

CHAPTER 62 : THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN "EMPIRE"

From its inception the United States held the promise of being one of the greatest powers on earth. Although the American Revolution had erased Protestantism from her national constitution, many other aspects of American life continued to enjoy the blessing of Protestantism, her heritage from the colonial era. In large measure America derived its stability from the strong presence of Protestantism which yet remained, preserving it from a rapid descent into the moral anarchy which is the logical end of a society premised upon secularism. This Protestant element kept it from the debacle of France in its French Revolution and of Russia and China in their communist experiments. In some cases the Protestant element retained a substantial degree of theological soundness, though befuddled by the lie of the propriety of a secularist state premised upon "common sense" philosophy. Illustrious examples were Timothy Dwight, Charles Hodge, Robert L. Dabney, and Jay Gresham Machen. Apparently many Protestants will only recognize the inconsistency of their allegiance to political secularism as they witness the utter decadence into which a secularist-based society falls.

Enlightenment philosophy had never thoroughly penetrated the American populace during the Revolutionary era, and even less so in the generation following the Revolutionary era. By the time the revolutionary Thomas Paine returned to America from France, he was ostracized for his anti-Christian tendencies. Paine's crime was that he had followed Enlightenment philosophy more to its logical conclusion, whereas most Americans had only embraced it to a point. Clearly, most Americans were not prepared to throw their Protestant faith overboard, even though they established secularist government at the federal level, and generally at the state level as well. In fact, there was something of a revival in orthodox Protestantism in the next generation, a conservative reaction to the extremes of the revolutionary era, and especially the French Revolution. This conservative reaction particularly manifested itself at Yale and Princeton Colleges, two of the leading colleges in America, and at that time bastions of more orthodox Congregationalism and Presbyterianism.

At Yale the leader of this revival was minister and scholar Timothy Dwight. During the period of the American Revolution Enlightenment philosophy had spread rapidly through the population and the intellectual leadership of the nation. Such thinking taught that the scripture was mere fable, that divine revelation was non-existent, and that human reason was the sole judge of right and wrong. The philosophy exalted man and ignored God. It proclaimed the innate goodness of man, while inviting lawlessness, and tempted the same men it exalted into debasing self-indulgence and sin. When Dwight arrived at Yale to preside over it, the moral and scholarly atmosphere of the school was at a low. Membership in the college church hovered near zero. Most undergraduates avowed themselves skeptics. One of the students of that day later wrote, "intemperance, profanity, and gambling were common; yea, and also licentiousness." Some of the students had taken to calling each other not by their given names, but rather by the names of Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, and of other French and English infidels. The campus supported not one but two societies dedicated to the reading and distribution of literature by deist Thomas Paine. Yale's laws at that time stated, "If any Scholar shall deny the

Holy Scriptures, or any part thereof, to be of divine authority; or shall assert and endeavour to propagate among the Students any error or heresy subverting the foundations of the Christian religion, and shall persist therein, after admonition, he shall be dismissed." In spite of this, most Yale men scoffed at the idea of divine revelation.

But Dwight, both college President and professor of Divinity, challenged the religious heterodoxy that permeated the Yale student body. He critiqued the prevailing infidelity, showing the irrationality of disbelief in scripture. From the class of graduate theology majors Dwight chose several to train as staff officers, in order to help preserve the faith of students who had escaped the net of infidelity. After seven years of such preaching, a revival broke out on campus. Of 230 students, one third professed conversion. Thirty of these entered the ministry. Others were prominent in New England life. One of Dwight's disciples later wrote, "Dwight, through the blessing of God, changed the college from a sink of moral and spiritual pollution into a residence not only of science and literature, but of morality and religion, a nursery of piety and virtue, a fountain whence has issued streams to make glad the city of God."

Harvard had been lost to the Unitarian influence as early as 1805 when the overseers of Harvard appointed a Unitarian to the Professor of Divinity. The next year they elected as president of Harvard a man with strong inclinations toward Unitarianism. This election caused no small alarm among the Christian denominations. Such concerns led to the founding of Andover Theological Seminary. The founding board consulted Dwight on the appointment of faculty, and the curriculum, and the overall plan of the seminary. Eventually they asked him to serve on the governing board. So it was that Dwight's influence spread from Yale to the first theological seminary in America. Through Dwight, God raised up generations of ministers and shepherds for the New England people. His influence lasted for decades.

At Princeton, Archibald Alexander (1772-1851) oversaw the establishment of Princeton Theological Seminary, the preeminent institution of American "Old School" Presbyterianism. Alexander, of Scot-Irish descent, had grown up in a frontier environment. Having little formal education, he studied with William Graham at Liberty Hall Academy (Washington and Lee University). Prior to assuming his duties at Princeton in 1812, Alexander pastored churches and served as president of Hampden-Sydney College (1796-1807) in his native Virginia and ministered in the Pine Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia (1807-1812). Recognizing the need for institutions providing formal training for Presbyterian ministers, Alexander issued a call for schools in 1808, and in 1812 Princeton Theological Seminary emerged as the first Presbyterian seminary in America, with Alexander as its first professor and the one that set it on its path.

In order to understand the place that Princeton Theological Seminary occupied in American religious life, we need to trace American Presbyterianism's path up to the time of the seminary's founding. The earliest Presbyterian churches in the American colonies were planted by New England Puritans who preferred Presbyterianism over congregationalism. Very soon after, they were joined by other settlers from Ireland,

Scotland, England and Wales, who formed churches throughout the Middle Colonies. In 1706 some of these joined in a loosely organized presbytery which in 1716 was expanded to a synod of three presbyteries. The church was primarily a blend of Scot-Irish and New England Puritan Presbyterians. The Scot-Irish element generally sought full subscription to the confession and strong synodical powers, whereas the New England Puritan element preferred looser subscription and greater local church independency. As we reviewed in a previous chapter, the Scot-Irish element lost in the controversy between Old Side and the New Side during the Great Awakening. The Old Side joined the New Side on essentially New Side terms. The near triumph of deism during the American Revolution dealt a severe blow to the church. John Witherspoon and other leading Presbyterians organized a newly independent and American Presbyterian Church. This main Presbyterian Church in the USA amended the Westminster Confession, removing its Establishment Principle clause. It also allowed a looser subscriptionism to the Confession, making it quasi-congregationalist in church organization. In yet another blow to historic Presbyterianism, in 1801 the Presbyterian Church entered into a Plan of Union with the New England Congregationalists. Though the churches did not merge, they federated their home mission work on the frontier. This drew the Presbyterian Church closer to New England Congregationalism, at a time when New England Congregationalism was becoming ever more doctrinally latitudinarian. But one countervailing factor that arrested American Presbyterianism's slide was the large influx of Scot-Irish immigrants in the last half of the 18th century. They brought with them a stronger doctrinal attachment to the Westminster Confession and the Biblical belief in uniformity of doctrine and worship enforced by the synod. Princeton Theological Seminary became a leading advocate of this "Old School" perspective, in contrast to the "New School" perspective that especially characterized the New England Puritan (mostly of English background) perspective. It should be kept in mind, however, that even "Old Schoolers" were not as truly "old school" as their name might suggest. Even these Princeton "Old Schoolers" maintained much of John Witherspoon's "common sense" philosophy, along with opposition to the original Westminster Confession's Establishment Principle. But "Old School" Presbyterianism was definitely closer to the Westminster Confession than "New School" Presbyterianism.

So there were these stabilizing Protestant influences which kept America from descending into moral anarchy- a moral anarchy which would have surely been disastrous for the young republic. Although theological liberalism captivated important institutions like Harvard, much of the American population decidedly rejected it after the revolutionary era. Although American Protestantism would become beset by various forms of heresy, yet a significant segment did not relinquish its attachment to the principle that the Bible is the infallible and sufficient Word of God.

The foundational heresy that did pervade almost every segment of the American population – theologically conservative or liberal - was a form of "common sense" philosophy . There was a common belief that men could govern in a morally appropriate way, even though adhering to different religions. It was thought that all men should have common sense enough to see the reasonableness of government framed in accordance with the principles in the US Constitution, and that government would rule

justly. Most Americans imagined that they had found the perfect model for organizing a society: religious faith of some kind at the family and personal levels, combined with religiously neutral, democratic civil government. Although logically incoherent and contrary to the doctrine of man's total depravity, the American philosophy has been pursued with a religious zeal that made it a formidable force in the world. Americans perceived it as their destiny to bring this new social model to people around the world, starting with the territories that lay between them and the Pacific Ocean. It was a model contradicting that of the Protestants of the Protestant Reformation, who realized that all must be subject to Christ, whereas American Protestantism imagined there was neutral territory in the realm of politics and civil government. American Protestants naively imagined that the leaven of false religion and worship in their midst would not leaven the whole lump, and eventually lead to all sorts of injustices.

The phrase in the 19th century that came to capture the American sense of their philosophy's ultimate triumph was "manifest destiny". The phrase was coined by New York journalist John O'Sullivan in 1845, when he wrote that "it was the nation's manifest destiny to overspread and to possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the development of the great experiment of liberty and federated self-government entrusted to us." American belief was strong that anything could happen, and anything could be done, and much of this potential was attributed to the superiority of the American Way of Life. Democratic republicanism was felt to be the best form of government and God's plan for mankind, so it was felt an obligation that it and "freedom" should be brought to as broad an area as possible. There was an almost complete blindness that God required every man and institution of man to be subject to both tables of the Ten Commandments. Yet to many it seemed a clear and unavoidable destiny that would eventually reach everywhere, making the United States a leader in agriculture, industry, commerce, the arts and sciences, and all intellectual areas. "Manifest Destiny" could be thought of as an ideal of the "boundlessness of no limits" in all areas, providing a more idealistic rationale for expansion than mere ambition for land. The belief had dramatic implications.

The belief in Manifest Destiny was accompanied by other favorable factors. Birth rates in the East had been high, since Protestants and Roman Catholics alike maintained their historic theological position that contraception and abortion are wrong. Immigration was increasing too, due to decreased cost and risk for the ocean voyage and the perception that life would be better in the New World than in the Old. The lands of the east were becoming more filled by the increased population from these two effects, providing a strong pressure for people to move to new regions where cheaper land was available. Economic depressions in 1818, 1837, 1839, and 1841, as well as the massive failure of attempts to establish farms in the far northern colonies (such as Vermont), provided strong incentive to take the risk of moving to much more reliable farming lands in the frontier areas. Several macro-opportunities had occurred making realization of the Manifest Destiny possible as well. The Native American tribes that had held the lands of the west had been decimated by disease over the past century, and so now even especially rich lands such as the Willamette Valley in Oregon were virtually void of inhabitants, providing a historically unusual opportunity to settlers of essentially free land. The

discovery of South Pass in Wyoming in 1811 had established a much more feasible route across the Rockies than had been known to Lewis and Clark in their expedition during the administration of President Thomas Jefferson.

The first step in the path of territorial expansion proved a momentous leap. During the Presidency of Thomas Jefferson the United States doubled in size with the Louisiana Purchase. Further expansion came with the annexation of Texas, followed by the Mexican Cession of 1848, a consequence of the Mexican-American War. Meanwhile, the Oregon territory was purchased from Great Britain, Alaska from Russia, and the kingdom of Hawaii was annexed at the end of the century, completing the present territory of the United States. This westward expansion by official acts of the United States Government was accompanied by the western (and northern in the case of New England) movement of settlers into the trans-Appalachia region and beyond the frontier.

Major events in the western movement of the American people were the Homestead Act, a law by which, for a nominal price, a settler was given title to land to farm; the opening of the Northwest Territory to settlement; the Texas Revolution; the opening of the Oregon Trail; the Mormon Emigration to Utah in 1846-7; The California gold rush of 1849; the Colorado Gold Rush of 1859; and the completion of the US Transcontinental Railroad in 1869.

The Mexican-American War from 1846-1848 was especially aggressive. In 1846, the President of the United States, James Polk, sent soldiers to the disputed zone between Mexico and the newly annexed Republic of Texas, in what most historians describe as a provocation for war. American forces quickly defeated those of Mexico, and at the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico was forced to cede what is now almost the entire Southwest and California to the United States for only \$15 million. A faction called the Continental Democrats had advocated annexing all of Mexico. At the time, the war was denounced in the North both as imperialism and also as a pro-slavery conspiracy to add more slave territory to the United States.

