48. One Who Believes and Comes to Christ Is One of the Elect.

“Whitefield certainly rejected the excuse ‘I cannot come to Christ and be saved, because I am not one of the elect.’ God’s election, he affirmed, does not negate man’s responsibility to hear the countless invitations in Scripture to come and believe in Christ. Quite the contrary, sinners find great confidence in unconditional election because the one who believes and comes to Christ is found among God’s chosen ones.” [p. 59]

49. Jesus died for His sheep.

“God the Father designed the death of the Lord Jesus Christ with the specific purpose of saving His elect. Christ laid down His life for those whom the Father had given Him in eternity past. Simply put, Jesus died for His sheep, the chosen bride of Christ.” [p. 60]

50. The Cross – Sufficient Sacrifice for Believers.

“Whitefield freely offered the glorious good news of the cross of Christ as a sufficient sacrifice for all who would believe.” [p. 61]

51. Whitefield Proclaimed the Gospel to Everyone.

“Such an unwavering belief did not annul Whitefield’s sense of responsibility to proclaim the gospel to everyone without discrimination. We can almost see his cheeks streaming with tears and hear his dramatic voice pleading with the throngs to come to Christ. In his sermon on the conversion of Zaccheus, Whitefield exclaimed:

There, there, by faith, O mourners in Zion, may you see your Savior hanging with arms stretched out, and hear Him, as it were, thus speaking to your souls; ‘Behold how I have loved you! Behold My hands and My feet! Look, look into My wounded side, and see a heart flaming with love; love stronger than death. Come into My arms, O sinners, come wash your spotted souls in My heart’s blood.

Unquestionably, George Whitefield presented the atoning sacrifice of Christ as applicable to all would come to Him for salvation.” [p. 62]

52. Efficacious Call.

“Whitefield further preached that all those chosen by the Father and redeemed by the Son would be regenerated by the Holy Spirit. The saving work of Christ on the cross is applied by the effectual call of the Holy Spirit. He held that the third person of the Trinity could convict the elect sinner, efficaciously draw him to Christ, and grant the gifts of true repentance and faith.” [p. 62]

53. Man Is Totally Saved by the Work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

“According to R. Elliot, Whitefield believed ‘man has no power or will at all to effect his own conversion, it being the entire work of God’s Spirit.’ Since man is born spiritually dead, there is absolutely nothing he can do to bring salvation to his soul, independent of the Spirit. The will of every man is imprisoned in sin and bound by Satan, and cannot break free unless the Holy Spirit liberated him to believe in Christ. Therefore, the beginning, middle, and end of the new birth are entirely the work of the triune God, for which He is to receive all honor and glory in salvation.” [p. 63]

54. Unbelieving Sinners Must Ask God to Believe in Christ.

“Knowing that no sinner can cause his own regeneration, Whitefield would urge the unconverted to pray that God would give them a new heart and faith to believe: ‘O that I could see some of you sensible of this, and hear you cry out,’ Lord, break this hard heart; Lord, deliver me from the body of this death; draw me, Lord, make me willing to come after Thee; I am lost; Lord, save me, or I perish.’ He asserted that unbelieving sinners must ask God to make them willing to believe in Christ.” [p.64]

55. Perseverance of the Saints.

“Whitefield upheld the biblical doctrine of perseverance of the saints. The work of sovereign grace does not end at conversion. What God in the corridors of eternity past had predestined to take place, He will bring to completion in eternity future. Whitefield was convinced that God brings all His chosen ones to future glory. Those whom God elects and brings to salvation will be preserved by grace, both in time and eternity. Those whom God saves, He saves forever. They will never fall away. They will never perish.” [p. 64-65]

56. John Newton’s Thoughts on Whitefield.

“Other ministers could, perhaps, preach the Gospel, as clearly, and in general say the same things. But I believe no man living could say them his [Whitefield] way. Here I always thought him unequalled, and I hardly expect to see his equal while I live.” [p. 69]

57. Unashamedly Lifted Up Christ.

“Wherever he was – whether in a church, in an open field, in a city square, on a ship, in a house – and with whomever he was – whether with royalty, coal miners, the cultured, or the uncouth – Whitefield was unashamedly lifting up Christ and fervently calling for their verdict. He purposed not to be with anyone for more than fifteen minutes without confronting them with the claims of Christ.” [p. 70]

