

3. Revival Preaching before the Awakening: Gilbert Tennent,
Solemn Warning, 1735

[Gilbert Tennent, *Solemn Warning to the Secure World from The God of terrible Majesty . . .* (Boston, 1735), vii-ix, xi-xii]

Beloved Brethren, You have often heard your Danger describ'd, you have had many a Call, by the *Word*, and *Providence of God*, as well as by your own *Conscienc*es, and are you not awaken'd yet? O strange! O mournfull! Others have been (through Grace) *convinc'd* and *chang'd* effectually by the Means you enjoy, and won't these be a Witness against you at the *Tribunal of Christ*? What will you be able to say in your own *Vindication*? Then won't *Blushing* and *Confusion* cover you, and *guilty Silence* be your Answer? What, does the Word prove a Saviour of Life unto Life to others, and of Death unto Death to you? O dreadful! What do you intend to do *dear Brethren*? Will you sleep for ever? Will you sleep till *Death* and *Hell* awake you? Or do you think that you may go to *Heaven* in this *Slumber* of carnal *Security*? If you do you shall find your selves miserably mistaken! as is fully prov'd in the following Tract. Be not deceiv'd Brethren, *The Kingdom of Heaven suffers Violence, and the violent* (and they only) *take it by Force*, Matth. 11. 12. Let me address you as the *Prophet Elijah* did the People of *Israel*, 1 Kings 18. 21. *How long halt ye between two Opinions? If the*

Lord be God follow him: but if Baal then follow him. Or as the *Shipmaster* to *Jonah*, who was fast asleep in the midst of a great *Tempest*, *Jonah* 1. 5. *What meanest thou, O Sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God, if so be he will think upon us that we perish not*, Verse 6. [—] just and pertinent Note of Mr. *Henry*, upon this Passage of Scripture, "*That those who sleep in a Storm may well be ask'd what they mean?*" *Brethren*, You sleep in a greater *Storm* than *Jonah* did; that only concern'd the *Body*, but this the precious *Soul*; that a *temporal*, but this an *eternal Death*. You are (whether you know it or not sensibly) every Moment ready to be swallow'd up by the *boisterous Billows* of *God's* justly *incensed Ire*, and the *Vessel* of your *Souls* like to be broken by a dreadful *Inundation* of his vindictive *Fury* and *Revenge*: Deut. 32. 41, 35. Rom. 12. 19. "*And yet will you sleep, what Metal are you made of? What God do you fear? Or are you deaf to all the Menaces of Heaven?*" Will not the *Terrors* of an *eternal God*, and an *eternal Hell* make you afraid? What mean you? Are you yet wholly lost to *Sense*, to *Reason*, and to *Conscience*? Are you *degenerated* into *Beasts*? Or *petrified* into

Stones? Are you cover'd with the Leviathan's Scales that no Arrow from the Bow of God will pierce you! Mayn't the Example of Jonas's Fellow Mariners make you asham'd? Jonah 1. 5. Then the Mariners were afraid, and cry'd every Man to his God, and cast forth the Wares that were in the Ship, into the Sea, to lighten it of them. But perhaps you mock at Fear, and are not affrighted, though the Heavens look black, and God's Lightnings and Thunders, from blazing, trembling Sinai, flash and groan, and rore hideously! Tho' God's Law condemn you, and your own Consciences tell you, that you shall surely perish, if ye die in the same State you are now in, yet you boldly, or rather shall I say impudently, or stupidly brave it out in the Face of an angry Heaven! And run upon the thick Bosses of God's Bucklers, and are not afraid when God's great Ordnance is level'd at your naked Bosom. You won't be perswaded by any Importunity to cast these Goods out of the Ship, (as the Mariners did) which will if retain'd sink it in Death. I mean your darling Lusts which you must forsake or perish. Mat. 5. 29. Again, the affrighted Mariners cry'd every one to his God, Ver. 5. Why don't you awake poor Souls, and cry every one of you to God, with the utmost Vehemence, as the Disciples of Christ did in a Storm, when the Waves were like to overwhelm the Vessel, Lord, save us we perish! Mat. 8. 25. Or as Peter's Hearers, Acts 2. 37. Men and Brethren, What shall we do to be saved? Sirs, Suffer me to acost you in the Language of Paul to the Ephesians, Chap. 5. 14. Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead, and Christ shall give thee Light; for the Time past of our Life may suffice us, to have wrought the Will of the Gentiles. 1 Pet. 4. 3. Awake to Righteousness and sin not: for some have not the Knowledge of God: I speak this to your Shame. I Cor. 15. 34. And especially knowing the

Time, that now it is high Time to awake out of Sleep. But I can't in Regard of you add the Apostle's Reason, Rom. 13. 11. For now is your Salvation nearer than when ye believed. No Brethren! I am oblig'd in Faithfulness to God, and Love to you, to tell that inasmuch as you did not, and now do not believe, that your Damnation is nearer than when ye first heard the Gospel of Christ, and Salvation by his Blood; because of your unbelieving Obstinacy and presumptuous Security.

