

DISCOVER AMERICA

Teacher Guide



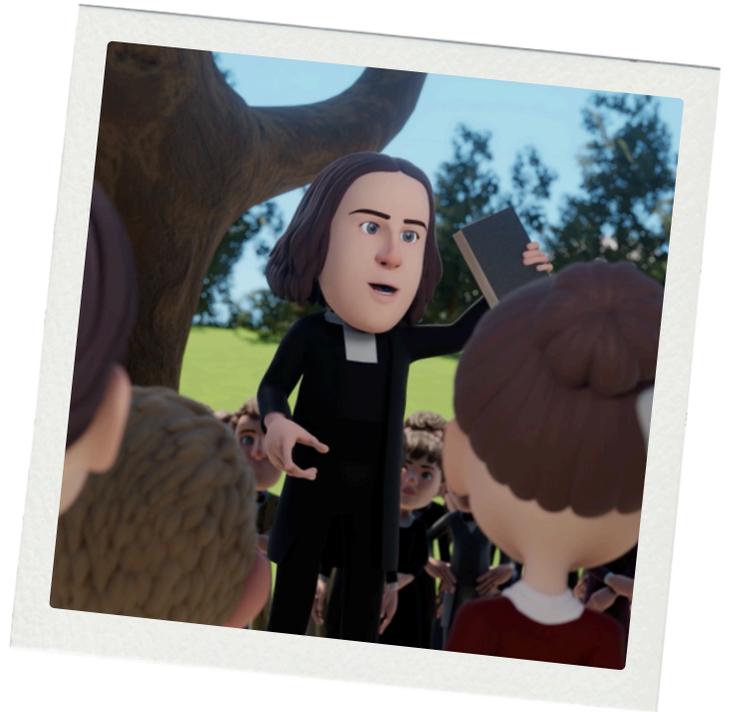
Faith and Freedom: The First Great Awakening's Influence on America's Founding

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Key Themes

- Awakening to Faith and Unity
- Faith in Our Founding
- Faith Across Denominations
- Self-Reliance and Personal Responsibility
- Self-Governance and Fairness
- The Value of Freedom and Democracy



Core Values

- Community
- Life
- Faith
- Liberty

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to

- Identify the First Great Awakening as a time when people became excited about their faith.
- Describe how the First Great Awakening helped people focus on their beliefs.
- Explain that John Winthrop wanted the Massachusetts Bay Colony to be a good example for others by working together and showing kindness.
- Define self-reliance as taking care of themselves and self-government as making decisions as a group.
- Analyze how leaders can use words to help make the world a better place.
- Understand that the First Great Awakening laid the foundation for the United States, influencing how our government operates today.

Key Terms

- 0 1 **Bible:** a holy book inspired by God that teaches about Him, His love, and how He helps us live a good life.
- 0 2 **Christianity:** a religion based on the teachings of Jesus Christ.
- 0 3 **colony:** a place where a group of people settle and live, but it is still ruled by another country.
- 0 4 **denomination:** a group of Christians who practice their faith in God in a similar way.
- 0 5 **faith:** trusting and believing in something or someone.
- 0 6 **First Great Awakening:** a revival — a new excitement — about the religious beliefs brought to the New World by the first settlers from England.
- 0 7 **preacher:** a person who talks to others about God and teaches them lessons from the Bible.
- 0 8 **religious revival:** a renewed excitement about God and His plan.
- 0 9 **self-government:** making decisions about how to live and work together as a group, without someone (like a king) telling you what to do.
- 1 0 **self-reliance:** taking care of yourself and being responsible for your choices.
- 1 1 **unity:** working together as one despite differences.