But territorial expansion was only one facet in the spread of the American ideal. It also meant promoting the ideal in foreign nations, while protecting American interests there as well. One notable example early in America's history was the Monroe Doctrine. President Monroe, in his message to Congress in 1823, proclaimed the Americas should be free from future European colonization and free from European interference in sovereign countries' affairs. It further stated the United States' intention to stay neutral in wars between European powers and their colonies, but to consider any new colonies or interference with independent countries in the Americas as hostile acts toward the United States. One should note, however, that the policy succeeded because it met British interests as well as American, and for the next 100 years was secured by the backing of the British fleet. In another example of American intervention, Admiral Matthew Perry forcibly opened Japan to the West with the Convention of Kanagawa in 1854. The 19th century saw the United States expand its presence in Asia. The US pushed through the Open Door Policy that guaranteed its economic access to China. It

also vigorously acquired small islands in the Pacific, mostly to be used as coaling stations.

The widespread American belief in “common sense” philosophy, secular democratic government, independence, and manifest destiny was not conducive to the maintenance of sound Reformed theology. At heart, this belief was Arminian and anti-nomian. It was a denial of man’s depraved condition after the Fall, and it was a refusal to have government that would enforce the Ten Commandments and to respect the sovereign rights of God ordained governments. Given these theological errors that lay at the very foundation of the American psyche, we should not be surprised that heretical and apostate sects grew in the fertile US soil, even as more theologically sound churches languished.

Although there was a significant splintering of denominational affiliation, in the period between the American Revolution and the Civil War the Congregationalist and Presbyterian churches remained the most influential Christian churches in America. The Anglican Church in America – which upon America's break with England was established as the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S. – never regained the influential status she had known during the colonial era. She could not readily adapt to the new national circumstances, and after the Civil War she succumbed to theological liberalism which further depleted her vitality. Members in the Congregationalist and Presbyterian churches largely supported the American Revolution, and in early American history they continued to appeal to and attract a large segment of the population. They also took an active part in the westward expansion of the nation.

The Congregationalist churches succumbed more quickly to the rising tide of theological liberalism than the Presbyterian churches. Following the American Revolution many Congregationalist churches even became Unitarian. We have already pointed out the Unitarian drift of Harvard. William Ellery Channing, a Congregational minister in Boston, became the leader of the Unitarian movement in preaching in 1819 his infamous sermon, "Unitarian Christianity". Channing (1780-1842) had graduated from Harvard in 1798. He rejected the Calvinist orthodoxy which had characterized early New England Congregationalism, and became the leading spokesman for Unitarianism, while serving as Congregationalist minister of the Federal Street Church in Boston. Other important tenets of Channing were the belief in human goodness and the subjection of theological ideas to the light of human reason. In one infamous sermon, entitled “Likeness to God”, Channing expressed the idea of the human potential to be like God. In later years Channing often preached against slavery, although he was never an ardent abolitionist. But much of the abolitionist movement was centered in the northern Congregationalist churches.

By no means was all of Congregationalism so quickly given over to Unitarianism. We previously pointed out the role of Timothy Dwight and the formation of the Congregational Andover Theological Seminary in 1808, as a bulwark of more orthodox Calvinism. Andover was the first of hundreds of new colleges and seminaries founded by Congregationalists in the 19th century. Andover was instrumental in preparing the first

Congregational missionaries for overseas mission. The churches already had sent missionaries to frontier America.

The American overseas missionary movement- spearheaded by the evangelical wing of American Congregationalism - had its informal beginning in 1806 when Samuel J. Mills met with four fellow students at Williams College in Massachusetts for a Sunday afternoon prayer meeting in a maple grove. A sudden thunderstorm drove them to the shelter of a haystack where, surrounded by thunder and lightning, Mills proposed a mission to preach the gospel in Asia. His zeal ignited the four others with the intent "to evangelize the world," and they went on to study theology at Andover Seminary. One of them, Adoniram Judson, who later joined the Baptist churches, had appealed to the London Missionary Society for support but was rejected.

Believing it was time for American Congregationalism to support its own missionaries, the Andover faculty and leaders of the Massachusetts General Association authorized a cooperative missionary venture by the churches of Massachusetts and Connecticut. In 1810 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was born—the first foreign missionary society in the United States. On February 8, 1812, at a moving service of worship in the crowded Salem Tabernacle Church, the Haystack "Brethren" were ordained. Within two weeks, they set sail for India. In the same year, New England Congregational clergy voted to condemn the War of 1812 as "unnecessary, unjust, and inexpedient." Their antiwar sermons and political organizing in opposition to a government policy were unprecedented. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions intended to establish missions not only in the Orient and Burma, but also "in the West among the Iroquois." Subsequently, throughout the 1820s and 1830s missions were organized among the Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Cherokee, Osage, Maumee and Iroquois. In an effort supported by Congregationalists and members of other churches, the American Board provided aid for Indian resistance to government removal from their lands.

But even Congregationalism's evangelical wing was giving way to increasingly heterodox notions, ultimately precipitating the split with Presbyterians. Although Timothy Dwight, grandson of Jonathan Edwards and president of Yale College from 1795 to 1817, rejected the Unitarianism and rationalism then plaguing Harvard, he nevertheless retained various Enlightenment errors. These errors laid the groundwork for what would become known as the New Haven theology. Dwight's concern for revival led him to place more emphasis on the natural abilities of individuals to respond to the gospel than had Edwards.

Dwight's most prominent pupil, Nathaniel William Taylor, carried the New Haven theology to its maturity, as did Charles Finney. Taylor was the first professor at the new Yale Divinity School, where he came in 1822 after a successful pastorate in New Haven. Taylor regarded himself as the heir of the tradition of Jonathan Edwards, particularly as he combated the rising tide of Unitarianism in New England. His theology, however, departed from Edwards's, especially in its beliefs about human nature. Most importantly, he argued in a famous phrase that people always had a "power to the contrary" when

faced with the choice for God. He also contended, as Edwards' son, Jonathan Edwards, Jr., had suggested, that human sinfulness arose from sinful acts, not from a sinful nature inherited from Adam. Taylor denied various aspects of divine predestination. More than other heirs of Edwards, Taylor also accepted the Scottish philosophy of "common sense" which also made much of innate human freedom and the power of individuals to shape their own destinies.

The New Haven theology promoted revivalism in many respects on Arminian terms, which manifested itself in the Second Great Awakening (1795-1830). The New Haven theology came to represent, with Methodists, Disciples of Christ, and some Baptists, a contribution to the generally Arminian theology which dominated American Christian thought in the nineteenth century. It was in this sense far more consistent with the American ethos than historic Calvinism. It thus served as a bridge between the Calvinism that dominated American Christianity in the colonial era and the more Arminian theology that came to prevail in the United States.

Taylor's theology was popularized by revivalist Charles G. Finney, who demonstrated wide appeal to New School Presbyterians and Congregationalists anxious for revivals in their parishes. However, Old School opponents such as Archibald Alexander and Charles Hodge at Princeton Theological Seminary rightly accused Taylor of Arminianism and the semi-Pelagianism of the Romish Church, and defended they defended historic Calvinistic doctrine concerning salvation.

Charles G. Finney (1792-1875), often called "America's foremost revivalist," was a major leader of the Second Great Awakening in America that had a profound impact on the history of the United States. He was a lawyer in Adams, New York and became a minister in 1821. Finney moved to New York City in 1832. Although Finney was originally a Presbyterian, he eventually became a Congregationalist. Congregationalism allowed him greater freedom to express his thoroughly Arminian theology, which drew upon the New Haven Theology of Nathaniel William Taylor.

Finney was known for his innovations in preaching and conducting religious meetings, such as allowing women to pray in public and the development of the "anxious bench," a place where those considering to become "Christians" could come to receive prayer.

In 1821 Finney experienced something of a religious epiphany and set out to preach in western New York. The area from Lake Ontario to the Adirondack mountains in western New York had been the scene of so many religious "revivals" in the past that it was known as the "Burned-Over District." Finney's revivals were characterized by careful planning, showmanship and advertising. Finney preached in the Burned-Over District throughout the 1820s and the early 1830s.

In addition to his evangelistic activity, Finney was involved with the abolitionist movement and frequently denounced slavery from the pulpit. Beginning in the 1830s, he denied communion to slaveholders in his churches.

In 1835, he moved to Ohio where he would become a professor, and later President of Oberlin College. Oberlin was a major cultivation ground for the early movement to end slavery. Oberlin was also the first American university that allowed blacks and women into the same classrooms as white men. In addition, it was Arminian and ultimately humanistic.

Finney's labors further eroded the fiber of sound theology formerly present in America. Finney's doctrine of justification repudiated the penal substitutionary atonement of Christ as the means by which God saves his people. He also rejected the doctrine of the total depravity of man. In other words, Finney rejected historic Calvinism and embraced Arminianism, and his legacy was one of converting many Americans to his false ideas.

Although Finney's affiliation was in the Presbyterian and Congregationalist denominations, the Second Great Awakening encouraged the emergence of new denominations which more fully embraced its false notions. In the Appalachian region of Kentucky and Tennessee, the revival strengthened the Methodists and the Baptists, and spawned a new form of religious expression -- the camp meeting. In the Appalachian region, the revival took on characteristics similar to the Great Awakening of the previous century. But here, the center of the revival was the camp meeting -- defined as a "religious service of several days' length, for a group that was obliged to take shelter on the spot because of the distance from home." Pioneers in thinly populated areas looked to the camp meeting as a refuge from the lonely life on the frontier. The sheer exhilaration of participating in a religious revival with hundreds and perhaps thousands of people inspired the dancing, shouting and singing associated with these events.

The first camp meeting took place in July 1800 at Gasper River Church in southwestern Kentucky. A much larger one was held at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, in August 1801, where between 10,000 and 25,000 people attended, and Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist ministers participated. It was this event that stamped the organized revival as the major mode of church expansion for denominations such as the Methodists and Baptists.

The great revival (so called, but not in truth) quickly spread throughout Kentucky, Tennessee and southern Ohio, with the Methodists and the Baptists its prime beneficiaries. Each denomination had assets that allowed it to thrive on the frontier. The Methodists had a very efficient organization that depended on ministers -- known as circuit riders -- who sought out people in remote frontier locations. The circuit riders came from among the common people, which helped them establish a rapport with the frontier families they hoped to convert. The Methodists were uniformly Arminian in doctrine.

The Baptists had no formal church organization. Their farmer-preachers were people who falsely imagined they had received "the call" from God, studied the Bible and founded a church, which then ordained them. Other candidates for the ministry emerged from these churches, and they helped the Baptist Church to establish a presence farther into the wilderness. Using such methods, the Baptists became dominant throughout the

border states and most of the South over time, though in the ante-bellum period the Presbyterians remained dominant.

Back in the Burned-Over District of western New York various sects and cults were born, further corrupting the religious landscape of America. The Burned-Over District was a hotbed of false religion, especially after attracting settlers in the period between the construction of the Erie Canal and the rise of the railroads. The area still had a frontier quality during the early canal boom, making professional and established clergy scarce, lending the piety of the area many of the self-taught qualities that proved susceptible to folk religion. As such the area spawned a number of innovative religious movements, all founded by lay people, during the early 19th century. These include:

- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, better known as the Mormons. Joseph Smith lived in the area, and claimed to have discovered the golden plates (using peep stones) that contained the Book of Mormon near Palmyra, New York.
- The Millerites. William Miller was a farmer born in rural Vermont who moved to the area and found many converts there to his theory of an imminent Second Coming. His successor, the false prophetess Ellen G. White, went on to found the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
- The Fox sisters of Hydesville, New York conducted the first "table-rapping" séances in the area, leading to the American movement of Spiritualism that taught communication with the dead.
- The Shakers were also highly active in the area, and had several of their communal farms there.
- Finney himself preached at many revivals in the area, and was an early precursor of Pentecostalism.

Another heretical sect which arose during the Second Great Awakening were the so called Christian Churches. The Christian Churches were most uniquely American in origin and character. In Virginia, Vermont and Kentucky, the Second Great Awakening motivated some of the members of different churches to seek unity and to de-emphasize doctrine. These new churches were determined to overcome the confessional and ethnic barriers that divided the Protestant community: Congregationalist, Presbyterian, Reformed, Lutheran, Methodist, Anglican. So this was an early attempt to reunite the church, an "ecumenical" movement that preceded modern ecumenism by more than a century. They called themselves "Christians", to emphasize their emphasis on Christian unity. Of course, in reality they adhered to very definite doctrinal positions, even if they did not acknowledge them as such.