Awake, Awake Sinners, stand up and look where you are hastning, lest you drink of the Hand of the Lord, the Dregs of the Cup of his Fury; the Cup of trembling, and wring them out, Isai. 51. 17. Awake ye Drunkards, and weep and howl, Joel 1. 5. For what can ye expect (so continuing) but to drink of that Cup of Trembling I but now mention'd.

Awake ye prophane Swearers, and remember ye will not get a drop of Water to cool your cursing cursed Tongues in Hell, when they and you shall flame in the broad burning Lake, Luke 16. 24. God has said he will not hold you Guiltless, that take his Name in vain, Exod 20. 7.

Awake ye unclean Adulterers, and Whoremongers, and remember that without a speedy Repentance, your dismal abode shall be ever with unclean Devils, the Soul of a God shall be aveng'd upon you, Jer. 5. 8, 29.

Awake ye Sabbath-Breakers, and reform; or God will break you upon the Wheels of his Vengeance, and torture you eternally upon the Rack of his Justice, Neham. 13. 16, 17, 18.

And let all other sorts of prophane Sinners be entreated to awake out of Sleep and consider their Danger.

Awake ye covetous griping Nabals, and read what the Apostle James says to you, Chap 5. 1 to 6. Go to now, ye rich Men, weep and howl for the Miseries

that shall come upon you. The Rust of your Gold and Silver shall be a Witness against you. Ye have lived in Pleasure upon Earth, and been wanton, you have nourished your Hearts as in a Day of Slaughter. Here we may Note by the Way, that those who *live like Beasts here*, and will not be induc'd by any Perswasive to *repent, reform* and act like Men, shall *howl like Beasts hereafter*, without being heard or pitied, 1 Cor. 16. 13. Prov. 1. 26.

Awake ye secure Moralists, and lifeless, sapless Formalists, who are Strangers to the Power of experimental Religion: Remember your shadowy Appearances, can't deceive the Rein trying God, Gal. 6. 7. Nor your dry Leaves of husky spiritless Duties, secure your guilty Souls, from an astonishing overwhelming Inundation of his high and terrible Displeasure, Mat. 5. 20.

Awake every of you that are yet in a Christless unconvinced State! Are you not asham'd to sleep all the Day in Sloth, while some are trembling, troubled and distress'd about their Souls, who are not greater Sinners than your selves? Nay, perhaps not near so great; what sleep? while others are crying Night and Day with Tears, and heavy Groans to God, for pardoning Mercy, who have no more precious Souls than you. Sleep! While others are labouring hard and taking Heaven by Storm! What sleep! While some are travelling fast to the heavenly Jerusalem, and re-

joycing in the Way with Joy unspeakable and glorious. What will ye draw the Curtains of a carnal Security, and false Hope about you, and sleep to Death and Hell, even when the meridian Sun of the Gospel shines full in your Face, and Life and Immortality is brought to Light, and God, and Christ, his Ministers, Word, Providences, and your own Consciences, are ringing a loud Alarm, a Peal of Thunder in your Ears to awake you: That you may consider your Ways, and turn your Feet to God's Testimonies. Will you sleep with Fire in your Bosoms? (the unpardon'd Guilt of Sin) with the Curse of God upon your Souls, the Heavens frowning upon you, and shut against you, the burden'd Earth travelling under you, and Hell yawning wide to devour and consume you! Mayn't I say to you as Moses to Israel, Deut. 29. 4. Yet the Lord hath not given you a Heart to perceive, and Eyes to see, and Ears to hear, unto this Day. O! Is it not to be fear'd that God in Justice has left you to a Spirit of Slumber? Because you shut your Eyes against the Light, John 3. That you should sleep and never awake. Jer. 51. 57. And I will make drunk her Princes, and her wise Men, and her Rulers, and her mighty Men; and they shall sleep a perpetual Sleep, and not awake, saith the King, whose Name is the Lord of Hosts. Prov. 6. 9. How long wilt thou sleep, O Sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy Sleep?

