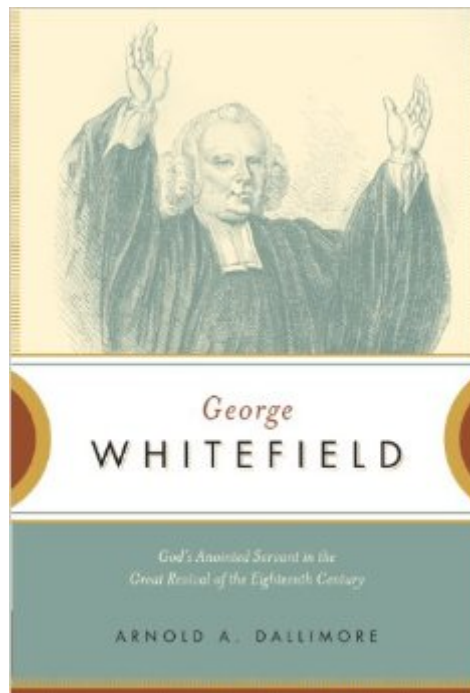


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George Whitefield: God's Anointed Servant In The Great Revival Of The Eighteenth Century



Synopsis

God's accomplishments through George Whitefield are to this day virtually unparalleled. In an era when many ministers were timid and apologetic in their preaching, he preached the gospel with zeal and undaunted courage. In the wake of his fearless preaching, revival swept across the British Isles, and the Great Awakening transformed the American colonies. The previous two-volume work *George Whitefield: The Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth-Century Revival* is now condensed into this single volume, filled with primary-source quotations from the eighteenth century, not only from Whitefield but also from prominent figures such as John and Charles Wesley, Benjamin Franklin, and William Cowper.

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Customer Reviews

This book is a 224 page condensation of the much longer, two-volume "George Whitefield: The Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth-Century Revival". I purchased this shorter volume for our church library and am already saving up the \$66 to purchase the longer work for my private library. I eagerly anticipate obtaining Dallimore's more exhaustive look at the life of this great evangelist. This Volume: First of all, the editing and reworking of the original for this edition was done by the author--Arnold Dallimore. This is important due to the terrible chop-jobs professional editors are prone to perform on works such as this one. But since I've yet to read the longer edition of which this volume is a condensation, I cannot draw any helpful comparisons between the two. I can, however, say unreservedly that this is an amazing biography in itself. Most modern readers aren't

interested in wading through 1200 pages of historical details, even for a man as great as Whitefield. Far more would be willing to pick up a well-written 200 page paperback concerning a name they might have heard mentioned, but know little about. All in all, I very highly recommend this volume for this sort of reader. But if you are an evangelical Christian (particularly of the "Calvinist" doctrinal persuasion) or a Church-history buff, then I feel compelled to recommend springing for the full edition. With what this tiny volume contained I cannot but expect great things from the lengthier original work.

The Subject Matter: Wow. Simply wow. I mean--who knew? I'd always heard that John Wesley was the sole founder of Methodism. In fact, the only thing I knew about George Whitefield was that he was attributed with a few neat quotes (ie. "Let the name of Whitefield perish, but Christ be glorified!", "I am weary in Thy work, but not weary of it", etc.) and that he once spoke at Jonathan Edwards' Northhampton church (at which time he left Edwards in tears). I fully expect that if it were not for this work of Dallimore, the name of Whitefield truly would be lost to persons such as myself. What I expected was another (Calvinistic) Wesley. What I found was a man whose zeal, love, holiness of life and passion for Christ seemed to equal even those I hold in highest regard (among whom are Martin Luther and Charles Spurgeon). Whitefield was a tireless worker for God and his zeal for the gospel was only matched by his selfless compassion for his fellow man. He was the first of the great open-air preachers and nudged both John and Charles Wesley into evangelistic ministry. Whitefield's life is a beautiful illustration of Christian ministry and evangelistic zeal. I cannot recommend this man highly enough.