Introduction

TELL Students

Alright, little patriots, let's start with a fun game! I want everyone to pretend you're sleeping. Close your eyes and make your best sleepy sound—"Zzzzz..." Now, when I say "Wake up!" I want you to stretch your arms, open your eyes wide, and say, "I'm awake!" Let's try it! [Lead the class in pretending to sleep, then excitedly call out, "Wake up!" Encourage students to stretch, open their eyes wide, and say, "I'm awake!"] Great job waking up! Did you know that an important part of history is called the First Great Awakening? It was like a big "wake-up" for people's hearts and minds. The **First Great Awakening** was a revival—a new excitement—about the religious beliefs the first settlers from England brought to the New World. What were those beliefs, and why were they important? To understand, we need to go back almost 100 years before the First Great Awakening.

ASK Students

Why do you think people might need a "wake-up" for their hearts and minds?

TELL Students

In the spring of 1630, a man named John Winthrop led a group of people from England across the Atlantic Ocean. **[Reference John Winthrop Image]** They were heading to a place we now call Massachusetts to start a new life. To help them understand this dangerous journey they were beginning, John Winthrop gave a speech to explain why they were leaving England and what they hoped to do in this new land. In his speech, he said:

"We must delight in each other; make other's conditions our own; rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and community in the work, as members of the same body. So shall we keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace . . . For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us."

ASK Students

What did he mean by "a city upon a hill"?

TELL Students

John Winthrop was talking about a verse from the Bible, from the Book of Matthew, Chapter 5 ...

Introduction

TELL Students (continued)

... Verse 14: *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden."* The **Bible** is a holy (something that is special, pure, and set apart for God) book that teaches about God, His love, and how He helps us live a good life. It is made up of two main parts: the Old Testament, which tells stories from before Jesus was born, and the New Testament, which tells about Jesus's life and teachings. **[Reference Bible Image]** Christians believe the Bible is God's word, written to help people know Him and follow His guidance. John Winthrop wanted the new colony in Massachusetts to be a light of God's hope and a good example for others. (A **colony** is a place where a group of people settle and live, but it is still ruled by another country.) Winthrop believed they could do this by following how the Bible says to live, like working together, showing kindness, respecting one another, and remembering that everyone is created by God and should be treated with care. This idea — respecting others because God created everyone — later became very important in American history. You can even find it in the Declaration of Independence, which says that all people are given rights by their Creator, or by God.

[Reference Declaration of Independence Image]

ASK Students

Why do you think John Winthrop wanted the colony to be like a "light of hope" and a good example for others?

TELL Students 🔑

Things didn't go as smoothly as John Winthrop hoped. The colonies didn't always get along because not everyone shared the same beliefs. Different groups of Christians, called denominations, had their own ways of practicing their faith. A **denomination** is a group of Christians who share the same faith but practice it a certain way. For example, some people may practice their faith in groups while others practice their faith by themselves. These disagreements between denominations sometimes caused problems among the colonies and made it hard for them to work together. Years later, the First Great Awakening helped people realize they needed to reconnect with God and each other. It reminded everyone of the importance of faith and **unity** — working together as one despite their differences.

Introduction

ASK Students

Why do you think it's important for people to work together, even if they don't always agree on everything?

TELL Students

Because of these differences, there wasn't much unity among the colonies. The colonists, those living in the colonies, often forgot that "the eyes of all people" were watching them, as John Winthrop had said, and they sometimes mistreated each other because of their religious differences. But things began to change in the 1730s. A big **religious revival** — a renewed excitement about God and His plan — swept through the colonies. This movement was called the First Great Awakening, and it helped unite Christians across the colonies. It was led by energetic preachers who inspired people to focus on their faith and come together. One of these preachers was George Whitefield. **[Reference George Whitefield Image]** A **preacher** is a person who talks to others about God and teaches them lessons from the Bible. Preachers often give speeches, called sermons, to help people understand how to live in a way that pleases God. Preachers may work in churches or travel to different places to share their message.

ASK Students

Why do you think it was important for preachers like George Whitefield to help people come together and focus on their faith during the First Great Awakening?