Opposition to Itineracy

16. The Subversion of Church Order: Theophilus Pickering, *Letters*, 1742

[Theophilus Pickering, *The Rev. Mr. Pickering's Letters To the Rev. N. Rogers and Mr. D. Rogers of Ipswich . . .* (Boston, 1742), 7-10]

To the Reverend Mr. Nathanael Rogers, Junior-Pastor of the First Church in Ipswich.

Rev. Sr.

INASMUCH as the LORD JESUS by his Providence and Grace has called me to the work of the *Ministry* and cast my Lot into the same Town with you, it may be reasonably suppos'd that I have not been altogether unobservant of the Methods by which you and your Brother (Mr. Daniel) have lately signaliz'd yourselves. And fearing that you were building upon the Foundation, *Wood Hay Stubble*, as well as *Gold Silver* and *precious Stones*; I conceiv'd it behooved me to inquire into the Design of some Things that lookt to be of *doubtful Meaning* and of *dangerous Tendency*: To which End, I wrote you my *Letter* of the 3rd of *Feb.* last: expecting such Reply to the reasonable Request therein contained, as might be some way satisfactory.

But the *Answer* you sent me, seem'd to be *superficial* and *evasive*.

Therefore I wrote you a *second Letter* dated the 15th of *Feb.* hoping that upon further Consideration you would endeavour to give me *better Light and Satisfaction*: But instead of that; you and your Brother [without advising with me, or any Consent of mine first obtained,] came last *March* into my Parish, and held several Meetings in the House for public Worship: and have moreover been pleas'd to pray for me in your Assemblies—*That God would open mine Eyes*—and *that the Scales*

might fall from 'em: yea one of you tho't fit, publickly in the Hearing of my People, to call me, their *Blind Minister*.

And therefore when you came Hither (alone) on the 26th of *May*, I was so far dispos'd to *magnify mine Office*, as, instead of favouring your Preaching among us, to send you a *Message of Denial*; with an Intimation *that I dislike your Conduct*; and desir'd you to *forbear coming to preach to my People, either in the Meeting-house or any where within the Limits of my Parish, unless I was foreacquainted with your Design and consenting thereunto*. Upon which you show'd so much Complaisance, as not to go into the Parish-House: But yet you saw meet to hold an *Assembly abroad*: as if *this* alter'd the case; which serv'd only to palliate the matter, and make the People believe that you did not infringe upon my Pastoral Charge, because your Service was not perform'd within the Meeting-house Walls: When indeed it was much the same Thing (both in the Nature and Consequents of it,) whether you officiated in the Meeting-house or elsewhere in the Parish: And accordingly in discourse with you (a few Minutes) on *May 31*, you acknowledged that *truly it made no great odds*; but seem'd to excuse the Matter, as if *you were so urg'd to preach that you could not well avoid it*: Whereupon I reply'd, *That I hop'd you endeavour'd to satisfy your self, that your Conduct was right*: To which you gave an *affirmative Answer*, and said *that you was clear in it*: Whereby I

understood you as acting from *Principle* notwithstanding your *colourable Excuse*.

Nevertheless, I have Charity for you, that you *aim at the Glory of God* in your Ministrations; and am willing to make due Allowance for *humane Infirmities*, being conscious of my own Imperfections.

But yet, as your Carriage in some respects appear'd so exceptionable that I thought my self oblig'd to discountenance your *itinerant Labours*, so I was in hopes that you wou'd be cautious of giving me further Molestation. But by what I have lately heard, I learn that you entertain some Thoughts of renewing your *Visits*; and am confirm'd in it, by some Discourse that I had *last Tuesday*, with your Harbinger Mr. *John Rogers* the younger, who *then* exercis'd his Gifts among us without my Leave, but conformable to your Example.

Wherefore I now send intreating as a *Minister a Neighbour a Brother*, that you wou'd seriously review the Steps you have taken, that you may be sensible of your Misconduct *in coming to minister in my Parish without my Consent or Allowance*. If any that have *itching Ears* applaud your Zeal herein, yet their Weakness can never justify your Measures. For you know that even in the *Apostle's Day*, care was taken that the Churches might be furnish'd with *ordinary Pastors* appointed to their *several Charges*, and that both *You and I* have our *respective Flocks* of which the HOLY GHOST hath made us *Overseers*. And therefore for you to invade my *Peculiar* (without open Council and fair Trial) is evidently subversive of the *Order of the Gospel and Peace of the Churches*.