The Author: Dallimore was a Baptist pastor and semi-prolific biographer. The only lack that I see in this work compared with his biography "Spurgeon" is that it is more lacking in anecdotal stories and pastoral application. This is likely due to the scope of the abbreviated work rather than to a change in style of the author. It is a fast-moving biography and takes you quickly from Whitefield's earliest days into the midst of his phenomenal ministry. Dallimore has done a superb job in this work.

The Reader: Who should read this book? I would recommend it most highly to pastors and other evangelical Christians whose zeal for God and spiritual wells have begun to run dry. Evangelical Calvinistic Christians will get the greatest benefit from this read. But it may also prove of great interest to those of the Methodist heritage. Also, all who are called to the ministry of evangelism (teaching and preaching) could not but benefit from this work. Whitefield's zeal is contagious and his meekness humbling. The mere historian might enjoy the factual aspects of the book, but it was written from a distinctively evangelical Christian perspective.

"Weary in Thy work, but not weary of it." -G. Whitefield

In *George Whitefield: God's Anointed Servant in the Great Revival of the Eighteenth Century*,

Arnold Dallimore gives us a fast moving 200 page version of his 1200 page, two-volume biography of Whitefield. George Whitefield grew up in England and attended Oxford with his friends John and Charles Wesley. These young men shared a passion for the Lord and for Evangelism, but differences in doctrine drove them apart. Whitefield held to the doctrines of grace: "I embrace the Calvinistic scheme, not because Calvin, but Jesus Christ has taught it to me." John Wesley, on the other hand, viewed Calvinism as heresy. Despite this, the three maintained a love for each other throughout their lives. Even after bitter controversy, John Wesley preached Whitefield's funeral. Whitefield began preaching in the open air--sometimes to crowds estimated at near 80,000--while still in England. He continued this in North America, where he served as a missionary. While there, he became friends with Benjamin Franklin, and his preaching, along with that of Jonathan Edwards, was instrumental in bringing about the Great Awakening. Dr. Dallimore calls Whitefield "the greatest evangelist since the apostle Paul." There is no doubt that he had an extraordinary love and burden for sinners; tears often streamed down his face while he pleaded with them to come to Christ, and he considered himself "the servant of all." When he died at 55, he had preached 30,000 sermons. Even when his doctor told him that he had to quit preaching and rest, he kept on. The night of his death, while on his way upstairs to bed, he paused to preach to a small group that had come to the door begging him to share the gospel. He preached until the candle in his hand burned out, and then he went to his final rest. Biographies are often the most interesting, encouraging, and edifying books that I read. I consider this one of the best. It is hard to put down, and it's hard to read without being changed.

I read the first few hundred pages of Dallimore's mammoth two volume tour of Whitefield's life and times, and I was loving it. But I got sidetracked and didn't get back to it right away. So I decided to read through this condensation of the two volume set. This little book has a lot of power because it is a tight presentation of the most telling moments in the great evangelist's life. You see his early days at the Bell Inn which was run by his parents. You read briefly of his involvement with the Oxford Holy Club, and his shattering conversion to Christ. After his ordination, he is introduced to field preaching by Howell Harris, and the rest, as we say, is history. He preaches to thousands of miners and workers in the open air in England, then in October of 1739, he sails for the second time to the American colonies, where his powerful preaching wins thousands of people to Christ. You also read of Whitefield's unfortunate doctrinal divisions with John and Charles Wesley involving Calvinism and Arminianism. You will meet Whitefield's wife, and how they spent more time apart than together on account of his itinerant ministry. You also read of his friendship with Benjamin

Franklin and of his meeting with Jonathan Edwards. You also read of Whitefield's constant health problems and how his persistent preaching eventually wore him out, and he died early one morning in 1770 of a severe case of asthma. He is quite simply the greatest evangelist since the apostle Paul, and Dallimore's little book catches the highlights of his ministry. Highly recommended.

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