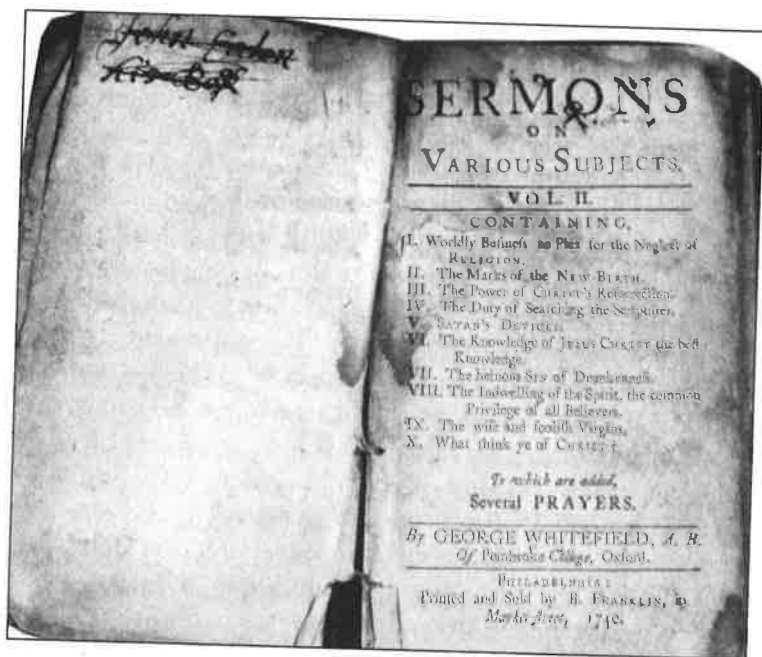


THE TRUTH
about the
FOUNDING FATHERS
of the
AMERICAN REPUBLIC



by
Dr. Catherine Millard

T U T I O N O F T H E



Title page of George Whitefield's "Sermons on Various Subjects." Vol. II. 1740. Printed and sold by Benjamin Franklin. Library of Congress, Rare Book Collection.

SERMON II.

The Marks of the New-Birth.

ACTS 19:2.

Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?

...By the Holy Ghost here spoken of, is signified the Holy Spirit, – the third Person in the ever blessed Trinity, – co-substantial and co-eternal with the Father and the Son, – proceeding from, yet equal to them both. He is emphatically called Holy, because infinitely Holy in Himself, and the Author and Finisher of all Holiness in us. This blessed Spirit, who once moved on the face of the great deep, who overshadowed the blessed Virgin before that Holy Thing was born of her, who descended in a bodily shape like a dove on our Blessed LORD, when He came up out of the water at His baptism; and lighted afterwards in fiery tongues on the heads of all His Apostles at the day of *Pentecost*; this is the Holy Ghost, who must move on the faces of our souls; this Power of the Most High must come upon us, and we must be baptized with His baptism and refining fire, before we can be stiled True members of His mystical Body.

Thus says that Apostle, *Know ye not that Christ is in you?* That is, by His Spirit, *unless you are reprobates?* Now if any man hath not the Spirit of CHRIST, he is none of His. – And again says St. John, *We know that we are His by the Spirit that He hath given us.*

It is not indeed necessary that we should have it now given in that miraculous manner in which it was at first given to our LORD's Apostles, by signs and

wonders. – But it is absolutely necessary that we should receive the Holy Ghost in His sanctifying Graces as really as they did, and so will it continue to be till the end of the world.

For thus stands the case between GOD and Man. – GOD at first made Man upright, or as the sacred penman expresses, it, ***In the Image of GOD made He man***, that is, his Soul was the very copy, the transcript of the Divine Nature. – He that before had by His almighty fiat spoke the world into being, breathed into Man the breath of Spiritual Life, and his Soul became adorned with all the perfections of the Deity. – This was the finishing stroke of the Creation: The perfection both of the moral and material world, – and so near resembled its Divine Original, that GOD could not but rejoice, and take pleasure in His own likeness – And therefore we read, that when GOD had finished the inanimate and brutish part of the Creation, He looked upon it, and behold, it was ***Good***; but when that lovely Godlike creature, ***Man***, was made, behold it was ***very Good***.

Happy then, unspeakably happy must Man needs be, who was thus partaker of the Divine Nature; and thus might he have still continued, had he still continued Holy. – But GOD had placed him in a state of probation, with a free grant to eat of every tree in the ***Garden of Eden***, except the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. – The day he did eat thereof he was surely to die; that is, not only to be subject to temporal, but spiritual death, and consequently to lose that Divine Image, that Spiritual Life GOD had not long since breathed into him, and which was as much his happiness as his Glory.

These, one would imagine, were easy conditions for a finite Creature's happiness to depend on. ***But Man, unhappy Man, being seduced by the Devil, and desiring like him, to be equal with his Maker, ate of the forbidden fruit, and thereby became liable to that curse which the Eternal GOD, who cannot lie, had denounced against his disobedience.***

Accordingly we read, that soon after ***Adam*** had fallen, he complained that he was naked. – ***Naked not only as to his body, but naked and left destitute of those Divine Graces, which before decked and beautified his soul.*** – The unhappy mutiny and disorder which the visible Creation fell into, those briars and thorns which now sprung up and overspread the earth were but poor emblems, but lifeless representations of that confusion and rebellion, those divers lusts and passions which sprung up in, and quite overwhelmed the Soul of Man immediately after the Fall. – Alas! He was now no longer the image of the invisible GOD; but as he had imitated the Devil's sin, he became partaker of the Devil's nature, and from a union with, sunk into a state of direct enmity against GOD.

Now in this dreadful disordered condition are all of us brought into the world. – For as the root is, such must the branches be. – Accordingly we are told, that ***Adam*** begat a son in his own likeness, that is with the same corrupt nature which he himself had sunk into after he had eaten the forbidden fruit. And experience, as well as Scripture proves, that we also are altogether born in sin and corruption, and therefore incapable, whilst in such a state, to hold communion with GOD – For as light cannot have communion with darkness, so GOD can have no

communion with such polluted sons of *Belial*.

Here then appears the end and design why CHRIST was made manifest in the Flesh. – viz. To put an end to these disorders, and to restore us to that primitive dignity in which we were at first created. – *Accordingly He shed His precious Blood to satisfy His Father's Justice for our sins, and thereby also He purchased again for us the HOLY GHOST, who should once more re-encrypt the Divine Image upon our hearts, and make us capable of living with and enjoying GOD.*

This, I say, was the only end of our LORD's coming into the world – Nay, this is the only end why the world itself is now kept in being. For as soon as a sufficient number are sanctified out of it, the Heavens shall be wrapped up like a scroll, the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth and all that therein is shall be burnt up.

This is that New-Birth mentioned by our blessed LORD to Nicodemus, without which we cannot see the Kingdom of GOD. This is what *St. Paul* calls being renewed in the Spirit of our minds, and herein consists that holiness without which no Man shall see the LORD.

In this manner then it is undeniably certain we must receive the HOLY GHOST e'er we can be stiled true members of CHRIST's mystical Body...⁶⁸