The first Christian congregations were gathered in 1794 in Virginia by a veteran of the American Revolution—James O'Kelley. He was an Arminian Methodist, but left the

church, objecting to the power of bishops. Methodism, O'Kelley and his followers felt, was becoming too autocratic. They wanted frontier churches to be free to deal with problems that were different from those of older churches in the cities of the East. They declared that the Bible was their only guide and called for a simple faith free of the confessions and creeds European churches had inherited from their ancestors. They believed in "freedom of conscience" subject only to the authority of scripture, without clearly setting forth what scripture teaches.

Far to the North, in Vermont, a Baptist named Abner Jones and his followers were independently coming to the same position. They organized the First Free Christian Church in Lyndon, Vermont. "Christian character" would be the only requirement for membership, and all were welcome to share in the Lord's Supper. Jones disagreed with his fellow Baptists that only those baptized by immersion could be invited to Communion. He was later joined by Baptist Elias Smith, who helped gather another Christian church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and began publishing, in 1808, the Herald of Gospel Liberty. Smith's paper became a means of drawing the separate Christian movements together.

With a minimum of organization, other churches of like mind were established and the movement became known as the "Christian Connection." The "Connection" had been organized in 1820 at the first United General Conference of Christians, during which six principles were unanimously affirmed:

- Christ, the only head of the Church.
- The Bible, sufficient rule of faith and practice.
- Christian character, the only measurement for membership.
- The right of private judgment, interpretation of scripture, and liberty of conscience.
- The name "Christian," worthy for Christ's followers.
- Unity of all Christ's followers in behalf of the world.

By 1845, a regional New England Convention was organized.

A third group, under Barton W. Stone, withdrew in 1803 from the Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky in opposition to Calvinist theology. They also called themselves "Christians" and shared the vision of the Christian Connection: a church beyond denominations that would acknowledge only the authority of Christ and "liberty of conscience." Stone's followers spread from Kentucky into Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

A fourth Christian movement was founded a few decades later in Kentucky and West Virginia by Alexander Campbell, a Scottish Presbyterian immigrant. Some of Stone's followers united with Campbell's new movement in 1832 to form the community that later became known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The majority of Stone's followers did not join Campbell and instead reaffirmed their ties with the

original Christian Connection founded by O'Kelley, Jones and Smith. More than a century later, these streams of the Christian movement would join together.

Another example of seceding Presbyterians on the frontier who founded an Arminian denomination is the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. In 1810 in the log cabin home of Rev. Samuel McAdow in Tennessee, McAdow together with Rev. Finis Ewing and Rev. Samuel King organized the church. The congregation was made up mostly of secedent members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. An outgrowth of "The Great Revival of 1800" in frontier Kentucky, the new denomination turned from the Biblical doctrine of predestination in favor of Arminianism. Unlike other denominations, however, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church retained Presbyterian organizational structure.

So the Second Great Awakening exercised a profound impact on American life and history. The numerical strength of the Baptists and Methodists- as well as smaller groups like the Christian Churches - rose relative to that of the denominations dominant in the colonial period -- the Anglicans, Presbyterians and Congregationalists. Among the latter, efforts to apply Christian teaching to the resolution of social problems presaged the Social Gospel of the late 19th century. In the Burned-Over District of western New York, for example, social radical Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the early feminist, conducted the Seneca Falls Convention devoted to women's suffrage. Social activism inspired by the revival more immediately gave rise to abolition groups and the Society for the Promotion of Temperance, as well as to efforts to reform prisons and care for the handicapped and mentally ill.

America was becoming a more diverse nation in the early to mid-19th century, and the growing differences within American Protestantism reflected and contributed to this diversity. In fact, much of American Protestantism bore little resemblance to the Protestantism of the Protestant Reformation. Rather, it was quite contrary to the tenets of the Reformation, and a return to various Romish and pagan errors. Increasingly it was denying the doctrines of grace, and embracing Arminian errors.

Yet even under these difficult circumstances, Old School Presbyterians maintained much of Calvinist orthodoxy from the 1830s to the 1860s, led by such Princeton theologians as Archibald Alexander and Charles Hodge. Because of their stand, the Old School faction expelled the New School from the Presbyterian church in 1837 for having diverged from the historic Calvinist path. Several New School leaders such as Albert Barnes and Lyman Beecher were rightly accused of holding sub-Calvinist views related to the New Haven theology of Nathaniel W Taylor. Alexander and Hodge answered Taylor in seven articles in the Princeton Review (1830 - 31) by stressing Reformed doctrines such as the imputation of Adam's sin (Adam acted as a representative for all men and his sin was counted against them), Christ's substitutionary atonement, and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. At the same time the Presbyterian Church in the USA (Old School) cut off its ties with Congregationalism as well.

Many Old School men, including Alexander and Hodge, were greatly influenced by revivals in their younger days and acknowledged a continuing need for revival in the church. But they sharply criticized contemporary revivalists for expressing Taylorite views in their preaching. They condemned emotional excesses and demanded that true revivals be carried out within the church, guided by its confessional stance on God's sovereignty and human inability. Charles G Finney's theology and Lectures on Revivals of Religion (1835) were thoroughly criticized. The Old School party also strongly supported Presbyterian polity as most consistent with a Reformed view of the church. Arguing that church order was a matter of faith, they opposed a plan of union with Congregationalists and claimed that Presbyterian polity provided discipline necessary to prevent errors in doctrine and practice which Congregationalism lacked. They also repudiated the social activism of voluntary societies, preferring that education and mission activities take place within the institutional church, where it also could be guided by the church's confession.

Two notable Old School Presbyterian theologians in the South were Robert Dabney and James Henley Thornwell. Both were of Scot-Irish heritage, from which so much of the South at the time descended. Presbyterianism had remained the dominant Christian denomination among the Scotch-Irish segment of the Southern populace. In his discussion on the Scotch-Irish culture, from which most Southerners descended, David Hackett Fischer stated, "The backcountry was indeed very mixed in its religious denominations - much as the borders of North Britain had been. But most visitors observed that Presbyterians generally predominated by the middle decades of the 18th century." This predominance had only grown from that time until 1861. Dabney, Stonewall Jackson, Andrew Jackson, James Polk, Patrick Henry, and Alexander Stephens were all Southerners from Scotch-Irish ancestry. (The other main ethnic group which made up the Southern people were the descendants of the Cavaliers. Jefferson Davis, R.E. Lee, and Robert Toombs were a part of this group, which was Anglican for the most part.)

Dabney (1820-1898) was a theology professor at Union Seminary in Hampton-Sidney, Virginia, for forty years. He was offered the chair of Church History at Princeton in 1860, but his devotion to the South and its cause led him to decline the invitation. According to his biographers, "When the Civil War commenced in the following year he believed in the justice of the cause to which the Confederate States of the South were committed." During the war he was a military chaplain and at one point served as chief of staff to General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. Dabney attained the rank of major in the Confederate Army. General Jackson referred to him as "the most efficient officer he knew." Immediately after the war Dabney lived in poverty as a farmer who had to provide food for his family during the winter of 1866. Later, he returned to Union Seminary to once again take up his life's work. In 1867, Dabney wrote *In Defense of Virginia and the South*, a polemic of Southern beliefs.

Thornwell (1812-1862) only lived to be 49 years old. Yet, in that short life time he "served as a pastor, and twice as a professor in the College of South Carolina, before he was called to the presidency of the College in 1851." After the South declared its

independence and drew up its new constitution, Thornwell began a movement to codify into law the Christian standing of the new nation. He died in 1862, and the project failed to carry on to victory. The words which Thornwell and others sought to insert into the Confederate Constitution were these, "Nevertheless we, the people of these Confederate States, distinctly acknowledge our responsibility to God, and the supremacy of His Son, Jesus Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords; and hereby ordain that no law shall be passed by the Congress of these Confederate States inconsistent with the will of God, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures." But it must be kept in mind that both Dabney and Thornwell rejected the Establishment Principle, and along with American Presbyterianism in general, accepted many premises of 'common sense' philosophy.

Standing alongside the Old School Presbyterian churches were some smaller bodies even more faithful in maintaining Reformed doctrine and worship. These were primarily populated by Scottish and Scot-Irish immigrants of Covenanter and Secession backgrounds. Although they generally abandoned the Establishment Principle, they retained much of their Biblical heritage, such as singing only psalms in public worship and forbidding musical instruments in public worship. The largest such denomination was the United Presbyterian Church of North America. Its base lay in Pennsylvania and the states west of Pennsylvania. Another example was the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

Meanwhile, the Presbyterian Church in the United States (New School) continued to work in close cooperation with the Congregationalists, in enterprises such as missions, abolition (of slavery), and temperance. Though it had a few churches in the South, it was primarily in the North. Union Theological Seminary in New York City became their great center. In 1852 the Congregationalists abrogated the Plan of Union with the New School, though some joint work continued.

The Civil War – and the issues related to it – not only brought political division in America, but ecclesiastical division as well. Most of the Protestant denominations – including the Presbyterian, Methodists, and Baptists – divided North versus South. In part the issue was slavery, and in part the issue was the centralization of power in the federal government.

At the time of the United States Civil War, many Southerners looked on the Union's action as imperialistic. Tracing their ideals back to the American Revolution, the Confederacy proclaimed that they had the right to self-government just as young America did in 1776. In response to the election of Republican Abraham Lincoln in 1860, most of the Southern states seceded from the Union, forming the Confederate States of America. In order to save the Union, northerners led by Abraham Lincoln engaged the southerners in battle. The American Civil War ensued. Some 650,000 Americans died in the conflict; the nation was literally ripped in two. It was surely a divine judgment upon America's sins.

U. S. military leadership was mediocre at first, compared to that of Confederate generals, particularly Robert E. Lee. But the Union government managed to invade the

Southern states, and defeat the Confederate army, by means of an overwhelming advantage in materials and number of soldiers, and the gradual appearance of skilled generals like Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman. The destructiveness of the Union invasion and defeat of the South, followed by exploitive economic policies in the defeated region after the war, caused lasting bitterness among white Southerners toward the U.S. government.

This failure of the Federal government to effectively reunite the country during Reconstruction contributed to other unhappy effects in the inevitable backlash in the South against Reconstruction policies. Reconstruction was the period after the American Civil War when the southern states of the defeated Confederacy, which had seceded from the United States, were reintegrated into the Union. Abraham Lincoln had endorsed a lenient plan for reconstruction, but the immense human cost of the war and the social changes wrought by it led Congress to resist readmitting the rebel states without first imposing preconditions. A series of laws, passed by the Federal government, established the conditions and procedures for reintegrating the southern states. Much of the impetus for Reconstruction involved the question of civil rights for the freed slaves in the southern states. In response to efforts by southern states, Congress enacted a civil rights act in 1866 (and again in 1875). This led to conflict with President Andrew Johnson, who vetoed the Civil Rights Act of 1866; however, his veto was overridden. After solid Republican gains in the midterm elections, the first Reconstruction Act was passed on March 2, 1867; the last on March 11, 1868. The first Reconstruction Act divided ten Confederate states (all except Tennessee, which had been readmitted in 1866) into 5 military districts. Governments that had been established under Abraham Lincoln's plan were abolished; the first Reconstruction Act stated that "no legal State governments or adequate protection for life or property now exist in the rebel States". During the period of Reconstruction there was considerable upheaval in Southern society. Northerners, known as *carpetbaggers*, moved south to participate in southern governments. Many of the freed slaves, working with the carpetbaggers, formed corrupt governments in the South. This created great Southern hostility among the white majority, and in response many white Southerners supported an organization opposing the goals of the Reconstruction, called the Ku Klux Klan. It was a sad time in American history, when both sides departed from Biblical principles.