If the Place where you dwell be too

strait for you, and you affect to be a *Minister at large* (like your Brother Mr. *Daniel*); then I pray that you would go *at large among the ungodly Heathen*, and not trespass upon your Neighbours Rights, by breaking into *Christ's Inclosures* put under the Care of *other Husbandmen*.

Or if you think that some Parishes call for your Pity, in being so unhappy as to have such Men for their Teachers that are *sadly in the Dark*; why are not you so *kind and faithful* as to shew such Ministers their *great Mistakes*, and to labour to convince 'em of their Errors *by the Word of God*?—and not to assume such despotick Power as to go within *Another's Line*, either of your own Head, or upon any Invitations or Complaints the grounds whereof may be controverted. I can hardly believe that you wou'd like to be dealt with in such Sort: at least I'm perswaded it would not be well-pleasing to the *Great LORD and HEAD* of the Church; the Laws of whose Kingdom provide for the well-ordering of his House; without leaving it to poor imperfect Men (as the Best of his ministers are,) to manage in an arbitrary way—which would tend to destroy the Interests of Christianity through Strifes and Divisions. Judge then what is right: *For God is not the Author of Confusion but of Peace as in all Churches of the Saints*.

But what aggravates the Matter, is the Liberty taken to vent your Zeal in forward Expressions tending to render me suspected and bring my Ministry into Contempt, after I had earnestly sought to you, and you had put me off with some general Intimations and frivolous Shifts, instead of endeavouring by the *Divine Oracles* to enlighten my Darkness.

27. The Failings of the Churches: Ebenezer Frothingham,
The Articles of Faith and Practice, 1750

[Ebenezer Frothingham, *The Articles of Faith and Practice, with the Covenant, That is confessed by the Separate Churches of Christ in general in this Land . . .* (Newport, 1750), 340-343]

The Churches that we have separated from generally hold, that external Morality is the Door into the Church, and that the Lord's Supper is a converting Ordinance; or that all have a Right to join with the Church, that will make an outward public Profession of Christianity, altho' they be unconverted. Now therefore consider if Christ be the Foundation or Rock that his Church is built upon, then it certainly followeth, that external Morality, or a bare Profession of Christianity, is not that Faith by which, and in which Christ's Church is built, namely, A real, true, divine Belief, that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God, and the only Rock to build upon, both in Faith and Practice, *Matt.* 16 chap. 16, 17, 18. is as wide asunder from external Morality, or a bare Profession only, as Grace is from Nature, or Heaven from Hell; for the one is upon the Rock Christ, and the other is upon the Sands, chap. 7 24 to 27 ver. We therefore ask the Reader, wherein we have transgressed for leaving the sandy Foundation, to build upon the Rock Christ? for such a Church and People as we have left, the Word of God requires us to separate from. For Instance; the Churches that we have left, professedly hold, that Believers and Unbelievers, should covenant together in Church standing, and partake of the Ordinances together; and such a People or Church we are commanded to separate from, *2 Cor.* 6 chap. 14, 17, 18 ver. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with Unbelievers; for what Fellowship hath Righteousness with Un-*

righteousness? and what Communion hath Light with Darkness? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean Thing; and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Again. In the Churches that we have left, there are many that are hardened, and believe not, but speak evil of the Ways, Work, and Power of God, and are awful Mockers at the Spirit of God, and the Saints that are under the Influence of the same Spirit; and these Persons are indulged in the Churches: Therefore we have a just Right and Warrant in the Word of God, to separate from them, *Acts* 19 chap. 9. *But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that Way before the Multitude, he departed from them, and separated the Disciples, disputing daily in the School of one Tyrannus.* *1 Cor.* 5 chap. 11. *If any Man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or covetous, or an Idolator, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such an one, no not to eat.*

Again. The Churches that we have left, have dwindled away into a dead, dry, lifeless Form of Godliness, and have denied the Power and Life of Godliness, and from such we are to turn away, see *2 Tim.* 3 chap. 5. *Having a Form of Godliness, but denying the Power thereof, from such turn away.*