TELL Students

Benjamin Franklin, one of America's Founding Fathers, said that "people of all groups and denominations" came to hear George Whitefield speak. Franklin admired Whitefield's speaking skills, supported his work, and listened to his message. Whitefield was a powerful and dramatic preacher from England. He arrived in Philadelphia in 1739 and traveled up and down the east coast, visiting every colony. From Savannah, Georgia, to Boston, Massachusetts, Whitefield shared his message of faith, hope, and unity. But what is faith? **Faith** means trusting and believing in something or someone, even when you can't see it. For Christians, faith is about trusting in God and believing in His love and promises. What is Christianity? **Christianity** is a religion based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God, who came to Earth to show God's love and to save people from their sins.

Introduction

TELL Students (continued)

For George Whitefield, it didn't matter what type of Christian denomination someone belonged to. He believed that Jesus Christ's love was for everyone, no matter where they lived or how they worshiped. Whitefield said that true faith isn't about belonging to one group or another, but about choosing to have Christ's love in your heart.

ASK Students

What did George Whitefield believe about Jesus?

TELL Students

Whitefield's powerful voice and messages made him very popular — so much so that he became America's first famous person, or what we might call a celebrity. He delivered about 18,000 sermons to nearly 10 million people! Many of these sermons were in the Thirteen Colonies (now the United States of America), and he also spoke in other countries, many times in his home country of England. He would often preach to thousands of people at once. His message helped unite the colonies by reminding people that they were all equal before God, no matter what denomination they belonged to.

ASK Students

Why do you think so many people wanted to hear George Whitefield speak?

TELL Students

Another important person in the First Great Awakening was Jonathan Edwards. **[Reference John Edwards Image]** He was a pastor, or preacher, who lived in Massachusetts. Before George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards preached at a Congregational church in Northampton, Massachusetts, in the early 1730s. His powerful sermons became very famous and helped change the way people thought about their faith. Let's watch another episode of Star Spangled Adventures to learn more!

Introduction

WATCH ▶

Star Spangled Adventures Cartoon [Ep. 37: First Great Awakening](#)



Lesson

TELL Students

Jonathan Edwards gave what many people think is the most famous sermon of the 1700s. It was called Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God. In his sermon, Edwards explained how people from all over — from the North, South, East, and West — were turning back to God. He said:

"And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day wherein CHRIST has flung the door of mercy wide open, and stands in the door calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners; a day wherein many are flocking to him, and pressing into the kingdom of God; many are daily coming from the east, west, north and south."

ASK Students

Why do you think Jonathan Edwards wanted people from all over to become closer to God?

TELL Students

Edwards wanted people to leave their bad habits behind and grow closer to Christ. Like George Whitefield, Edwards believed that following Christ meant a change of heart, no matter which church someone attended. He said that true faith reaches deep into the heart and leads people to live good and obedient lives. **Obedient** means following the rules or doing what you are asked to do. When someone is obedient, they listen carefully and make good choices to do what is right. For example, being obedient might mean doing what your parents and teachers ask you to do, or following what God teaches us in the Bible.

ASK Students

Why do you think Jonathan Edwards believed that being obedient and making good choices is important?

TELL Students

The First Great Awakening had a huge impact on the colonies and their future. First, it brought the colonies together with the shared belief that everyone is made equal by their Creator. This idea — that all people are created equal — was so important that it was later written into the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration of Independence says that all people “are created equal” and are given certain rights by their Creator, such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

[Reference Declaration of Independence Image]

Lesson

TELL Students (continued)

This belief became one of the main ideas upon which our country was founded. Edwards' and Whitefield's sermons (messages) helped spread this belief. And, all kinds of people – farmers, workers, rich, poor, educated, and uneducated alike – loved their sermons because they taught that everyone was equal before God, no matter who they were.

ASK Students

Why do you think it was important for people to hear that everyone is created equal and has special rights from God?