58. The Driving Forces of Whitefield’s Ministry.

“In his gospel ministry, he continually exposed sin, exalted the cross, required regeneration, summoned the will, and pointed to eternity. Here lay the driving forces behind Whitefield’s soul-winning efforts. To grasp these essential truths is to understand the dynamics of his ocean-spanning ministry.” [p. 71]

59. Swept Away All Useless Rhetoric.

“Whitefield was a master at sweeping away all useless rhetoric in order that the unconverted would recognize their desperate need to repent. He implored them, ‘You are lost, undone, without Him; and if He is not glorified in your salvation, He will be glorified in your destruction; if He does not come and make His abode in your hearts, you must take up an eternal abode with the devil and the angels.’ None who heard Whitefield were put to sleep with a false sense of security.” [p. 72]

60. Shined the Light on Sin in Depraved Hearts.

“By such strong statements, Whitefield shined a sin-exposing spotlight into the dark crevasses of depraved hearts. Only then would sinners flee to the foot of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ to hear about a Savior who died for their guilty souls.” [p.74]

61. Preached of Christ Crucified.

“Whenever Whitefield preached, he spoke of the perfect atonement accomplished by the death of the son of God. Moving from man’s ruin in sin to Christ’s redemption at the cross, Whitefield preached of Christ crucified as his greatest passion and most-dominant note.” [p. 74]

62. Preached the Cross as the Saving Purpose.

“Whitefield preached the cross as the saving purpose for which Christ came to earth..” [p.77]

63. You Must Be Born Again.

“There is an often-repeated story in which a woman asked Whitefield after a preaching service, ‘Why do you keep saying to us, ‘You must be born again?’’ The great evangelist answered, ‘Because, dear woman, you *must* be born again.’” [p.77]

64. Whitefield Asked for an Immediate Response to the Gospel.

“Whitefield pressed the hearts of his listeners for an immediate response. It was not enough for him that people knew the truth of the gospel. They must fully commit themselves to Jesus Christ. ‘Though I hold particular election, yet I offer Jesus freely to every individual soul,’ he said. Whitefield was constantly calling men and women to come to Christ.

“Martyn Lloyd-Jones implored, ‘Let us, I hope, once and forever put an end to that lie which says that Calvinism and an interest in evangelism are not compatible.’” [p. 80]

65. Come to Christ Was Whitefield's Plea.

Hear the impassioned pleading of Whitefield as he calls his listeners to respond by faith and come to Christ immediately:

Come, then unto Christ, everyone that hears me this night; I offer Jesus Christ, pardon, and salvation to all you who will accept thereof. *Come*, O you drunkards; lay aside your cups, drink no more to excel; *come* and drink of the water which Christ will give you, and then you will thirst no more. *Come*, O you thieves; let him who has stolen, steal no more, but fly to Christ, and He will receive you. *Come* unto Him, O you harlots; lay aside your lusts and turn unto the Lord, and He will have mercy on you; He will cleanse you of all your sins and wash you in His blood. *Come*, all you liars; *come*, all you Pharisees; *come*, all you fornicators, adulterers, swearers, and blasphemers; *come* to Christ, and He will take away all your filth; He will cleanse you from your pollution, and your sins shall be done away. *Come, come*, my guilty brethren; I beseech you for Christ's sake, and for your immortal soul's sake, to *come* unto Christ." [p.81-82]

66. An Invitation Must Be Given.

"It was quite clear that Whitefield believed an invitation must be offered to the lost to come to Christ. Still he did not practice an 'altar call,' nor did he encourage emotional excitement among his congregation. He said, 'I offer you salvation this day; the door of mercy is not yet shut, there does yet remain a sacrifice for sin, for all that will accept of the Lord Jesus Christ.' This gospel appeal represents countless invitations Whitefield extended to his listeners." [p.83]

67. No Hope for One Who Lives and Dies in Sin.

"No decision for Christ, Whitefield asserted, could be made after one dies. He pleaded, 'While your sins are not repented of, you are in danger of death, and if you should die, you would perish forever. There is no hope of any who live and die in their sins, but that they dwell with devils and damned spirits to all eternity.' Unless lost souls receive Christ in this life, there is no hope in the eternal ages that one should escape the punishment of the damned." [p.87]

68. Loved the Glorious Gospel of Grace.

"The evangelistic zeal of George Whitefield flowed out of his love for the glorious gospel of grace. It was his supreme love and devotion that drove him to pursue the lost, expose sin, exalt the cross, summon the will, and point to eternity. Thorough Calvinistic in

theology, this fervent evangelist held forth the only saving message there is for guilty sinners. He delighted in calling them to faith in Christ and leaving the results to God, who alone can save.” [p. 88]