Again. The Churches that we have left, are stuffed full of hypocrites or Dissemblers; for they professedly take

in the unconverted; and when they are in the Church, they profess themselves Saints, and are counted and treated as such, which is manifest Hypocrisy in the sight of God, and his Saints, *Psa. 26. 4, 5. I have not sat with vain Persons, neither will I go in with Dissemblers. I have hated the Congregation of evil Doers; and will not set with the Wicked. Isa. 29 chap. 13, 14.* Now as to our leaving the House of God: Multitudes are deceived by a traditional Practice in this Matter, and so take that to be God's House, which is not. We have Reason to think, that there are Multitudes, that can give no other Reason why that is the House of God where they meet only this; That the Society, or their Fathers, have always met there to pray, and hear preaching, and attend upon the Ordinances, and it is the Place appointed; therefore it is God's House, etc. Now the same Argument the Papist can bring, to prove, that

where they meet is the House of God; for they pray, preach, and attend Ordinances also; therefore those that can give no other Reason than this, speak what they do not know, when they say, that we have left the House of God; For the Truth is, that we have left the House of dead Formality, and spiritual Idolatry, and meet where the sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth grants his gracious Spirit, in its divine, quick'ning, and sanctifying Influences; so that thereby we are enabled to worship him in Spirit and in Truth. It is not any Meeting Place, or House, that is appointed by Man only, that makes God's House; No! for what makes a Place to be God's House, is his special, spiritual Presence; and where his Children meet, under the Divine Influence of his blessed Spirit, for social and Spiritual Worship, whether it be a public Meeting-House, or a private House, or the open Wilderness.

29. Overheated Passions: Charles Chauncy, *A Letter . . . to
Mr. George Wishart, 1742*

[(Charles Chauncy), *A Letter from a Gentleman in Boston, to Mr. George Wishart, One of the Ministers of Edinburgh, Concerning the State of Religion In New-England* (Edinburgh, 1742), 5-15, 17-24]

Reverend Sir,

I Perceive by a printed Letter from a Friend in *Edinburgh*, containing *Excerpts of Letters concerning the Success of the Gospel in these Parts*, that marvellous Accounts have been sent Abroad of a most glorious Work of Grace going on in *America*, as begun by Mr. *Whitefield*, and helpt forward by those in his way of preaching and acting. I should be glad there had been more Truth in those Accounts. Some of the Things related are known Falsehoods, others strangely enlarged upon; and the Representations, in general, such, as exhibite a wrong Idea of the *religious* State of Affairs among us. I had Thoughts of sending you the needful Corrections of that *Pamphlet*; but my Circumstances being such, at present, as not to allow of this, must content myself with giving you the following *summary* Narration of things as they have appeared among us.

The Minds of People in this Part of the World, had been greatly prepossess'd in Favour of Mr. *Whitefield*, from the Accounts transmitted of him, from time to time, as a *Wonder of Piety, a Man of*

God, so as no one was like him: Accordingly, when he came to *Town*, about two Years since, he was received as though he had been an *Angel of God*; yea, a *God come down in the Likeness of Man*. He was strangely flocked after by all Sorts of Persons, and much admired by the *Vulgar*, both *great* and *small*. The *Ministers* had him in Veneration, at least in Appearance, as much as the People; encouraged his Preaching, attended it themselves every Day in the Week, and mostly *twice* a Day. The grand Subject of Conversation was Mr. *Whitefield*, and the whole Business of the *Town* to run, from Place to Place, to hear him preach: And, as he preach'd under such uncommon Advantages, being high in the Opinion of the People, and having the Body of the *Ministers* hanging on his Lips, he soon insinuated himself still further into the Affections of Multitudes, in so much that it became dangerous to mention his Name, without saying something in commendation of him.

His Reception, as he past through *this* and the neighbouring Governments of *Connecticut* and *New-York*, till he

came to *Philadelphia*, was after much the same Manner; save only, that he met with no Admirers among the *Clergy*, unless here and there one, any where but in *Boston*: And, whether the Ministers here in general, really thought better of him than they did elsewhere, I will not be too positive to affirm. 'Tis possible, they might act as tho' they had a great Veneration for him, and so as to lead People into such an Apprehension, from *Cowardice*, *Affectation of Popularity*, or a *rigid Attachment to some Sentiments in Divinity*, they might imagine there was now an Advantage to establish and propagate: And I would not undertake to prove, that they might none of them be under an undue Influence from some or other of these Motives.