TELL Students

Second, the First Great Awakening taught the ideas of self-reliance and self-government. **Self-reliance** means taking care of yourself and being responsible for your choices. The First Great Awakening preachers reminded people that accepting Christ was a personal decision, a choice they needed to make for themselves. **Self-government** means making decisions about how to live and work together as a group, without someone (like a king) telling you what to do. This idea helped people in the colonies start creating a government that listened to them and worked for them.

ASK Students

Why do you think it was important for people in the colonies to learn about making their own choices?

TELL Students

Finally, the First Great Awakening introduced the idea that one strong voice could lead to big changes. This was very important when the colonies decided they wanted a government that got its power from the people, not from a king. Before this, kings and rulers made most of the decisions, and many people didn't get to have a say. But the First Great Awakening reminded people that everyone is created equal by God and has the ability to make their own choices about things like faith and how to live their lives. This helped people realize that they should also have a say in how their government worked. The First Great Awakening brought people together and gave them the courage to believe that their voices mattered.

Lesson

TELL Students (continued)

These ideas helped shape America's foundation and are still very important today. **[Reference American Flag]**

ASK Students

Why do you think it's important for people to have a say in how their government works?

TELL Students

It's important for people to take part in deciding how their government works because it helps make sure everyone's voice is heard and respected. The idea that everyone is created equal by God means that no one person is more important than another, and everyone deserves to be treated fairly. This belief is the foundation of our government today. In America, the people get to make decisions by voting. **[Reference Voting Image]** This includes choosing leaders and deciding important issues. The First Great Awakening reminded people that their voices mattered, and that's still true today. For you, this might mean thinking about how to work together as a class to make decisions, like voting on a game to play at recess or deciding on a classroom rule. Just like the people during the First Great Awakening learned to come together and share ideas, you can practice working with others to make choices that are fair for everyone.



Light of Hope



Objective

Help kindergarten students understand the concepts of unity, kindness, and being a “light of hope” by working together in a fun, hands-on activity.

Materials Needed

- Small building blocks (or any stackable objects like cardboard boxes or foam pieces)
- Flashlight or a small LED lantern (to represent light)
- A sturdy surface or area in the classroom to build on

Introduction

John Winthrop said the colony should be like a city upon a hill — a light of hope for everyone to see. He wanted people to work together, show kindness, and be a good example. Today, we’re going to build our very own city on a hill to show what working together and being a light of hope looks like.

Explain the Activity

- Show the blocks and the flashlight.
- We’re going to work as a team to build a big tower or city with these blocks. While we build, we need to show kindness and help each other. Once our city is built, we’ll add the light to make it shine like the city on a hill John Winthrop talked about.

Building the City

- Divide the students into small groups and give each group a few blocks.
- Encourage them to take turns and work together to add their blocks to the “city.” Walk around and guide any students who might need help sharing or cooperating.

Adding the Light

- Once the city is complete, turn on the flashlight or LED lantern and place it on top of the city.
- Dim the lights in the room to make the city shine brightly.



Light of Hope



Discussion

- Look at our beautiful city! It's shining brightly, just like John Winthrop said the colony should. What did we do to work together and make our city so strong and bright?
- Let students share examples of teamwork, kindness, and helping one another.

Reflection

- How can we be like this city on a hill in our classroom or at home? What can we do to show kindness and be a light of hope for others?
- Encourage students to share their ideas.

Closing the Lesson

Just like we worked together to build our city, the people during the First Great Awakening learned to come together and be a light of hope for others. Remember, being kind and helping one another can make a big difference!



City on a Hill Chorus



Objective

Help kindergarten students understand the lesson of being a "city on a hill" by teaching them a simple song with hand motions. This reinforces teamwork, kindness, and being a light of hope in a fun and memorable way.

Song Name: "We Are a City on a Hill" (Tune: "The Wheels on the Bus")

Lyrics

(Verse 1)

We are a city on a hill, so bright, so bright, so bright!
We are a city on a hill, shining with our light.

