

George Whitefield's Preaching: *Has anything changed?*

In the 1700's, *George Whitefield* who played a vital part in the *great awakening*, said in a sermon entitled *True conversion*,

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“ I suppose I may take it for granted, that all of you, among whom I am now about to preach the kingdom of God, are fully convinced, that it is appointed for all men once to die, and that ye all really believe that after death comes the judgment, and that the consequences of that judgment will be, that ye must be doomed to dwell in the blackness of darkness, or ascend to dwell with the blessed God, forever and ever.

I may take it for granted also, that whatever your practice in common life may be, there is not one, though ever so profligate and abandoned, but hopes to go to that place, which the scriptures call Heaven, when he dies.

And, I think, if I know anything of mine own heart, my heart's desire, as well as my prayer to God, for you all, is, that I may see you sitting down in the kingdom of our heavenly Father.

But then, though we all hope to go to heaven when we die, yet, *if we may judge by people's lives, and our Lord says, 'that by their fruits we may know them,' I am afraid it will be found, that thousands, and ten thousands, who hope to go to this blessed place after death, are not now in the way to it while they live.* Though we call ourselves Christians, and would consider it as an affront put upon us, for anyone to doubt whether we were Christians or not; yet there are a great many, who bear the name of Christ, *that yet do not so much as know what real Christianity is* (italics added). ”

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George Whitefield (December 16, 1714 – September 29, 1770) was an Anglican Protestant minister who helped spread the Great Awakening in Britain and, especially, in the British North American colonies.

Though he was slender in build, he stormed in the pulpit as if he were a giant. Within a year it was said that "his voice startled England like a trumpet blast." At a time when London had a population of less than 700,000, he could hold spellbound 20,000 people at a time at Moorfields and Kennington Common. For thirty-four years his preaching resounded throughout England and America. In his preaching ministry he crossed the Atlantic thirteen times and became known as the '*apostle of the British empire.*'

Biography of George Whitefield (<https://www.ccel.org/w/whitefield/>)