Much began to be now said of a *glorious Work of God* going on in the Land. *Evening-lectures* were set up in one Place and another; no less than six in this Town, *four* weekly, and *two* monthly ones, tho' the Town does not consist of above 5000 Families at the largest Computation. At some of these Lectures, it was common to mention Mr. *Whitefield* by Name, both in the *Prayers* and *Sermons*; giving God Thanks for sending such an *extraordinary Man* among us, and making him the Instrument of *such extraordinary Good* to so many Souls. He was indeed spoken of, as *the Angel flying through Heaven with the everlasting Gospel*, and such Honours sacrificed to him as were due to no meer Man: Nay, to such a Height did this Spirit rise, that all who did not express a very high Thought of Mr. *Whitefield*, were lookt upon with an evil Eye; and as to those who declared their Dislike of what they judged amiss of the Times, they were stigmatised as *Enemies of God* and *true Religion*; yea, they were openly represented, both from the *Pulpit* and the *Press*, as in danger of committing the

Sin against the Holy Ghost, if not actually guilty even of this *unpardonable Sin*.

And here you will doubtless be disposed to enquire, what was the *great Good* this *Gentleman* was the Instrument of?

In answer whereto, I freely acknowledge, wherever he went he generally moved the *Passions*, especially of the *younger People*, and the *Females* among them; the Effect whereof was, a great Talk about Religion, together with a Disposition to be perpetually hearing Sermons, to neglect of all other Business; especially, as preach'd by those who were Sticklers for the *new Way*, as it was called. And in these things *chiefly* consisted the Goodness so much spoken of. I deny not, but there might be here and there a Person stopp'd from going on in a Course of Sin; and some might be made really better: But so far as I could judge upon the nicest Observation, the Town, in general, was not much mended in those things wherein a Reformation was greatly needed. I could not discern myself, nor many others whom I have talked with, and challenged on this Head, but that there was the same Pride and Vanity, the same Luxury and Intemperance, the same lying and tricking and cheating, as before this Gentleman came among us. There was certainly no *remarkable* Difference as to these things: And 'tis vain in any to pretend there was. This, I am sure of, there was raised such a Spirit of bitter, censorious, uncharitable judging, as was not know before; and is, wherever it reigns, a Scandal to all who call themselves Christians: Nor was it ever evident to me, but that the greatest Friends to Mr. *Whitefield* were as much puffed up with Conceit and Pride as any of their Neighbours; and as to some of them, and the more eminent too, I verily believe they possess a *worse Spirit*

the Shrieks catch from one to another, till a great Part of the Congregation is affected; and some are in the Thought, that it may be too common for those *zealous in the new Way* to cry out themselves, on purpose to move others, and bring forward a *general Scream*. *Visions* now became common, and *Trances* also, the Subjects of which were in their own Conceit transported from Earth to Heaven, where they saw and heard most glorious Things; conversed with *Christ* and *holy Angels*; had opened to them the *Book of Life*, and were permitted to read the Names of Persons there, and the like. And what is a singular Instance (so far as I remember) of the working of Enthusiasm, *laughing, loud hearty laughing*, was one of the Ways in which our *new Converts*, almost every where, were wont to join together in expressing their Joy at the Conversion of others.

'Tis scarce imaginable what Excesses and Extravagancies People were running into, and even encouraged in; being told such Things were Arguments of the *extraordinary Presence of the Holy Ghost* with them. The same Houses of Worship were scarce emptied Night nor Day for a Week together, and unheard of Instances of supposed Religion were carried on in them. In the same House, and at the same time, some would be *praying*, some *exhorting*, some *singing*, some *clapping their Hands*, some *laughing*, some *crying*, some *shrieking and roaring out*; and so invincibly set were they in these Ways, especially when encouraged by any Ministers, (as was too often the Case) that it was a vain Thing to argue with them, to shew them the Indecency of such Behaviour; and whoever indeed made an Attempt this Way, might be sure beforehand of being called an *Opposer of the Spirit*, and a *Child of the Devil*.