69. Whitefield Was an Intense Preacher.

“In a day when pulpit delivery had degenerated into dry ritual, involving nothing more than a monotone reading of a sermon manuscript, Whitefield burst onto the scene with intense *preaching*. That is to say, this celebrated evangelist came exhorting, pleading, wooing, calling, begging, even weeping before his listeners. With deep emotions, his heart bled as he declared the gospel. He spoke with demonstrative body language and commanding gestures that loomed larger than life. Whitefield was aglow with the glory of God as he proclaimed the gospel of Christ.” [p. 93]

70. Deep Convictions.

“Whitefield’s passion arose from the depth of his biblical convictions. Strong beliefs were first ignited in his heart at the moment of his conversion. These firmly held truths were cultivated over the years through intense prayer and diligent study of the Word. Many preachers have weak convictions and therefore have little passion. However, George Whitefield possessed a deep persuasion about the truth, which in turn fueled his passion in preaching. His beliefs in the gospel of sovereign grace stoked the flames of his heart into a blazing furnace.” [pgs. 93-94]

71. Delivered Divine Truth.

“Whenever he stood behind an open Bible, Whitefield was thoroughly convinced he was delivering divine truth. He firmly believed he was feeding the bread of life to starving beggars. This inner conviction created flaming passion in his preaching. Life a tree rooted in rich soil, Whitefield could not be moved. He remained firm in the cardinal doctrines he believed essential for salvation. When he spoke, he used plain words to address every rank and condition among his listeners. He did so with the certainty that he was a divinely appointed spokesman for God, bring His truth on His behalf.” [p.94]

72. A Fisher of Men.

“Like Jesus and His Apostles, Whitefield set out onto the open seas of humanity to become a fisher of men. ‘The whole world is now my parish,’ he exclaimed. ‘Wheresoever my Master calls me I am ready to go and preach the everlasting Gospel.’” [p. 106]

73. Preached to African Americans.

“Whitefield is remembered as one of the first to preach to African slaves in the colonies. Historian Thomas Kidd commented, ‘Whitefield expressed growing awareness and concern for the plight of African Americans in both the North and South.’” [p. 107]

74. No Distinction nor Prejudice

“Without distinction or prejudice, whether free or slave, Whitefield saw all men as enslaved to sin, and he pursued them with indiscriminate determination in order to show the way to what Wheatley called ‘grace’s road.’ He elevated those who were enslaved and recognized them as precious souls whom God calls to be His children. In Whitefield’s preaching, ‘whosoever will’ remained a continual note that he struck.” [p. 108]

75. A Mandate from the Lord.

“Here was a man endued with mighty influence from God as he carried out his proclamation of the Word. As Whitefield stood to declare the gospel, he was made strong in the Lord. The empowering Spirit enabled this gifted evangelist to accomplish a monumental work and to witness amazing results.” [p. 112]

76. Had the Spirit’s Calling and Gifting.

“It was the Holy Spirit who quickened Whitefield’s mind, ignited his soul, inflamed his heart, fueled his passion, and strengthened his body. His preaching reintroduced the old truths of Scripture back into the dry atmosphere of gospel preaching. He employed all his gifts and talents to this sacred task. But only the Spirit’s calling and gifting can explain the extent of Whitefield’s impact.” [p.115]

77. Founded Churches, Schools, and Was Responsible for an Orphanage.

“Whitefield’s productivity extended beyond his preaching. He gave myriad personal interviews who sought his counsel and kept up a prodigious letter-writing ministry. He founded three churches and one school, and founded and assumed responsibility for an orphanage in Savannah, Georgia. He said, ‘I ought to lay myself out more and more in going about endeavoring to do good to precious and immortal souls.’ His heart so overflowed for others that he was compelled to bring them God’s Word. Such was Whitefield’s resolve. [p. 116]

78. Not Weary of the Lord's Work.

Whitefield was often urged by others to slow the pace of his ministry. A typical response was, 'I would sooner wear out, than rust out.' He simply could not shorten his stride, even as his time on earth drew to a close. As Whitefield prepared to deliver what would be his final sermon, someone said to him, 'Sir, you are more fit to go to bed than to preach.' Whitefield looked up to the heavens and said, 'Lord Jesus, I am weary in Thy work, but not of Thy work.' Though depleted by his stupendous labors in gospel ministry, Whitefield stepped forward to finish the course that had been set before him." [p.117]

