

# Effects of the First Great Awakening

1730-1750

# Altered Religious Climate in America

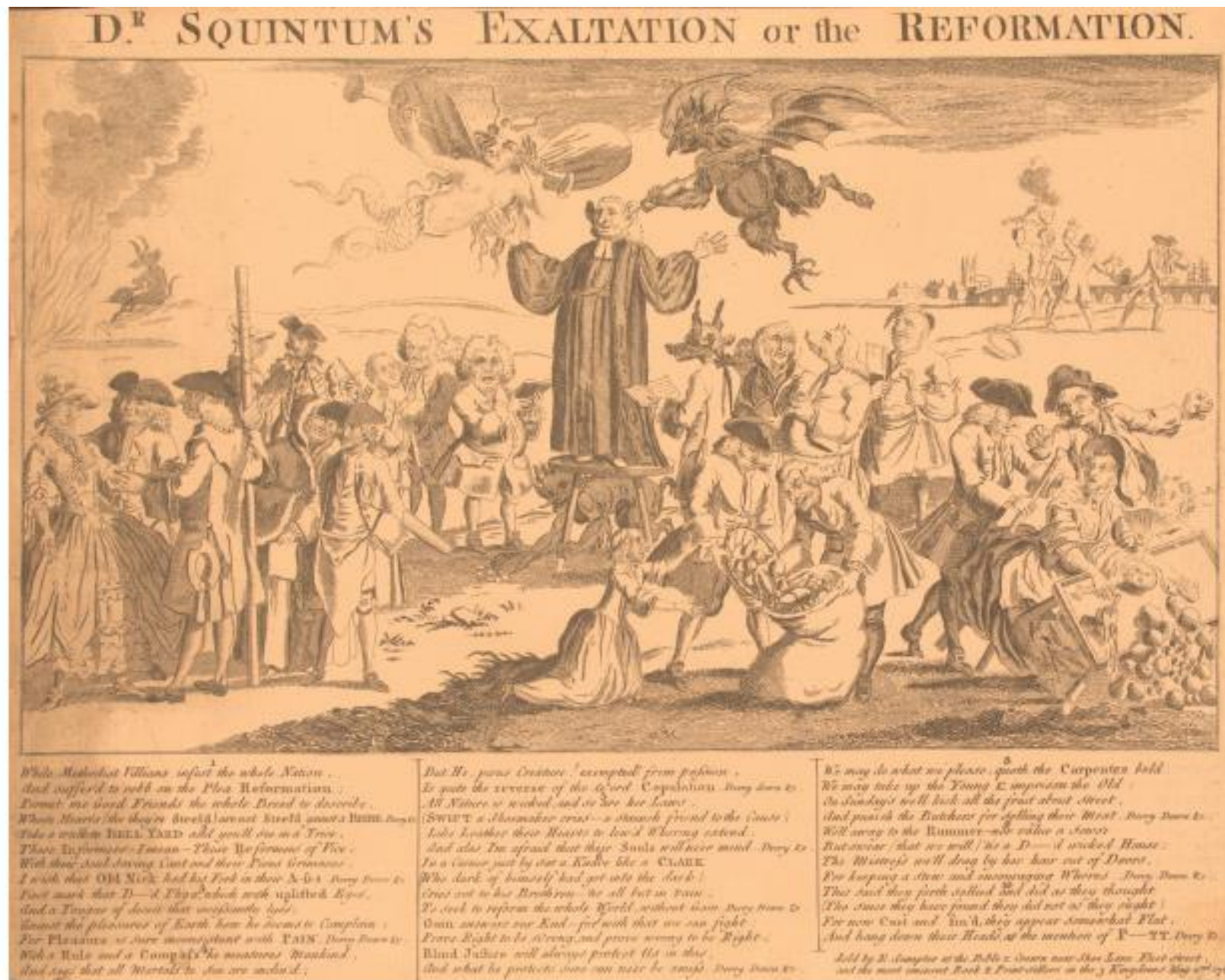
- Ordinary people were encouraged to make a personal connection with God, instead of relying on a minister
- Newer denominations (Methodists and Baptists) grew quickly
- Rise of "itinerant" preaching and evangelism
  - Whitefield preached to an estimated 75 – 80% of the population over 7 preaching tours
  - Located minister led resentment
- Church attendance increased

# Altered Religious Climate in America

- Division in Presbyterian/Congregationalist churches
  - Old Lights
  - New Lights
- Some argue that it influenced the Revolutionary War
  - Theory of the Lesser (or Inferior) Magistrate
    - The governmental duties of “inferior magistrates” (government officials, such as mayor or governors, in an intermediate level between the king and the people) required them to protect the people against oppression from above.
    - If an inferior magistrate failed to protect the rights of the people, it was the duty of the people to revolt against such tyranny. The command in Romans 13 to be obedient to government” applies only to those that “are orderly and lawfully instituted by God.” “Tyrannical government came from Satan, not from God. To obey a tyrant was to rebel against God.”
  - Encouraged nationalism
  - Emphasized individual rights
- Spawned establishment of educational institutions (Princeton, Rutgers, Brown, Dartmouth)
- Began to separate church and state



(a)



(b)

# Ecclesiastical Polity

- “Polity” as opposed to “government”

In defense of the polity of the Church of England against the Puritans “[polity] containeth both [the] government and also whatever else belongeth to the ordering of the Church in public”

Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, (1594)

- Itinerant preachers spawned the conversation – “Who oversees them?”
- Divergent forms
  - Episcopal or Hierarchical (Roman Catholic and Anglican churches)
  - Presbyterian
  - Connectional
  - Congregational

# Presbyterian ("Councils" at various levels)