At these Times there were among the

People what we call here EXHORTERS; these are such as are esteemed to be *Converts* in the *new Way*. Sometimes they are *Children, Boys and Girls*, sometimes *Women*; but most commonly *raw, illiterate, weak and conceited young Men, or Lads*. They pray with the People, call upon them to come to Christ, tell them they are dropping into Hell, and take upon them what they imagine is the Business of preaching. They are generally much better thought of than any Ministers, except those in the *new Way*, I mean by the Friends to the *Extraordinaries* prevalent in the Land; and they are the greatest Promoters of them. 'Tis indeed at the *Exhortations* of these poor ignorant Creatures, that there is ordinarily the most Noise and Confusion: And what may be worth a particular Remark, 'tis *seldom* there are any great Effects wrought, till the Gloominess of the Night comes on. It is in the *Evening*, or more late in the *Night*, with only a *few Candles* in a *Meeting-house*, that there is the *screaming and shrieking* to the greatest Degree; and the Persons thus affected are generally *Children, young People, and Women*. Other Instances there may have been, but they are more rare; these bear the chief Part.

You may be ready perhaps to think I have here given you a romantick Representation of Things; but it is the real Truth of the Case without a Figure; yea, this has been the Appearance in all Parts of the Land more or less, and so known to have been so, that there is no room for Debate upon the Matter: Nay, those who are Friends to the *new Way* were *once* so far from being ashamed of these Things, that they boasted of them, and entertained an ill Opinion of all who did not speak of them as *Evidences of the wonderful Power of the Spirit of God*: I say, they at first

than before they heard of his Name, and it had been as well for them if they had never seen his Face.

But I have only entred as yet upon that Scene of Things, which has made so much Noise in the Country. A Number of Ministers, in one Place and another, were by this Time formed into Mr. *Whitefield's* Temper, and began to appear and go about preaching, with a Zeal more flaming, if possible, than his. One of the most famous among these was Mr. *Gilbert Tennent*, a Man of no great Parts or Learning; his preaching was in the *extemporaneous* Way, with much Noise and little Connection. If he had taken suitable Care to prepare his Sermons, and followed Nature in the Delivery of them, he might have acquitted himself as a *middling* Preacher; but as he preached, he was an *awkward Imitator* of Mr. *Whitefield*, and too often turned off his Hearers with *mere Stuff*, which he uttered with a Spirit more bitter and uncharitable than you can easily imagine; all were *Pharisees, Hypocrites, carnal unregenerate Wretches*, both Ministers and People, who did not think just as he did, particularly as to the Doctrines of *Calvinism*; and those who opposed him, and the Work of God he was sure he was carrying on, would have opposed *Christ Jesus himself and his Apostles*, had they lived in their Day. This Gentleman came from *New-Brunswick* in the *Jersies* to *Boston*, in the Middle of Winter, (a Journey of more than 300 Miles) to *water the good Seed sown by Mr. Whitefield* in this Place. It was indeed at Mr. *Whitefield's* Desire, and in consequence of a Day of *Fasting and Prayer*, kept on purpose to know the Mind of God as to this Matter, that he came among us; the *Ministers in the Town*, though *fourteen* in Number, being thought insufficient to carry on the *good Work* he had begun here in the Hearts of People. And though the

Design this Gentleman professedly came upon, was a bare-faced Affront to the *Body of the Ministers*, yet not only the People, (which is not to be wondred at) but some of the Ministers themselves admired and followed him, as much as they had done Mr. *Whitefield* before him; and here he was, by their Encouragement, a great Part of the Winter, preaching every Day in the Week, to the taking People off from their Callings, and the introducing a Neglect of all Business but that of hearing him preach. He went from *Boston* to the *eastward*, to visit the Places where Mr. *Whitefield* had been; and on his Return home passed through the Country, preaching every where as he went along, in the same Manner, and with the same Spirit he did here in *Boston*.

And now it was, that Mr. *Whitefield's* Doctrine of *inward Feelings* began to discover itself in Multitudes, whose *sensible Perceptions* arose to such a Height, as that they *cried out, fell down, swooned away*, and, to all Appearance, were like Persons in *Fits*; and this, when the Preaching (if it may be so called) had in it as little well digested and connected good Sense, as you can well suppose. Scores in a Congregation would be in such Circumstances at a Time; nay some hundreds in some Places, to the filling the Houses of Worship with Confusion not to be expressed in Words, nor indeed conceived of by the most lively Imagination, unless where Persons have been Eye and Ear-witnesses to these Things. Though I may add here, that to a Person in possession of himself, and capable of Observation, this surprising Scene of Things may be accounted for: The *Speaker* delivers himself, with the *greatest Vehemence* both of *Voice* and *Gesture*, and in the most *frightful Language* his Genius will allow of. If this has its intended Effect upon *one or two weak Women*,

