

How the Great Awakenings' Spiritual Fervor Established America's Foundation

There was a time in the history of America when people cried out to God for a great revival. The gap between the first and second Great Awakenings saw descendants of the Puritans, who founded Jamestown, drift away from God and into spiritual lethargy. The moral foundation of our country decayed.

"America was born between the first and second Great Awakenings," said Robert Morgan, pastor and author of *100 Bible Verses that Made America*. In a recent interview on the *Greenelines* podcast, Morgan shared a few of the "defining moments that shaped our enduring foundation of faith."

Morgan said "The first Great Awakening was the revival that swept through the colonies. You know, the Puritans migrated to the country from 1620 to 1640. Thousands of them came, and they really established the Judeo-Christian moral foundation for our nation.

"But 100 years later, all of that had died down," he said. "And the Christians and the descendants of the Puritans were not nearly as committed. But then God brought a great revival across the colonies with Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield and others.

"And it was that revival that for the first time ever took 13 regional governments and the people in them, and knotted them together emotionally and spiritually," Morgan said. "The pulpits gave them a love for liberty. And that led to the Declaration of Independence.

"After the nation was established and the Constitution was established, and America again fell into spiritual lethargy,

it was at a point where only 5 or 6% of Americans were going to church," he said. "Colleges were full of atheists, and the French rationalists had come in, and the flame of spiritual enthusiasm and fervor was burning very low. But God sent another great revival that we call the second Great Awakening. And it brought the nation together, thousands were converted, and a Judeo-Christian morality was established into our lifetimes. "

Patrick Henry was a deeply devoted Christian and is often remembered for his words "Give me liberty or give me death."

Henry bellowed those words to the Second Virginia Convention at St. John's Church, Richmond, in 1775 to denounce King George's "Intolerable Acts."

"He got up," Morgan said, "and gave a tremendous speech, filled with Scripture. The verse that I selected from his speech was taken from Jeremiah 8:11: "For they have healed the brokenness of the daughter of My people superficially, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace.'"

Patrick Henry suggested it wasn't necessary to go to war with Great Britain. Morgan said Henry's speech "swayed the Virginia delegation to go to Philadelphia and to vote for the Declaration of Independence. I don't think there would have been a Declaration of Independence without three things: Christians like Patrick Henry; colonial pulpits filled with preaching about the liberty of Christ; and third, the first Great Awakening, which united the colonies by the power of the Holy Spirit.

"If it hadn't been for those three things, there never would have been a Fourth of July. It was the Bible and Christians that paved the way for our nation's history," Morgan said.

"So, I think if we don't have another Great Awakening, we won't find answers for our politics. The only answers are the spiritual answers that will come with a revival," he added.