Three constitutional amendments were passed in the wake of the Civil War: the thirteenth, which abolished slavery; and the fourteenth and fifteenth, which ostensibly granted civil rights, while greatly expanding potential federal powers. The fourteenth amendment was opposed by the southern states, and as a precondition of readmission to the Union, they were required to accept it (or the fifteenth after passage of the fourteenth). All Southern states were readmitted by 1870, but Reconstruction continued until 1877, when the contentious Presidential election of 1876 was decided in favor of Rutherford B. Hayes, supported by Northern states, over his opponent, Samuel J. Tilden. Some historians have argued that the election was handed to the Hayes in exchange for an end to Reconstruction; this theory characterizes the settlement of that election as the "Compromise of 1877". Not all historians agree with this theory; in any case, regardless of the circumstances, Reconstruction came to an end at this time.

The Civil War, and events contemporary with the Civil War, wrought a great change in America's religious landscape. Although Baptists, Methodists, and other misguided sects had grown much more rapidly than the Congregationalists and Presbyterians before the Civil War, yet in the ante-bellum US, Congregationalism and Presbyterianism had retained much of their power and influence from the colonial era. But in the decades after the Civil War, there was a notable decline in Congregationalist and Presbyterian influence, due to a variety of factors.

One factor was the movement towards liberalism in the Congregationalist and Presbyterian churches. We have already traced the rise of liberalism in Congregationalist churches, but we also noted the presence of a strong evangelical wing. As the 19th century progressed, the liberal element increased and the evangelical element decreased. Yale, which had been a center of evangelical Congregationalism, succumbed to theological liberalism. The Congregationalist minister and theologian Horace Bushnell (1802-1876) was representative of this trend. He was born in the township of Litchfield, Connecticut, and graduated from Yale in 1827. In 1831 he entered the theological department of Yale College, and in 1833 was ordained pastor of the North Congregational church in Hartford, Connecticut, where he remained until 1859, when on account of long-continued ill-health he resigned his pastorate. Until his death at Hartford, he occasionally preached and was diligently employed as an author. His heretical books had significant influence in what had been the evangelical wing of Congregationalism. In his book *The Vicarious Sacrifice* (1866) he contended for what has come to be known as the moral view of the atonement in distinction from the Biblical governmental and the penal or satisfaction view. And his book *God in Christ* (1849) undermined an orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.

Liberal tendencies also made greater inroads in Presbyterian circles. Old School Presbyterianism was compromised by the union in 1869 with the New School Presbyterian church. Due to lingering tensions from the Civil War, the Old School in the North did not merge with the Old School Presbyterian church in the South, but instead in both regions the New School and Old School merged. In the North the merged entity was called the Presbyterian Church in the USA, and in the South the merged entity was the Presbyterian Church in the US. The merger itself revealed a doctrinal laxity. When the Old School and New School Presbyterians merged in 1869, their differences were papered over, not resolved. Occurring just as German destructive criticism began to infect the churches of North America, this made it almost impossible to protect the theological integrity of the church. And so it meant that more liberal institutions like Union Theological Seminary in New York, a center for New School Presbyterian thought, churned out ever increasing liberal perspectives, and thrust them into the merged denomination.

One way that theological liberalism subtly entered was via textual criticism and the appearance of a Revised Version of the Bible. Thirty-four of the leading Hebrew and Greek Scholars of America united with sixty-seven Englishmen in this undertaking, which Philip Schaff, the chairman of the American revisers, declared to be "the noblest monument of Christian union and co-operation in this nineteenth century." After a

laborious toil of eight years, during which “no sectarian question was ever raised,” the New Testament was given to the public. “The rapidity and extent of its sale surpassed all expectations and are without a parallel in the history of the book-trade.” The New Testament appeared in 1881 and the Old Testament in 1885. Although one of the Old Testament revisers took pains to say in his *Companion to the Revised Old Testament* that “they have no fellowship with that disposition which of late years has appeared among some who profess and call themselves Christians to speak lightly of the Scriptures as a partial and imperfect record of revelation,” and although the Old Testament Committee was presided over by Professor Wm. H. Green of Princeton Seminary and the New Testament Committee by ex-President Theodore D. Woolsey of Yale College, both regarded as conservative scholars, the mere publication of a new translation of the scriptures, founded upon a revised Hebrew and Greek text consistent with the German critic Lachmann, prepared the public mind for some modification of the concept of scriptural infallibility which had possessed it hitherto. The printing of the Bible in paragraphs like other books—instead of in the oracular verses—and the appearance of portions of the Old Testament in poetic form helped greatly in convincing the plain people of the country that the Bible was to be subsumed under the genus literature rather than kept as a sacred oracle. Nor did the fact that the greatest attacks upon the infallibility of the Bible originated in Germany militate against the progress of the newer thought in America as much as might have been expected. There was far more opposition, for example, in Scotland, where conservative Presbyterian theologians better gauged the consequences. American theological minds were dull, and American scholars felt themselves dependent upon European thought. German theological scholarship had been introduced to American minds by the presence of Philip Schaff (1819–93), who, in an amazing number of volumes, chiefly in the domain of Church History, had commended the thoroughness and sanity of German research to the American public, from his chair in Wittenberg, Pennsylvania, and later in Union Theological Seminary in New York. This lay the groundwork for additional religious compromise in Presbyterianism and beyond.

This theological liberalism often entered into the Presbyterian and other mainline Protestant churches by their method of theological education. Some of the most promising theological students were sent to Germany to complete their theological education. While there, they would pick up liberal theology, and bring it into the American seminaries and churches. Only those churches in America which had not stressed an educated clergy—like certain Baptist and independent churches—avoided this trap.

Too, the battle over modernism was joined with the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, along with the growing historical/critical methodology in the interpretation of scripture emanating from Germany. When the first copies of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* reached American ports late in 1859, nearly all Americans, including most naturalists, believed that the various species of plants and animals owed their origin to divine intervention. Darwin, in contrast, argued that species had originated without supernatural assistance by means of natural selection and other biological mechanisms. According to natural selection, evolution occurred when organisms

possessing certain advantageous characteristics survived in the struggle for scarce resources and passed their distinctive features on to their descendants. Eager for a natural explanation of origins and now predispositionally opposed to a supernatural explanation, the majority of America's leading zoologists, botanists, geologists, and anthropologists within fifteen years or so, embraced some kind of evolution, though few attached as much weight to natural selection as Darwin did. Even Darwin's closest ally in North America, the Harvard botanist Asa Gray, who described himself as "one who is scientifically, and in his own fashion, a Darwinian," disagreed with Darwin on several key points. He not only questioned the ability of natural selection "to account for the formation of organs, the making of eyes, &c.," but appealed to a "special origination" in explaining the appearance of the first humans. He also urged Darwin, without success, to attribute to divine providence the inexplicable organic variations on which natural selection worked.

Charles Hodge, the Princeton Theological Seminary Old School theologian, arguably the most influential theologian in mid-century America, argued against Darwinism in his *What Is Darwinism* (1874). But not all Presbyterians agreed with Hodge. In fact, there was a widespread adoption of so called theistic evolution among the intellectual elites in the mainline Protestant churches. For example, although Charles Hodge opposed evolution, his counterparts in the faculty at Princeton College did not.

President James McCosh (1811–1894) of Princeton College was instrumental in changing the views of many in the evangelical camp. McCosh made his name in Scotland as one of the group to leave the established Church of Scotland and set up the Free Church of Scotland in 1843 (the group led by Thomas Chalmers). McCosh taught at Queens' College in Belfast, before becoming President of Princeton (then commonly known as the College of New Jersey) in 1868. He wrote on a wide variety of theological, philosophical and psychological topics. His major works included *The Method of Divine Government, Physical and Moral* (1850), *The Scottish Philosophy from Hutcheson to Hamilton* (1875), and *The Emotions* (1880). McCosh's role in America in many respects parallels that of Witherspoon before him. Many of McCosh's long list of books, expounding the Scottish "Common Sense" philosophy, which had long been accepted at Princeton (as well as throughout much American philosophy), had been written. He was wrongly regarded as orthodox in evangelical circles, as well as being regarded as an outstanding thinker and educator. He, however, gave liberal recognition to "powers modifying evolution." These agents are light, life, sensation, instinct and intelligence, morality. "As evolution by physical causes cannot [produce them], we infer that God does it by an immediate fiat, even as He created matter. It makes God continue the work of creation, and if God's creation be a good work, why should He not continue it?" So McCosh advocated a form of theistic evolution, and Princeton College, like so many other Christian colleges, quickly embraced and taught this erroneous perspective as well.

McCosh as well as other advocates of theistic evolution sought to maintain central Christian dogma, but theistic evolution ultimately undermined the authority of scripture upon which that dogma stood, and so the dogma fell with evolution. Having destroyed

the foundation, they sought in vain to maintain the structure. For instance, in attempting to defend the unique sonship of Christ while yet maintaining theistic evolution, George Harris of Andover Seminary and later President of Amherst College wrote: "There is no reason to suppose that any other man will be thus Godfilled.... We may well believe that he was one who transcended the human." Because Christ produced "a new moral type," Harris tried to argue that we need not deny either Christ's nature, miracles or his resurrection. Among the most thoroughgoing "Christian" evolutionists of this period may be mentioned President Hyde (1858–1917) of Bowdoin College and President John Bascom (1827–1911) of the University of Wisconsin. The latter, in his *Evolution and Religion or Faith as a Part of a Complete Cosmic System* (1915), rejoiced in the breadth of view and the boundless hope with which the doctrine of evolution invests its believers. Bascom failed to acknowledge the patently obvious: Christian hope is dead if evolution is true, because evolution contradicts scripture. So when the main-line Protestant denominations accepted evolution, they rapidly descended into theological liberalism, and eventually lost membership.

Even Charles Hodge's son, A.A. Hodge (1823-1886), held to an old earth view consisting of vast geologic ages. This was significant because of the place A.A. Hodge maintained at Princeton Seminary. A.A. Hodge in 1877 was called to Princeton to be the associate of his father in the chair of systematic theology, to the full duties of which he succeeded in 1878. This post he retained till his death. He was a trustee of the College of New Jersey (Princeton College) and a leading man in the Presbyterian Church. His first book and that by which he is best known was his *Outlines of Theology* (New York, 1860; enlarged ed., 1878), which was translated into Welsh, modern Greek, and Hindustani. He contributed some important articles to encyclopedias-Johnson's, McClintock and Strong's, and the Schaff-Herzog. He was one of the founders of the *Presbyterian Review*, to the pages of which he was a frequent contributor. So any compromises he made were significant in effect. He was representative of how even the most staunch of Old School advocates in Presbyterianism were gradually weakening.

Another factor in the relative decline of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism were the successful recruiting methods of such groups as the Baptists and the Methodists during the period, which was especially successful in the vast American frontier. American Methodism actually dates back to 1784, when Francis Asbury and other leaders formed the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. Asbury had been born in England, and consecrated by Wesley. Like Wesley, Asbury was an Arminian, and American Methodism has thus been thoroughly Arminian. This actually helped it flourish in an American culture which favored Arminianism. Their method of evangelism was also effective in 19th century frontier America. Circuit riders, many of which were laymen, traveled by horseback to preach the false Methodist gospel and establish churches until there was scarcely any crossroad community in America without a Methodist expression of Christianity. American Methodist churches were generally organized on a connectional model, related but not identical to that used in Britain. Ministers were assigned to churches by bishops, distinguishing it from presbyterian government. Methodist denominations typically give lay members representation at regional and national meetings (conferences) at which the business of the church is

conducted, making it different from episcopalian government. This connectional organizational model differed further from the congregational model, for example of Baptist, and Congregationalist Churches, among others. In 1845 the Methodist Church split between North and South, and did not re-unite until 1939.

The Holiness Movement of the later 19th century was primarily among people of Methodist persuasion. Some important events of this movement were the writings of Phoebe Palmer during the mid-1800s, the establishment of the first of many holiness camp meetings at Vineland, New Jersey in 1867, and the founding of Asbury College (1890), and other similar institutions in the US around the turn of the 20th century. The movement was premised upon an error of John Wesley, sometimes referred to as "entire sanctification," or moral and spiritual perfection. Spiritual perfection in this life was deemed a real possibility, and a spiritual attainment to which every Christian should aspire. It was to be accompanied by the renunciation of drinking, smoking, cursing, dancing, gambling, and playing cards. In addition, many advocates of holiness came to believe that one of "the fruits" of this "second blessing" was the ability to speak in tongues, and to undertake physical healing by the laying on of hands. This was the Pentecostal movement, which we shall consider later. The Holiness and Pentecostal movements attracted support among many blacks, as well as whites.