boasted of these Things, and some of them do so still; though the Generality have begun, for some time, to speak publickly of the *Subtilty of Satan*, to tell People he may appear as *an Angel of Light*, and to warn them against being carried away by his Devices. Nay Mr. *Tennent* himself, one of the main Instruments of all our Disorders, has, in a couple of Letters to some of his Friends, published in the *Prints*, expressed his Fears lest the Churches should be undone with a *Spirit of Enthusiasm*, and these *Exhorters* which have risen up every where in the Land. He seems indeed to have quite turned about: The Reason whereof may be this; the *Moravians* who came to *Philadelphia* with Count *Zinzendorf*, have been among his People, and managed with them as he did elsewhere, and brought the like Confusion among them; and now he cries out of Danger, and expresses himself much as those did, whom before he had sent to the Devil by wholesale.

Various are the Sentiments of Persons about this *unusual Appearance* among us. Some think it to be a *most wonderful Work of God's Grace*; others a *most wonderful Spirit of Enthusiasm*; some think there is a *great deal of Religion*, with some *small Mixture* of Extravagance; others, a *great deal of Extravagance* with some *small Mixture* of that which may be called *good*; some think the *Country* was never in such a *happy State* on a *religious* account, others that it was never in a *worse*.

For my self, I am among those who are clearly in the Opinion, that there never was such a *Spirit of Superstition* and *Enthusiasm* reigning in the Land before; never such *gross Disorders* and *barefaced Affronts to common Decency*; never such *scandalous Reproaches* on the *Blessed Spirit*, making him the Author of the greatest *Irregularities* and *Confusions*: Yet, I am of Opinion also, that the *Appearances* among us (so

much out of the ordinary Way, and so unaccountable to Persons not acquainted with the History of the World) have been the Means of awakening the Attention of many; and a good Number, I hope, have settled into a truly *Christian Temper*: Tho' I must add, at the same time, that I am far from thinking, that the Appearance, in *general*, is any other than the Effect of *enthusiastick Heat*. The Goodness that has been so much talked of, 'tis plain to me, is nothing more, in general, than a *Commotion in the Passions*. I can't see that Men have been made *better*, if hereby be meant, their being formed to a nearer Resemblance to the *Divine Being* in *moral Holiness*. 'Tis not evident to me, that Persons, generally, have a better Understanding of Religion, a better Government of their Passions, a more Christian Love to their Neighbour, or that they are more decent and regular in their Devotions towards God. I am clearly of the Mind, they are worse in all these Regards. They place their Religion so much in the *Heat* and *Fervour* of their *Passions*, that they too much neglect their *Reason* and *Judgment*: And instead of being more kind and gentle, more full of Mercy and good Fruits, they are more bitter, fierce and implacable. And what is a *grand discriminating Mark of this Work*, wherever it takes Place, is, that it makes Men *spiritually proud* and *conceited* beyond Measure, infinitely *ensorious* and *uncharitable*, to *Neighbours*, to *Relations*, even the nearest and dearest; to *Ministers* in an especial Manner; yea, to all Mankind, who are not as they are, and don't think and act as they do: And there are few Places where *this Work* has been in any *remarkable* manner, but they have been filled with Faction and Contention; yea, in some, they have divided into Parties, and openly and scandalously separated from one another.

Truly the Accounts sent Abroad,

were sent too soon; too soon, I am satisfied, to reflect Honour upon the Persons who wrote them: And they bewray such a want of Judgment, as I was really sorry to see them falling into. There are few Persons now, perhaps none but such as are evidently overheated, but begin to see that Things have been carried too far, and that the Hazard is great, unless God mercifully interpose, lest we should be over-run with *Enthusiasm*. And to speak the plain Truth, my Fear is, lest the End of these things should be *Quakerism* and *Infidelity*: These we have now chiefly to guard against.

A particular Account of one Mr. *James Davenport*, with his *strange Conduct* in this *Town* and *elsewhere*, I doubt not would have been agreeable:

But I have exceeded already. He is the *wildest Enthusiast* I ever saw, and acts in the wildest manner; and yet, he is vindicated by some in all his Extravagancies.

I now beg Pardon, Sir, for thus trespassing upon your Patience. As Mr. *Whitefield* has been in *Scotland*, and *human Nature* is the same every where; this Narration of the Effects he has been the Instrument of producing here, may excite your Zeal to guard the People in time against any such Extravagancies, if there should be Danger of them where you may be concerned. I am,

Reverend Sir,

With all due Regard, etc.

Boston, August 4.

1742.