(Verse 2)

We work together, hand in hand, with love, with love, with love!
We work together, hand in hand, just like we should.

(Verse 3)

We help each other every day, so kind, so kind, so kind!
We help each other every day, love we always find.

(Verse 4)

We shine our light for all to see, so bright, so bright, so bright!
We shine our light for all to see, with kindness and unity.

Hand Motions

• Verse 1

- On "city on a hill," raise both arms high like a hilltop.
- On "so bright," open hands wide and wiggle fingers like shining light.
- On "shining with our light," point both index fingers up to the sky.





City on a Hill Chorus



Hand Motions (continued)

• Verse 2

- On "hand in hand," pretend to hold hands with the person next to you.
- On "with love," place both hands over your heart.
- On "just like we should," point up as if to God.

• Verse 3

- On "help each other," pretend to hand something to the person next to you.
- On "every day," make a circular motion with your hands like the sun rising.
- On "love we always find," point to your heart.

• Verse 4:

- On "shine our light," stretch arms wide and wiggle fingers.
- On "for all to see," gesture outward as if showing something to others.
- On "kindness and unity," bring hands together as if giving a group hug.

How to Teach the Song

1. Introduce the Tune: Sing a quick part of "The Wheels on the Bus" to familiarize the students with the tune.
2. Teach the Lyrics: Break the song into verses and teach one at a time. Repeat each verse 2–3 times so the students feel confident.
3. Add Motions: Show the hand motions for each verse, then have the students practice singing with the motions.
4. Perform Together: Sing the entire song with motions as a class.

Discussion After Singing

- Ask:
 - "What does it mean to be a city on a hill?"
 - "How can we work together to be kind and help others like the song says?"
- Encourage students to share one way they can "shine their light" at school or home.

Wrap-Up

Just like the song says, we can all be a city on a hill by showing kindness, helping each other, and shining God's love wherever we go. Great job, little patriots!