The Baptist churches also thrived in this period. They catered to the American sense of independence and "soul liberty". Due to their stress on the autonomy of the local church, there were a wide variety of practices and beliefs within churches that labeled themselves as Baptists. However, Baptist churches often united into "conventions" with a prime example being its largest convention, the Southern Baptist Convention. However there were hundred of conventions and many Baptist churches did not fall into any of them. Nor were their clear standards for the ministry, which enabled virtually anyone to step up and claim to be a Baptist minister. Since many Baptists came from Scot-Irish ranks, many retained for a time certain Calvinistic doctrines of salvation. But over time there was a shift towards Arminianism by the majority of Baptists.

An example of the success of the Baptists during the 35 years between the Civil War and the turn of the century were the Southern Baptists. They enjoyed phenomenal growth in membership, income, property values, and cultural influence. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Southern Baptists had blanketed the region. Furthermore, the denomination's quantitative growth was matched by a qualitative dominance of regional religious life, and beyond that to the accepted values and truth-claims of the society generally. It became normative, and probably no other institution typified the culture more accurately or influenced it more profoundly. During this era, the Southern Baptist Convention expanded its efforts through establishing a press to publish Sunday School materials, strengthening the role of its colleges, developing a foreign missionary enterprise, founding theological seminaries and much more. White Baptists were relatively conservative on issues like evolution and scriptural inspiration, while the Episcopal, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches were encountering more divisions in these matters. Where many of these evangelicals had been ecumenically oriented during the revivals of the Second Great Awakening, now they came to be rather provincial, and

denominationally conscious. A competitive attitude developed on the subject of doctrinal teachings, particularly with the Presbyterians and Methodists over infant baptism. Southern Baptists also boasted of Southern purity, a point of view which strengthened their appeal to the region. On the frontier, sometimes Baptist churches were the only ones available to join. And Baptist membership increased, largely at the expense of Presbyterian membership. Men were adopting ever more deviant positions.

The Civil War era also proved the beginning of an era of increasing Masonic popularity, which lasted until World War II. Freemasonry had been looked upon favorably during the American Revolution, but had fallen into disrepute after the Revolutionary era. Indeed, an Anti-Masonic Party had even formed as a political third party. In 1826 a bricklayer from Batavia, New York, William Morgan, disappeared. He had formerly been a Mason and was on the verge of publishing an exposé of Masonic secrets. Anti-Masonic fervor was especially strong in New York State, where the political machine, the Albany Regency, was run by Martin Van Buren, a Mason. Opposition was led by William Seward and Thurlow Weed. A state Anti-Masonic party was formed in 1828 and was successful with electing local and statewide candidates; the party also spread into neighboring states. In 1831, the anti-Masonic Party held a national convention and nominated William Wirt as their presidential candidate for the following year. Wirt had been the U.S. Attorney General and, strangely, a Mason. Running against the popular Andrew Jackson, Wirt did poorly, carrying only the state of Vermont. Their prime impact had been to drain votes away from Henry Clay. Around 1834, the Anti-Masonic Party members helped to establish the new Whig Party. These proceedings, along with the strength of Old School Presbyterianism in the period, had diminished Masonic ranks. But the Civil War reversed that trend, and many men joined freemasonry during the course of the Civil War. Many remained Masons after the war, and most communities had prominent Masonic lodges. Freemasonry undermined sound Protestant theology by teaching a spiritual brotherhood of man apart from Christianity. Freemasonry contradicted sound Reformed faith and practice. Its growth, therefore, weakened the Protestant churches.

America became a veritable breeding ground of heretical sects and cults, since there was no suppression of fraudulent religion. We have already noted the rise of such sects as the Mormons and the Seventh Day Adventists before the Civil War. After the Civil War ones such as the The Church of Christ, Scientist (often known as The Christian Science Church) was founded by Mary Baker Eddy, in 1879. It claimed to be based on the Bible and her book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. Eddy argued that given the absolute perfection and goodness of God, sin, disease, and death were not of Him, and therefore could not be truly real. The material world was thus in effect an illusive blend of spiritual truth and material "error" which could be remedied through elevated spiritual understanding; this she contended, was what enabled Jesus in the Christian record to heal. Adherents of this teaching, known as *Christian Scientists*, thus believe that disease can be overcome through faith, prayer, and an ever-deepening understanding of God and man's relation to Him. As a result, church members generally substituted prayer for traditional medical care, often with the aid of *Christian Science practitioners* (people who devote their full time to treatment through prayer) and claim to experience healing,

occasionally reporting these experiences in church publications. The *Mother Church* was located in Boston, Massachusetts. A newspaper, the *Christian Science Monitor*, founded by Eddy in 1908 and winner of 7 Pulitzer prizes, was published by the church. Branch Christian Science churches and Christian Science Societies were at once related to the central church but with large autonomy. They proliferated worldwide, like so many other sects and cults which had their origin in the US.

Given the circumstances, we should not be surprised that the Mother of fraudulent religion, the Roman Catholic Church, should enjoy rising prosperity and success in America. This success was set in motion with the overthrow of established Protestantism in the American Revolution, and it enjoyed consistent growth from that point onward. In 1790, there were only 30,000 Catholics in the entire country, but 40 years later that number had grown to 600,000. When the first Provincial Council of Catholic Bishops was held in Baltimore in 1829, it served to reveal to non-Catholic Americans that the church was, to use Sydney Ahlstrom's description, a "substantial, growing, and well organized reality." As Catholicism grew steadily (primarily, but not exclusively through immigration), it began to threaten Protestant hopes for the future of America.

In 1820, the first wave of Irish settlement began what would eventually swell to four and one half million Irish before the century was over. Roman Catholic Irish wanted to escape the ill consequences of Romanism, generally without abandoning their false Romish religion. So they migrated to an area enjoying the fruits of Protestantism. During the 1830's, 200,000 Irish arrived in America. But this number grew exponentially with the Potato blight of 1845 that resulted in the deaths of 1.5 million Irish. With the coming of the blight, the exodus from Ireland became a desperate scramble. By 1850, there were 962,000 Irish in the United States, and that number nearly doubled over the next ten years.

This wave of immigration left Protestants deeply fearful. Such prominent Protestant leaders as Lyman Beecher and Horace Bushnell bewailed the situation in the 1830's and 1840's, but they did not recognize that the root of the problem was their own religious unfaithfulness. In the 1840's, when there was a major influx of Irish immigrants, the number of Roman Catholics in America had soared to 1.75 million, leading to the formation of the inter-denominational American Protestant Association. It was organized to coordinate the various anti-Catholic groups. Many of the Protestant voluntary societies also participated in the anti-catholic agitation, but to little positive effect.

In the post-war period, as Catholic immigration continued to grow exponentially (new Catholics came from many of the same Eastern European countries as did the Jews), opposition to Catholicism grew along with it. Josiah Strong, in his widely read book *Our Country*, listed immigration as one of seven perils facing America, the others being Romanism, Mormonism, intemperance, socialism, wealth, and the city. He wrote: "during the last four years we have suffered a peaceful invasion by an army, more than twice as vast as the estimated number of Goths and Vandals that swept over Southern Europe and overwhelmed Rome." What was of particular concern to the Protestants was

the number of Catholics coming to America. From 1880-1900, two and a half million Catholics arrived, further threatening Protestant America.

The American Catholic Church grew, not only by immigration, but by conversion. During the 19th century, converts to Catholicism numbered 700,000. Many of these came from the ranks of High Church Episcopalians. In 1852, 50 priests and one Bishop (Levi S. Ives) of the Episcopal Church had converted to Roman Catholicism.

A focal point of the conflict between Protestants and Catholics was the education system. For their part Protestants distrusted the subservience of Catholics to their priests and Pope, and many echoed Daniel Dorchester of the Evangelical Alliance who stated: "We believe the Roman Catholic Church is inimical to the best progress of society, and in direct antagonism to the historic religion of the nation--the religion of the Holy Scriptures." This gave an impetus to the public education system. But without an Establishment Principle, the public education system was without a sound Biblical anchor, and so drifted over time into rank secular humanism.

American Catholicism was not only held in suspicion by American Protestants, but also by the Vatican. From its inception the American Catholic Church was dominated by Jesuits who maintained the American Church's independence for very political reasons. American Catholics had maintained a high degree of autonomy from the Vatican, in part because of accusations leveled against them that they were under the control of a foreign potentate. Shortly after the American Revolution, Bishop John Carroll asked that an American Episcopate be created as soon as possible, and Bishop John England in the early years of the 19th century, focused on building a truly American Church with an American clergy. Archbishop Gibbons and Ireland labored tirelessly to get the Church to recognize and take into account distinctive American ways and ideals. The controversy reached a peak in 1870 when the First Vatican Council promulgated the doctrine of papal infallibility. The Council declared that: "When the Roman pontiff speaks *ex cathedra*, that is when discharging the office of the Shepherd and Doctor of all Christians, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority [he] defines a doctrine to be held by the Universal Church concerning faith or morals, he enjoys (by divine assistance promised to him in the blessed Peter) that infallibility by which the Divine Redeemer wished his Church to be instructed in the definition of doctrine concerning faith or morals; and therefore such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irreformable of themselves, and not by virtue of the consent of the Church." Prior to this only Church Councils had exercised this kind of power. Now, as some scholars have pointed out, they were made "superfluous or at least reduced to an advisory role." The Vatican Council also asserted the Pope's universal episcopate, that is, his direct authority over every diocese. This meant, in effect, that the Pope had become the absolute monarch of the church. But when the vote was taken to expand the Pope's authority, the American delegates opposed these measures, but they were outvoted by the Italians, Spaniards, and South Americans. The American delegates voiced strong opposition, and believed that if these changes in doctrine and polity were adopted, in the words of Bishop John McQuaid, "the damage to the church will be immense. In some countries there will be large schisms...if some decrees are passed as they have been presented to us, we can look for hard times in all countries in which

Catholics and Protestants are expected to live together." The day before the final vote, he wrote, "They have ended by making the definition [of infallibility] as absolute and strict as it was possible to make it. As a consequence a large non placet vote will be recorded against it. What will be the consequences...God only knows." The Vatican continued to be threatened by this sort of opposition and independence in the American Church.

The American Catholic Church not only sought to guard its reputation with those on the outside, it nurtured the Catholic immigrant community which was increasing its ranks. The Catholic Church, more than any other organization, made a concerted effort to welcome the new Catholic immigrants and encourage additional immigration. Catholic citizens helped them find jobs and homes; sisters (nuns) taught their children English in Catholic schools; priests tried to protect their political interests and shield them from a sometimes hostile Protestant environment; the local church held religious festivals and social events. The neighborhood Catholic church was not just a church; it was the focal point of a whole community, a whole way of life. The Roman Catholic Church in America continued to engage in a shrewd strategy of building itself up, even as it watched (and encouraged) the disintegration of Protestantism in America.

The effect of Roman Catholic immigration, as well as the immigration of infidels like the Jews and even some Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists, in the successive waves of massive immigration to the United States between the 1840s and 1920s, changed the religious complexion of America. In 1850 Catholics made up only five percent of the total U.S. population. By 1906, they made up seventeen percent of the total population (14 million out of 82 million people)--and constituted the single largest religious denomination in the country. Their size and unity, in contrast with Protestant disunity, made them an increasingly formidable political force, especially in the North where most immigration occurred. The American public's resistance to immigration culminated in a series of immigration restriction laws passed in the early 1920s, but by then much of the damage had already been done and was locked into place.

The religious population shift was accompanied by changes in social norms. For example, Sunday observance began to change in the 1800s with immigrant laborers, many Roman Catholic, who saw things differently. American Protestantism into the 19th century had in great measure remained faithful to the principle that Sunday was to be kept as the Christian Sabbath. But many Roman Catholic immigrants were devoted to "a Sunday that took a very different shape - church in the morning and leisure in the afternoon," says Alexis McCrossen, author of "Holy Day, Holiday: The American Sunday." The Roman Catholic practice gradually had a greater and greater influence on the way the Lord's Day was kept by Americans in general. A little leaven leavened the whole lump.

The rapid evolution in the religious complexion and population of America was accompanied by great economic changes during what is sometimes called the Gilded Age. The population and the labor force were shifting dramatically away from farms to cities, and from fields to factories, and also to service industries like banking and insurance.

