

# The History of Christianity

(taken from Eerdmans' Handbook to the History of Christianity)

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## Introduction: The Christian Centuries, Part 12

(excerpts from Robert D. Linder's introduction)

**Revival.** After a religious "low" in the later 17<sup>th</sup> century, Christianity was rejuvenated once again in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the unexpected, even miraculous outbreak of the evangelical revivals. Battered by the rationalism and skepticism of the Enlightenment, and the spiritual deadness of the Protestant orthodoxy in the period, many felt that Christianity was in a permanent decline from which it would never recover. However, this did not take into account the remarkable ability of the faith periodically to reform and renew itself.

The revivals started in Germany and spread from there to Scandinavia and Switzerland. In those countries they produced what was known as Pietism. Several men of stature appeared to lead the revivals, including Philipp Jacob Spener (1635-1705), August Francke (1663-1727), and Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-60). Cutting across classes and creeds, the Pietists emphasized New Testament simplicity and the necessity of a personal religious experience of Christ. They were also deeply concerned for missions and evangelism as well as Christian social ministry. The Moravian church, founded under Zinzendorf, became one of the most intensely mission-minded in modern history.

This same pattern of evangelical revivals can be found in Britain and North America in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Dissatisfied with the coldness of Anglican orthodoxy and uncertain about his own salvation, John Wesley (1703-91) finally found peace with God in his famous 'heart-warming experience' in London in 1738. Wesley's 'new birth' served as the impetus for a new wave of gospel preaching. Turning first to England's largely



John Wesley, the itinerant evangelist. He declared he had "only one point of view—to promote, so far as I am able, vital, practical religion, and by the grace of God, beget, preserve and increase the life of God in the soul of men."

unevangelized population, Wesley soon won hundreds of thousands of converts. Many of them kindled the evangelical zeal of the Church of England, whilst others joined various evangelical denominations such as the Baptists and Congregationalists. But the vast majority formed 'societies' which eventually became the Methodist church.

The influence of the Wesleyan movement cannot be overestimated, affecting the British Isles, Europe, and America. It produced a popular style of direct evangelistic preaching and emphasized fervent hymn-singing, both of which became traditions in later Protestantism. It also stimulated far-reaching social changes in Britain and America—especially the abolition of slavery and prison reform.

## "Elders & Deacons"

### 1 Timothy 3

September 14, 2025

Hartford Bible Church, Pastor Dan Hummel

#### Requirements for Elder

[Other list in Titus 1:6-9]

"overseer" = bishop, elder, pastor, leader, but not deacon  
above reproach  
husband of one wife  
temperate  
prudent  
respectable  
hospitable  
able to teach  
not addicted to wine nor pugnacious  
gentle  
peaceable  
free from the love of money  
manages own household well  
not a new convert  
good reputation outside the church

#### Requirements for Deacon

Acts 6:1-6 first deacons were chosen  
Deacons do not have to be hospitable, nor teach  
Women deacons...

#### The Mystery of Godliness

"household of God," "The church of the living God"

"the pillar and support of the truth"

The mystery of Godliness:

1. Incarnation
2. Resurrection (Acts 2:24-36) by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:11) proved Jesus was Lord and Messiah.
3. Exaltation before heavenly realm (Phil. 2:9-11; Col. 2:15; Heb. 1:6)
4. Preached among the nations (Col. 1:23)
5. Was believed on in the world... progressive fulfillment of God's redemptive plan through His preordained means (1Cor. 1:18-2:5)
6. Ascension (Eph. 4:10)