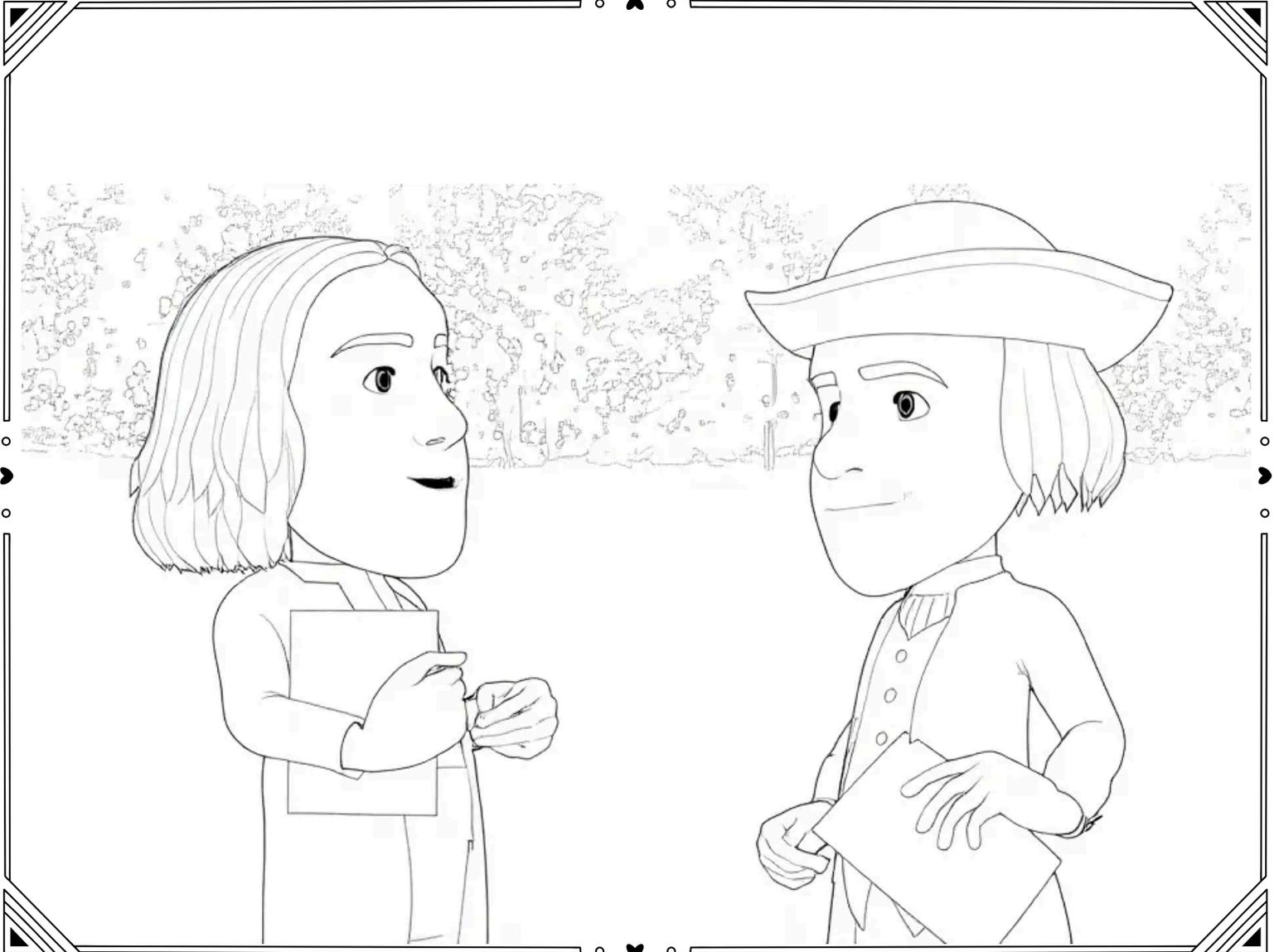


LITTLEPATRIOTS

WWW.LITTLEPATRIOTSLARNING.COM

Coloring Sheet

NAME: _____ DATE: _____



Resources

- <https://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colliding-cultures/john-winthrop-dreams-of-a-city-on-a-hill-1630/>
- <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/matthew/5>
- https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/declare.asp
- <https://www.britannica.com/event/Glorious-Revolution#:~:text=Church%20of%20England.,What%20caused%20the%20Glorious%20Revolution%3F,non%20Catholic%20population%20and%20others>
- <https://users.ssc.wisc.edu/~rkeyser/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/TolerationAct1689.pdf>
- <https://gutenberg.org/files/20203/20203-h/20203-h.htm>
- <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/come-poor-lost-undone-sinner>
- <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/george-whitefield-did-you-know>
- <https://gutenberg.org/files/20203/20203-h/20203-h.htm>
- <https://minio.la.utexas.edu/webeditor-files/coretexts/pdf/174120sinners20angry20god.pdf>
- <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/mather-a-man-of-reason-edwards-a-supernatural-light/>
- Jefferson, Thomas. Declaration of Independence.