When the economic prosperity of the Gilded Age came to a halt in the Panic of 1893, there was a re-evaluation of the policies then present. The Panic of 1893 included deflation, rural decline, and unemployment (indicative of under-consumption), which aggravated the bitter social protests of the Gilded Age, the Populist movement, the free-silver crusade, and violent labor disputes such as the Pullman Strike. Similarly, the post-1873 in Europe period saw a reemergence of far more militant working-class organization and cycles of large strikes. In fact, the rapid turn to imperialism in the late nineteenth century can be correlated with cyclically spaced economic depressions that adversely affected many elite groups. Like the Long Depression, an era of increasing unemployment and deflated prices for manufactured goods, the Panic of 1893 contributed to fierce competition over markets in the growing "spheres of influence" of the United States, which tended to overlap with Britain's, especially in the Pacific and South America.

While Germany, the U.S., Italy, and other more recently industrialized empires were under relatively less pressure to offload surplus capital than Britain, these nations would resort to protectionism and formal empire. Some politicians, such as Henry Cabot Lodge, William McKinley, and Theodore Roosevelt, advocated a more aggressive foreign policy to pull the United States out of the depression of the second Grover Cleveland Administration, known for a more laissez-faire approach and free trade. By World War I, the rise of US imperialism and militarism, however, would, in effect, save the Allies, the older, more established, and more liberal empires from the emergent threat of Germany.

Just as the German Reich reacted to depression with the adoption of protective tariff protection in 1879, so would the United States, with the landslide election victory of William McKinley, who had risen to national prominence six years earlier with the passage of the McKinley Tariff of 1890. Britain's economic threat from the United States, thus, was (at the time at least) intensified by America's rise as a great military and political power after the Civil War, its adoption of such protective tariff protection, its acquisition of a colonial empire in 1898, and its building of a powerful navy, "the Great White Fleet", under the slain McKinley's more "big stick" and militarist successor, Theodore Roosevelt. This course of events paralleled a similar trend in Germany, which emerged as a potential military power after its own unification, its adoption of a tariff in 1879, its acquisition of a colonial empire in 1884-85, and its building of a powerful navy after 1898. On the Pacific, since the Meiji Restoration, Japan's development followed a similar pattern, following the Western lead in industrialization and militarism, enabling it to gain a foothold or "sphere of influence" in Qing China.

The end of the 19th century ushered in a period of imperialist expansion, pushing the USA on to the World stage:

- 1893 - Queen Liliuokalani deposed by an American coup; leading to the annexation of Hawaii to the United States in 1898.
- 1898 - Spanish-American War the USA gained control of the Spanish colonies of Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam.

- 1903 - intervention in Colombia to achieve the independence of Panama and to acquire the land necessary to build the canal.

The annexation of Hawaii and the fall-out from the Spanish-American War saw the United States very closely adopt the European model of empire, if only for a brief period. The era also saw the first widespread protest against American imperialism. The population was divided between those that saw the economic and strategic benefits of colonies and those that felt it was counter to America's founding ideology. Noted Americans such as Mark Twain spoke out forcefully against these ventures. The same period saw other notables such as British author and poet Rudyard Kipling advocate the idea of The White Man's Burden to civilize the rest of the world.

During this same period the American people continued to strongly chastise the European powers for their imperialism. The Boer War in South Africa was especially unpopular in the United States, and it soured Anglo-American relations.

The Kingdom of Hawaii was long an independent monarchy in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. During the nineteenth century, first American (especially Congregationalist) missionaries and then American business interests began to play a major role in the island. Most notable were the powerful fruit companies, such as Dole Pineapple. After a coup financed and directed by American interests, the island became a republic in 1894, and in 1898 Hawaiian President Sanford Dole agreed to his nation's annexation by the United States. The republic ended in 1900 and the country became a territory of the US.

With the Spanish-American War, the United States greatly increased its international power. The Spanish-American War took place in 1898. The Treaty of Paris (1898) ended the Spanish-American war, giving the United States possession of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Cuba, in exchange for \$20 million.

The Philippine-American War (1899-1913) is perhaps the most egregious example of United States imperialism. While many Filipinos were initially delighted to be rid of the Spanish rule of the Philippines (which included oppression by scandalous Romish orders like the Jesuits), the guerilla fighters soon found that the Americans were not prepared to grant them much more autonomy than Spain had. Thus for the next six years American forces engaged in a war in the jungles of the Philippines against the insurgents. The war was expensive and quite unpopular in the United States, but eventually victory was obtained.

Although US capital investments within the Philippines and Puerto Rico were relatively small (figures that would seemingly detract from the broader economic implications on first glance), these colonies were strategic outposts for expanding trade with Asia, particularly China and Latin America, enabling the United States to reap the benefit of China's "Open Door" and Dollar Diplomacy under Taft in Latin America. Imperialism by the United States, marked by the reaffirmation of the Monroe Doctrine (formalized by the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine in 1904), would thus herald the trend

of the United States replacing Britain as the predominant "investor" in Latin America. This was a process largely completed by the end of the Great War.

The late 19th century was a "cyclone" socially and politically, with changes in the economy, science, technology and "higher criticism" of scripture. In this period the infallible scriptures were subjected to critical examination. The ordinary canons of historical and literary criticism were applied to it, and as a result the awesome phrase "Thus saith the Lord" came to bear diverse connotations. It was in the eighties and nineties of the 19th century that the authority of the scripture became a vital question in American thought. Then a series of heresy trials—five within the Presbyterian Church—concentrated the attention of religious people upon the subject.

Dissent in the Presbyterian Church reached a boiling point in 1891 when Charles A. Briggs was in line to become president of Union Theological Seminary. But Briggs had incited protests from the Biblical conservatives who rightly adhered to the infallibility of scripture, while Briggs and other liberals engaged in duplicity as they promoted their liberalism. The 1891 General Assembly voted against letting Briggs assume the presidency at Union Theological Seminary. Briggs, who had studied higher criticism under German scholars, lost the presidency partly because of this statement about scripture: "There is nothing divine in the text – in its letters, words, or clauses." "Briggs, started out sympathetic to Old School," Wilkinson said. "He talked about his mediating theology, which not considered provocative. ... He spoke about barriers, inerrancy and infallibility."

Briggs' allegiance to higher criticism spawned a backlash. Sixty-three overtures opposing his appointment at Union were presented to the 1891 General Assembly. Briggs' appointment was turned down and the commissioners approved a statement expressing their belief in the inerrancy of scripture. In addition, in 1892, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission suspended Briggs from the ministry. He became the pastor of a Protestant Episcopal Church, which had already succumbed to theological liberalism.

So Charles Briggs was dealt with, but the cancer by then had already spread far beyond one man. The PCUSA General Assembly in 1892 declared that the original manuscripts of the Bible were "without error", but many theologians and ministers other than Briggs required church discipline.

While Union Theological Seminary in New York was at the vanguard of theological liberalism in the Presbyterian Church in the USA, Princeton Theological Seminary was still in the vanguard of its Old School orthodoxy. But even this vanguard of Old School orthodoxy was slipping from its moorings. The weaknesses inherent in its common sense philosophy and opposition to the Establishment Principle were bearing fruit. One doctrinal compromise followed another. During the 19th century Charles Hodge and his son A.A. Hodge had led at Princeton Seminary. Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield succeeded A.A. Hodge in this position.

Warfield arrived at Princeton Seminary when both its basic outlook and worldwide reputation still were in place. Since its founding in 1811, Princeton had become the engine of the Old School tendency within American Presbyterianism and far beyond. The seminary was devoted to an authoritative view of scripture, in contrast to the emotionalism of the revival movements, the rationalism of the higher critics, and the confusions of the emerging cults. Yet it was also committed to a 'common sense' philosophical viewpoint, derived from thinkers such as Thomas Reid (1710-1796), with its evidentialism in apologetics, anti-Establishment Principle, and compromise on the doctrine of total depravity. B. B. Warfield sought to work within these parameters; indeed, he embodied them. The seminary's influence was not just upon its students and, through them, the pulpits of the Presbyterian Church. It extended far and wide through its journal, commonly referred to as *The Princeton Review*, from its inception in 1825 until it ceased publication in 1930. Through most of those years, this was the most important theological journal in the world, ranging over a vast range of subjects. Warfield edited the journal from 1889 to 1921; only Charles Hodge served longer.

In contrast to the Hodges before him, and because of his wife's poor health, Warfield traveled little and was rarely active in denominational activities. When asked to serve on a committee of the General Assembly to revise *The Westminster Confession*, he declined, believing the effort to be wrong-headed.

Warfield served an uneasy co-editorship of *The Presbyterian Review* from 1887 to 1889 with Charles A. Briggs (1841-1913), in an unsuccessful attempt to bridge the widening gap between the two sides in the Presbyterian Church. He wrote a joint article with A. A. Hodge in 1881 on 'Inspiration', which drew the attention of many for its erudite and trenchant defense of the inerrancy of Scripture. Warfield went on to write extensively, and his many books continue to be published and translated around the world.

Warfield's life-long ministry was to refute theological liberalism, even though he himself was compromised by it. Dismayed by new and subjective trends, even in supposedly orthodox circles, Warfield warned against the counterfeit miracles that marked the church in the twentieth century and the perfectionism that appealed to those with exalted views of human nature. But for all his theological firmness in some areas, he was not immune to the baneful influences of his time. His 'common sense' philosophical views, led him to accept Darwinian evolution, as long as God was allowed to shepherd the process along! Charles Hodge had been much more skeptical of Darwinian evolution. Another area of compromise by Warfield concerned the text of the Bible. But to understand what happened here, we need to consider the view which had dominated conservative reformed thought before the time of Warfield.

At the beginning of the 16th century Reformation, you will recall, a humanist scholar by the name of Erasmus published the first printed and mass produced edition of the Greek New Testament. His printed text was based on the relatively small number of late manuscript witnesses that were available to him at the time. What has been discovered since his day dwarfs what he had available to him. Yet, we should not for this reason undervalue the manuscripts he worked with, or the text of his Greek New Testament.

The manuscripts he used were late, but they were faithful exemplars of the vast majority of New Testament manuscripts used throughout the church since the apostolic era. Therefore Erasmus placed in the hands of the Reformers a printed Greek New Testament with genuine catholicity, which presented what had been preserved as sacred text in the church throughout its history. This text was rightly regarded as the Bible. The Bible is the infallible Word of God, and God has preserved the integrity of His Word for the Church from generation to generation. God did not leave man without His Word for generations, only to be discovered in the Vatican or some monastery centuries later (as many modern scholars came to believe).

It is important to realize that the vast majority of ancient witnesses to the text of the New Testament favors this Ecclesiastical Text, Traditional Text, Majority Text, Received Text, or whatever else you want to call it. With Erasmus' Greek New Testament, and with other editions of that basic text by editors who followed Erasmus, scholars had at their disposal a printed edition of the consensus of ancient witnesses to the preserved, catholic, sacred text of the New Testament. In time, these printed editions became known as the Textus Receptus, or Received Text. When the Reformers urged us "Back to the Sources", it was to these extant texts, not to some hypothetically reconstructed original autograph. It was the texts in hand that the Reformers and confessors called inspired and infallible...all of the Bible translations produced during the Reformation and post-Reformation eras, were translations of the received Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and the received Greek text of the New Testament, not some hypothetical reconstruction of lost original autographs...

In the 1700 's and 1800 's, as more and more ancient manuscripts and sources became available, it was discovered that some few of these witnesses differed substantially from the Ecclesiastical Text in numerous places. These variant readings were seized upon by rationalistic, skeptical scholars in order to attack the church's doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the scriptures. Many conservative scholars responded to this threat by maintaining that the Ecclesiastical Text was the sacred text that God had preserved through the church throughout the centuries, and regarded the variant readings in the minority texts as either intentional or inadvertent corruptions. They were not overly intimidated by the variant readings. However, some conservative scholars, particularly B.B. Warfield, bought into the rationalistic argument that the Ecclesiastical Text was an ecclesiastical corruption of the text of the New Testament. Warfield asserted this in what he imagined was the interests of orthodoxy. He argued that the church had corrupted the New Testament by smoothing it out and taking out the rough edges. He asserted that the inspiration and infallibility of the New Testament resided only with the original autographs, and that it was the task of conservative textual critics to use the "earliest and best" manuscripts and witnesses in order to reconstruct, as closely as possible, the text of the autographs. Thus Warfield, and the many reformed conservatives that followed him, turned against the Ecclesiastical Text and minimized the doctrine of divine preservation which had always gone hand in hand with the doctrine of inspiration. They felt safe in locating inspiration and infallibility in the (as far as we know non-existent) autographs, and they confidently began the quest for the original text. It did not seem to bother them that behind their quest lay the idea that for 1900 years labored with a "weak" text while

the "purer" manuscripts lay moldering in forgotten corners, only to be brought to light in an era noted more for its apostasy than for its faithfulness.