79. The Spirit Must Accompany Truth.

"Whitefield demonstrates that neither mere assent to the truth, not doctrinal correctness, is enough for effective gospel influence. There must be empowerment of the Spirit to accompany this truth, both in the preacher and the listener. As Whitefield wrote, 'Oh, how Divine truths make their own way, when attended by Divine power.' Any power Whitefield possessed did not come from his innate human abilities, but from the Spirit who lived within Him." [p. 118]

80. Divinely Comforted.

Whitefield was inwardly consoled in the midst of many demanding circumstances in his life and ministry. He was confronted with many difficulties throughout his life and was met with resistance on many sides. Any of these would have been sufficient to have discouraged the strongest of men. Yet, as we read of Whitefield's life, we see a servant of the Lord not deflated by discouragements, nor drowning in despair, but abounding in joy and filled with peace. This must be attributed to the sufficiency of the Holy Spirit within Him." [pgs. 121-122]

81. Real Ministry of the Holy Spirit.

"Whitefield understood that the inward ministry of the Spirit though inexplicable, was nevertheless real. Once when he was depleted, he stated, 'Afterwards found my strength renewed, and my soul filled with divine love and joy in the Holy Ghost. Oh what a mystery is the hidden life of a Christian.' As he faced these many trials in his life and ministry – the conflict with the Wesleys, the financial burden of Bethesda Orphanage, the long ocean voyage, the premature death of his newborn son, the loss of his wife, and the growing hecklers in the crowd – this valiant soldier of the cross found supernatural solace in the Lord, mediated by the Holy Spirit. Without this inner joy

and peace, the multitudes would have not been attracted to the gospel he held forth.” [p. 123]

82. The Holy Spirit Causes Me Joy.

“God fills me with love, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Oh how does the Holy Ghost cause me to joy in God.’ Whitefield found the Spirit to be a fountain of inexhaustible grace that washed over his weary heart, comforting, upholding, and sustaining him with each laborious step of his extensive journey.” [p. 124]

83. Supernaturally Effective.

“Whitefield understood that the effects of his preaching were sovereignly determined by God. His responsibility was to deliver the message and leave the results entirely with God. In the wake of Whitefield’s preaching, lives were visibly affected and dramatically altered. These results were clearly the effect of God’s hand.” [p. 124]

84. The Holy Spirit Is the Same Today.

“The same spirit who indwelt Whitefield has taken up His royal residence within the heart of every believer in Christ. The same Spirit who called Whitefield from obscurity to worldwide influence has placed the same call upon every Christian’s heart to bear gospel witness. The same Spirit who empowered Whitefield in his numerous endeavors will propel every follower of Christ to service in His name. The same Spirit who energized Whitefield will give divine energy and supernatural power today to accomplish all He wills.” [p. 127]

85. God’s Blessed Instrument.

“Have we read or heard of any person who called so many thousands, so many myriads of sinners to repentance? Above all, have we read or heard of anyone who has been God’s blessed instrument to bring so many sinners from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God as Whitefield?” -- John Wesley [p.129]

86. Lowly Sinner Saved by Grace.

“Whitefield never lost sight of the fact that he was a lowly sinner saved by the matchless grace of his Redeemer. He never promoted himself, but desired simply that Christ be glorified through his many labors. He allowed no Christian institution or religious movement to be named after him. He was a model of self-effacing humility, even amid his painful controversies. He never championed his own cause, nor sought the

spotlight. Instead, Whitefield only sought the honor of God in the salvation of lost souls.” [p. 130]

87. Simple Gospel Preaching Opens Men’s Ears.

“I do not look for any other means of converting men beyond the simple preaching of the gospel and the opening of men’s ears to hear it. The moment the church of God shall despise the pulpit, God will despise her. It has been through the ministry that the Lord has always been pleased to review and bless His churches.” – C. H. Spurgeon [p. 131]

88. A New Generation of Whitefields.

“May the Lord raise up a new generation of zealous evangelists who will never lose sight of the need to preach the gospel with urgency and passion. Now more than ever, we must have men dominated by the glory of God who will expound the Scripture, proclaim the doctrines of grace, and call men and women to follow Christ by Faith. May the Lord grant to preachers and Christians alike the mind for the truth, a heart for the world, and a passion for the glory of God.

Truly, we want again Whitefields!” [p. 132]