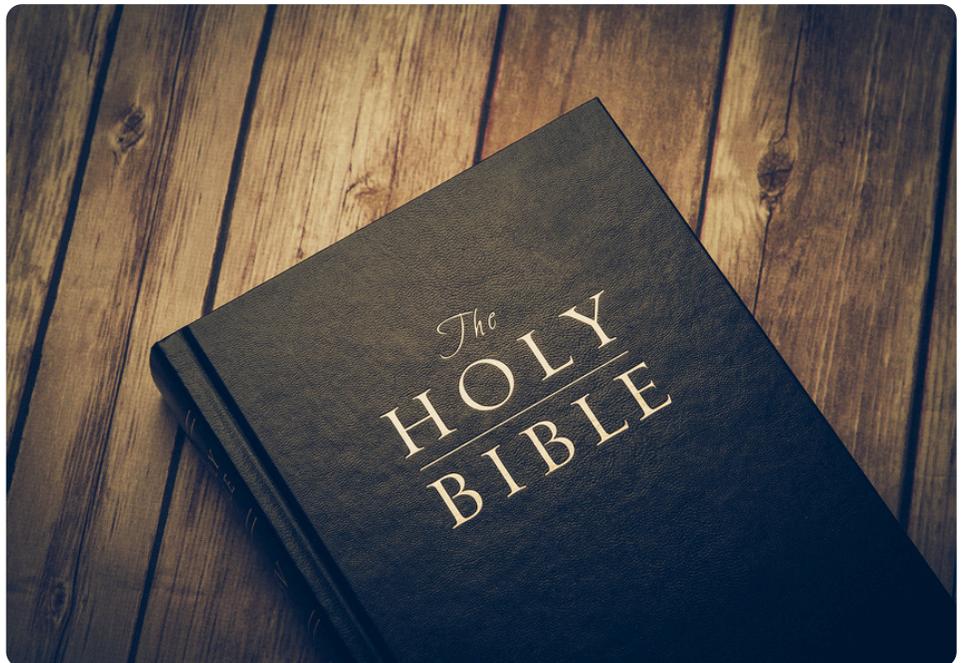
Images

John Winthrop



Credit: Wikipedia.

Bible



Credit: Canva Pro.

Images

Declaration of Independence



Credit: Canva Pro.

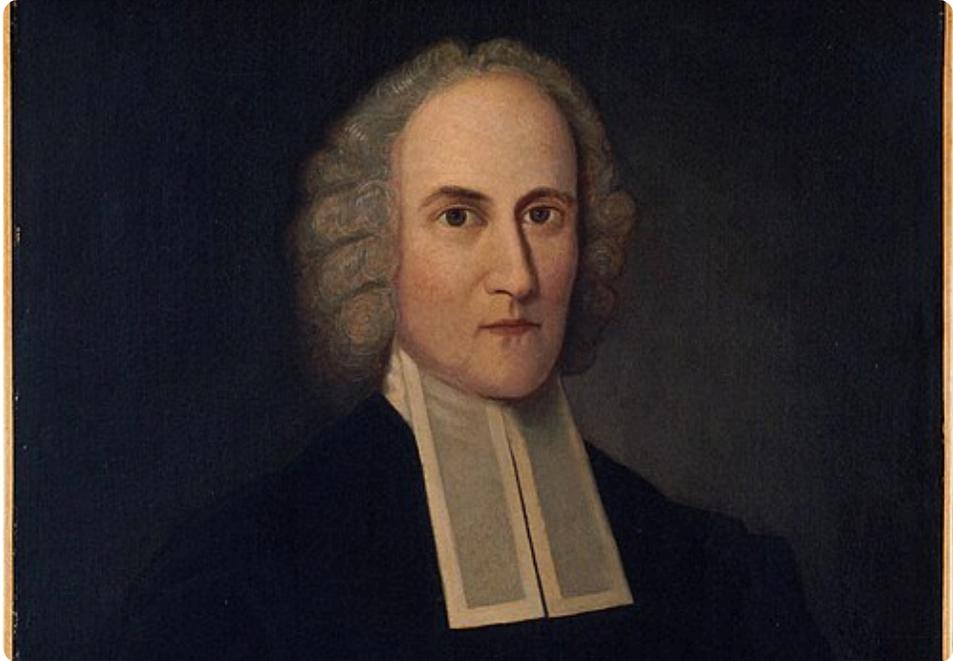
George Whitefield



Credit: Wikipedia.

Images

John Edwards



Credit: Wikipedia.

American Flag



Credit: Canva Pro.

Images

Voting



Credit: Canva Pro.