The nineteenth century culmination of the new approach to the text of the New Testament came with the publication of the English Revised Version of 1881. This granddaddy of all modern Bible translations reflects the text critical outlook of two famous English scholars, Westcott and Hort. They and the translation committee that worked with them were charged by the Anglican Church to revise the Authorized Version as gently and sparingly as possible, making only patently necessary changes. First, they edited an altogether new edition of the Greek New Testament, which reflected their preference for a small minority of ancient manuscripts that differ sometimes sharply from the Byzantine/Majority text. Then they translated their new text into English rather than following the text used by the Authorized Version translators. They made unnecessary changes to the wording of the Authorized Version, even when this made their version more obtuse and stilted, and unleashed it on the world.

By and large the scholarly world liked Westcott and Hort's new Greek Text, but were mixed about the quality of the English translation. The nineteenth century was a time when people snapped hungrily at any novel new idea. And just as they had done with Darwin and evolution, so they did now with an amazing fascination for discarded old manuscripts dug out of monastery wastebaskets and cellars. In the scholarly world, Westcott and Hort's Greek New Testament, and the multitudinous revised editions of it throughout the 20th century, have become the almost universally recognized *New Textus Receptus*.

With these compromises by Warfield and the many which followed his lead even in the conservative camp, we should not be surprised at the results. Warfield's time was one of unparalleled theological decline within the Presbyterian Church in the USA. In 1903, the church vitiated its commitment to *The Westminster Confession* to such an extent that it was possible three years later for the majority of the Arminian Cumberland Presbyterian Church to merge back into it. Only three years after Warfield's death, in the 'Auburn Affirmation', over 1200 ministers and ruling elders dismissed the miracles and resurrection of Jesus Christ as fanciful relics. Eight years after his death, the church's General Assembly reorganized the Board of Princeton Seminary, gutting its orthodoxy. But it would not be fair to blame Warfield for most of this declension; Warfield actually resisted the errors of his time more than most.

Conservative efforts to stay the tide of liberalism in the Presbyterian Church in the USA proved unsuccessful. One attempt was to outline those doctrines which all ministers should embrace. So in 1910 the "five points" of fundamentalism (the five fundamentals) were adopted: the inerrancy of the Bible, the virgin birth of Christ, his substitutional atonement, Christ's bodily resurrection, and the authenticity of miracles. In reality, this was a retreat for sound Presbyterian theology, to reduce the truths to be defended by the church to such a skeleton.

The Presbyterian leader who arose at the time to counterattack the advance of theological liberalism in American Presbyterianism was J. Gresham Machen. Machen was born at Baltimore in 1881. He was reared Presbyterian. Schooled in the *Westminster Confession* and the Bible, he would later say that at twelve he had a better understanding of the scripture than many older students entering seminary. He was educated at Johns Hopkins and Princeton universities, Princeton Theological Seminary and the Universities of Marburg and Göttingen in Germany. Although he is known as a conservative champion of traditional Calvinism against modernism, under the influence of German liberals in the German schools, he almost became a liberal himself. In the end, his conviction that the Bible was true, made him an ally of the fundamentalists. He was ordained in 1914, after discovering that Christ "keeps a firmer hold on us than we keep on him."

J. Gresham's battles against modernism were mostly waged at Princeton Seminary, where he taught for many years. He insisted that Modernist Christianity and Bible Christianity were two different religions. As the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. began to adopt Modernist ideas, he fought the drift. Typical Modernists doubted the truth of the Resurrection of Christ, forsook the Virgin Birth, and were skeptical of miracles and of the Bible's accuracy. On the other side, J. Gresham defended all these things. He fought the good fight against the inroads of liberal theology and the hypocrisy of those Presbyterian ministers who vowed on their ordination to uphold the divine authority of the Word of God in Holy Scripture, and then spent the rest of their lives preaching doctrines contrary to the Word of God.

One famous book authored by Machen was *The Virgin Birth of Christ*. In it he answered objection after objection. He began by showing that the doctrine was very old and that differences in Matthew and Luke could be reconciled. He argued that the virgin birth was a crucial element of the whole story of Jesus: "Remove the part and the whole becomes harder not easier to accept; the New Testament account of Jesus is most convincing when it is taken as a whole."

But liberals continued to advance. On May 21, 1922, Harry Emerson Fosdick preached "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" from the pulpit of First Presbyterian Church of New York City. This sermon propelled the fundamentalist-modernist conflict. Moderates in the denomination gathered and signed the "Auburn Affirmation" in 1924. This document affirmed the "five points" but allowed for alternative formulae for explaining these doctrines, and it called for toleration in the denomination. Over the next several annual General Assemblies, Machen's contentions were repudiated, and he was denied an appointment at Princeton Seminary. In 1929 Princeton Seminary was re-organized to give liberals control.

Machen left Princeton to form Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia in 1929. Machen felt that to be consistent, he had to leave Princeton. He founded Westminster Seminary to reclaim truths that he saw being thrown away. Next he formed the Independent Board for Presbyterian Missions because some Presbyterian missionaries (such as Pearl S. Buck) made statements that watered down faith in Christ. He was suspended from the ministry

for creating this alleged schism. So he founded the Presbyterian Church of America, known today as the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He died in 1937.

The final act in closing the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the Presbyterian Church in the USA came with the commission to study mission in the Protestant Church, led by William Ernest Hocking, a professor at Harvard University. The commission issued a one-volume summary of its work called *Rethinking Missions* (Harper 1932). The project was funded by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the benefactor behind Fosdick's Riverside Church. The report urged greater sensitivity to the integrity of other religions and called for a more stringent standard in the selection of missionary candidates, criticizing missionaries for their "rigidity." The report received an ambivalent response; it solidified conservative rejection of modernism but, over the next half century, became the basis for much of contemporary mission work in the Presbyterian church.

In the North the once influential Old School Presbyterianism was reduced to small Presbyterian denominations. The United Presbyterian Church of North America merged with the Presbyterian Church in the USA in 1958, for it too had given way to theological liberalism. Southern Presbyterians were less affected by the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the early 20th century, because liberal opinions on scripture were still more rare in the South. But gradually the Presbyterian Church in the US also succumbed to theological liberalism, and in 1983 it too merged with the Presbyterian Church in the USA. Thus mainline Presbyterianism in the United States had fallen into apostasy. And Presbyterianism had been the last of the mainline denominations to fall.

We have already noted the fundamentalist movement which began in the late 19th century to counteract modernism. It insisted on adhering to a set of core beliefs under attack by theological liberals. The original formulation of American fundamentalist beliefs can be traced to the Niagara Bible Conference in 1878. In 1910, these beliefs later became distilled into what were known as the "five fundamentals", which were:

- Inerrancy of the Bible
- The virgin birth and deity of Jesus Christ
- The doctrine of substitutionary atonement
- The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ
- The bodily second coming of Jesus Christ

At first leading Presbyterians like Warfield and Machen figured prominent in the movement. But very quickly the movement became led and even dominated by dispensationalists. Dispensationalism became so successful, and conservative Presbyterian ranks so thinned, that the Fundamentalist movement became identified with dispensationalist teachings, even though many of the first and most influential Fundamentalists, like B. B. Warfield and J. Gresham Machen, were strongly opposed to dispensationalism. Although by historical standards a relative novelty, dispensationalism enjoyed a meteoric rise to prominence in Protestant circles in America.

The roots of dispensationalism go back to the writings of a Jesuit author from Chile named Manuel De Lacunza (1731–1801), but dispensationalism proper is generally considered to begin with the writings of Francis Darby. Manuel De Lacunza wrote a manuscript in Spanish titled *La Venida del Mesías en Gloria y Magestad* ("The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty"), under the pen name of Juan Josafa [Rabbi] Ben-Ezra about 1791. An advocate of Futurism, Lacunza argued that the Antichrist (and Man of Sin) of scripture was still off in the future, in contrast to the Protestant interpretation which identified him with the Papacy. Edward Irving (1792-1834), a deposed Scottish Presbyterian minister and forerunner of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, translated Lacunza's work from Spanish into English in a book titled *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty with a Preliminary Discourse*, which included Irving's own lengthy preface. Margaret McDonald, a 15 year old Scottish girl, and member of Edward Irving's congregation, had visions in early 1830 that included a Secret Rapture of believers before the appearance of the Antichrist. She informed Irving of her visions by letter. Irving then attended the prophecy conferences that began in Dublin, Ireland in 1830 at Powerscourt Castle, where he promoted *both* Futurism and a Secret Rapture. John Nelson Darby (1800–1882), a Church of Ireland clergyman, later with the Plymouth Brethren, also promoted Futurism and a secret rapture. Darby attended the series of meetings on Bible Prophecy that began in 1830 at Powerscourt, Ireland, and at these conferences Darby apparently learned about the secret rapture as revealed by vision to Margaret McDonald, and promoted by Edward Irving, and he soon visited Margaret MacDonald at her home in Port Glasgow, Scotland. Dispensationalism was proposed as a specific system by Darby. Darby later visited America several times between 1859 and 1874, where his Futurist theology was readily accepted. In the Protestant countries of Europe, on the other hand, it was not widely accepted.

Cyrus Ingerson Scofield (1843-1921) greatly popularized dispensationalism. He was strongly influenced by the writings of J. N. Darby, and incorporated Futurism in the notes of his *Scofield Reference Bible*. First published by Oxford University Press in 1909, one million copies were printed by 1930. The *Scofield Bible* was instrumental in firmly establishing the Jesuit inspired Futurist interpretation in the Protestant Bible schools of the United States in the 20th century. Scofield's theology was Arminian, anti-nomian, and dispensationalist, although it adhered to the five fundamentals of the faith.

Dispensationalism has had a number of effects on Protestantism, at least as it is practised in the United States of America. By consistently teaching that the Beast of Revelation, or the Antichrist, is a future political leader, dispensationalism has weakened the Reformation identification of that figure with the Papacy. Also, Darby's prophecies envision Judaism as continuing to enjoy God's protection, parallel to Christianity, literally to the End of Time, and teaches that God has a separate track in the prophecies for Jews, apart from the church. This made dispensationalist supporters of Zionism. The dispensationalist movement especially prospered among Baptist and independent fundamentalist churches. These churches became especially attractive among Americans, since they adhered to the infallibility of scripture, while the mainline churches were denying its infallibility through liberalizing tendencies.

The Pentecostal movement, which we have already noted grew out of the Methodist Holiness movement, adopted dispensationalism alongside its other heretical errors. Modern Pentecostalism began around 1901. The commonly accepted origin dates from when Agnes Ozman purportedly received the gift of tongues at Charles Fox Parham's Bethel Bible College in Topeka [Kansas] in 1901. Parham, a minister of Methodist background, formulated the doctrine that tongues was the "Bible evidence" of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Parham left Topeka and began a revival ministry which led to a link to the Azusa street revival through William J. Seymour whom he taught in Houston. The expansion of the movement started with the Azusa Street Revival, beginning April 9, 1906 at the Los Angeles home of a Mr. and Mrs. Edward Lee, when Mr. Lee experienced what he felt to be an infilling of the Holy Spirit during a prayer session. The attending pastor, William J. Seymour, also claimed that he was overcome with the Holy Spirit on April 12, 1906. On April 18, 1906, the Los Angeles Times ran a front page story on the movement. By the third week in April, 1906, the small but growing congregation had rented an abandoned African Methodist Episcopal church at 312 Azusa Street and organized as the Apostolic Faith Mission. Pentecostalism combined various errors (dispensationalism, Arminianism, denial of the sufficiency of scripture) into an outrageous, albeit popular, religion.

The first decade of Pentecostalism was marked by interracial assemblies, which was generally looked down upon at that time in American history. "...Whites and blacks mix in a religious frenzy..." read a local newspaper account. This lasted until 1924, when the church split along racial lines. When the *Pentecostal Fellowship of North America* was formed in 1948, it was made up entirely of Anglo-American Pentecostal denominations. But more recently the unification of white and black movements led to the restructuring of the *Pentecostal Fellowship of North America* to become the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America.

About the latter third of the 20th century there was a movement of Pentecostalism, sometimes called the *Charismatic Movement*, into the mainline Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic church. Unlike earlier Pentecostals, they did not leave their churches for strictly Pentecostal churches, or found new denominations.

The largest Pentecostal denominations in the United States became the Church of God in Christ, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and the Assemblies of God. According to a Spring 1998 article in *Christian History*, there are about 11,000 different pentecostal or charismatic denominations worldwide. The size of Pentecostalism in the U.S. is estimated to be more than 20 million. Pentecostalism was conservatively estimated to number around 120 million followers worldwide in 2000; other estimates place the figure closer to 400 million. The great majority of Pentecostals are to be found in Third World countries, although much of their international leadership is still North American, where the movement was born and from which it was carried.

At the same time dispensational fundamentalist and Pentecostal churches were growing, and being carried worldwide, cults continued to be born in America and proliferate as well. One notable example is the Jehovah's Witnesses, which was founded in the 1870s

in Pennsylvania by Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) as a small Bible study group. It grew into an organization which came to be known as the International Bible Students. Russell was born in Pennsylvania. He was the second son of Joseph L. Russell and Ann Eliza Birney, who were Presbyterians of Scottish-Irish descent. Russell for a time attended the Episcopalian Church, but his interest in spiritual matters was kindled when he attended a sermon of Adventist Preacher Jonas Wendell. Jehovah's Witnesses, also known as the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (with headquarters in Brooklyn, New York), was officially founded in 1884 [as the Zion's Watch Tower and Tract Society], and officially adopted the name of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1931. Russell originally denied the doctrine of Hell, and would go on to reject nearly every other Christian doctrine, as well as add many physically and spiritually dangerous doctrines of his own making. Many of these unique and bizarre teachings were to be found in his six volume series titled, *Studies in the Scriptures*. They deny the doctrine of the Trinity, the existence of hell, and the doctrines of grace.

But despite these and other errors, the cult has grown prolifically. By the year 2000, the Watchtower Society could claim a worldwide membership of over six million (about one million in the US) in more than 91,000 congregations in 235 countries speaking 340 languages, and taking in approximately 300,000 new members each year. The cult fields over 500,000 full and part-time missionaries.

Even more bizarre cults arose in the US in the twentieth century. The Church of Scientology is surely an example. Scientology is a system of beliefs and teachings, originally established as a secular philosophy in 1952 by author L. Ron Hubbard, and subsequently reoriented from 1953 as an "applied religious philosophy". It is most prominently represented by the *Church of Scientology*, which has aroused considerable controversy since it was founded in 1954. Scientology's doctrines were established by Hubbard over some 43 years, issued in the form of thousands of lectures, bulletins, policies, books and pamphlets. Most of the basic principles of Scientology were set out during its first 15 years of its existence, with Hubbard devoting much of his later life to the more esoteric upper levels (or "Advanced Technologies") of the Scientology belief system. The central beliefs of Scientology are that a person is an immortal spiritual being (referred to as a *thetan*) who has a mind and a body, but is neither of these, that the person is basically good, and is seeking to survive. The United States government regards Scientology as a constitutionally protected religion; other countries, notably in Europe, have shown more sense and regarded Scientology as a potentially dangerous cult and have significantly restricted its activities at various times. In Germany for instance, they are not seen as a religion by the government but as a financial organization. This cult alone attracted more than one million followers, while sound Presbyterian denominations had a fraction of that.

The US – along with much of the world – suffered through two world wars and many smaller wars during the twentieth century, even as it played the harlot from true religion. The US firmly maintained neutrality at the beginning of World War I in 1914, but entered the war after the RMS Lusitania, a British ship carrying many American passengers, was sunk by German submarines. With American help, Great Britain,

France and Italy won the war, and imposed severe economic penalties on Germany in the Treaty of Versailles. Despite President Woodrow Wilson's calls for agreeable terms, the economic impact of the reparations mandated by the Treaty were severe.

Disillusioned by the failure of the Great War to achieve the high ideals promised by President Woodrow Wilson, the American people drifted morally and religiously. After the Roaring Twenties, the US – along with much of the world – felt the horrible effects of a worldwide depression.

The fascist movements in Germany and Italy took advantage of the difficult conditions to catapult to power. They, along with Japan, engaged in aggressive policies of international conquest. And in the 1940s the US found herself again involved in another World War against these Axis powers.

After World War II, Communist Russia posed a threat and challenge to the ideal of secularist democracy, and that challenge manifested itself in the Cold War with America. Besides its participation in two world wars, the United States engaged in a number of smaller scale wars and military occupations, some associated with this Cold War after World War II. These smaller military engagements included:

- 1903: US backed independence of Panama from Columbia in order to build the Panama Canal; Hay-Bunau Varilla Treaty
- 1909: overthrow of José Santos Zelaya in Nicaragua
- 1912-1933: US occupation of Nicaragua
- 1914-1916: Mexico conflict, including US troops occupying north of the country and port city of Veracruz
- 1915-1934: US occupation of Haiti
- 1945-1951: US occupation of Japan
- 1945-1955: US occupation of West Germany
- The 1953 US backed overthrow of the regime in Iran
- US backed overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán in Guatemala- 1954
- Vietnam War - (1964-1975)
- Alleged CIA-supported overthrow of Salvador Allende in Chile- 1973
- US invasion of Grenada, overthrow of Marxist junta (Operation Urgent Fury) - 1983
- US invasion of Panama, overthrow of Manuel Noriega (Operation Just Cause) - 1989
- US invasion of Afghanistan, overthrow of Taliban - 2001
- US Invasion of Iraq, overthrow of Saddam Hussein - 2003

But eventually this communist threat from Russia collapsed. Communism's form of secularist government combined with a controlled economy was no match for America's model of secularist democracy combined with a free market economy.

But American political and military success was not accompanied by sound religion. Along with the decline in sound theology came the rise of immorality, as God gave

Americans up in judgment to all sorts of sins. The birth control movement, manifested in artificial contraception and abortion, has been one example. The movement was led by Margaret Sanger (1879-1966). Sanger defied the Congressional ruling that birth control information was obscene, and distributed the pamphlet "Family Limitation" to poor women. She was forced to flee America in 1914 due to public outrage. In 1920 she published *What Every Girl Should Know*, which was later widely distributed as one of the Haldeman-Julius "Little Blue Books". After she returned to the country she founded the American Birth Control League in 1921 as well as Planned Parenthood of America in 1942. Planned Parenthood expanded to have worldwide outreach. At the same time Sanger was an outspoken advocate of eugenics, and appeared at a Ku Klux Klan rally at one point in her life. The birth control movement achieved its objectives, first with the legalization of contraception, and in 1973 with the national legalization of abortion. In addition, the rate of divorce greatly increased in the twentieth century. Sodomy became tolerated, and the Supreme Court even ruled anti-sodomy laws to be illegal. Diseases caused by sodomy, such as AIDS, increased. Lies were propagated by the US government, such as in its policy to forbid creationism in the public schools, yet to require that evolution be taught. Immigration laws became unenforced, such that streams of illegal immigrants, primarily Roman Catholic, entered the nation. Romish influence greatly expanded, and in 1984 under President Reagan there was establishment of full diplomatic relations between the US and the "Holy See". Christian Sabbath observance became a rarity. The moral fabric of America thus unraveled as a result of America's early tolerance of false religion and false worship.

Part of this declension too was a widespread abandonment of the Received Text of scripture, even by the general public. We have previously noted the abandonment of the Received Text by most of the scholarly world, even in the "conservative" evangelical Christian camp. This eventually spread to the laity of evangelical Christendom. It was not until the Bible translation mania of the post World War II era that the Authorized Version (i.e., King James Version), using the Received Text for its translation, slowly began to make room for various modern versions. It was not until the publication of the New International Version that the Authorized Version was abandoned in a widespread way. The New International Version was commercially marketed like no other Bible in history, by a publisher that was not even Christian in ownership. The Rupert Murdoch-owned Zondervan Publishing Co. became the main publisher of the New International Version Bibles. Rupert Murdoch was foreign Jew who had no interest in true religion; his interest was money. This same Murdoch owned commercial television networks which spewed forth moral trash as well.

But not all of Christendom was fooled by poor scholarship and commercial hype. The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, along with some other small conservative reformed denominations, maintained their adherence to the principle that God had kept His Word pure from generation to generation. Some gifted textual critics, like John William Burgon and F.H.A. Scrivner, defended the Received Text as well. Now, while their work was largely ignored by the majority, there has always been a small but ardent group of scholars who have kept the home fires burning for the Traditional Text of the New Testament, like Edward F. Hills and Theodore Letis.

The work of Hills and Letis, and those who held to the Protestant Reformation view concerning the Received Text, must be contrasted with other groups of scholars who supported this Traditional Text for different reasons. One group became known as the "King James Only" group. They believed that the Authorized Version is the perfect, preserved Word of God for the English speaking world. For them, the Authorized Version is equal in authority to the original Hebrew and Greek of the Old and New Testaments. The "King James Only" group generally consisted of a small group of fundamentalist Baptists who have little positive impact on the world of scholarship or serious thought, with the exception that some among them managed to keep the works of Burgon and Scrivner in print, despite the fact that Burgon and Scrivner would never have subscribed to their views. A second group of scholars that must be distinguished from the work of Hills and Letis and the mainstream Reformation view is the Majority Text school. This school, again, mostly fundamentalist Baptist, produced two notable editions of the Greek New Testament. Maurice Robinson and William Pierpont have edited *The New Testament in the Original Greek According to the Byzantine/Majority Textform* (1991). This is the Byzantine Greek Text found in many Bible Software programs such as BibleWorks, Logos, and the Online Bible. Zane Hodges and Arthur Farstad have edited *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text* (1985). It is important to note that the Majority Text school was in no way made up of "King James Only" advocates. Indeed, the KJ-Only people considered the Majority Text people to be in league with the devil! What the Majority Text school was up to was attempting to purge the Traditional Text of its slight "corruptions" in the interest of making it conform more closely to the hypothetical original autographs. They, like the critical school of textual criticism, were primitive restorationists, with the exception that they hold that the Byzantine manuscripts and witnesses better reflect the originals than do the Alexandrian texts. But like the critical school, they are attempting to get behind the church's preserved texts to the posited originals. Both groups assume that the church, to some degree, corrupted the originals. So both compromise with an important scriptural truth that God has preserved His Word for each generation.

There were other ways as well that modern Christianity became corrupted by American-style commercialism. Christianity became Big Business, and many entered the market who had little interest in truth. Entertaining stories like "Veggie Tales" became more popular among the Christian public than serious study of the Word of God. Many "Christian" books were little more than pop psychology. This commercial Christianity in turn was marketed and distributed around the world. In this way what has been called American evangelical Christianity became more corrupted after World War II, and bears little resemblance to the Christianity of the Apostolic era.

Although many Americans had been killed in World War II, the United States itself came out of the war the most powerful nation in the world- militarily, economically, politically, and culturally. America's military presence by itself became breathtaking and influential. Around the world, the United States attained 750 military bases or installations staffed by American military personnel in roughly 130 countries. It formed military alliances with nations around the world- alliances in which it is the most powerful member. An

example is NATO. US defense spending came to dwarf any of its rivals. The United States also had the largest economy in the world. In fact, it has served as the engine of the world economy since World War II, employing methods such as the Marshall Plan to stimulate the economy in other nations, especially after the devastation of World War II. The United States enhanced its economic power over many developing states by the creation of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, which made loans to less developed countries. President Franklin Roosevelt and his successor, Harry Truman, shaped the post World War II international world order so that America would remain dominant. The economic influence of American corporations has also been substantial. The United States furthered its secularist vision in the creation of the United Nations, with its Universal Declaration of Human Rights. While at its inception the United States was the first secularist democracy, the United States has successfully exported its political model to most nations around the world. This order, based on a balance of power between sovereign nation-states, stood for some fifty years, but is now crumbling under the pressures of globalization, persistent international poverty, terrorism, religious fundamentalism, and American foreign policy itself as practiced by the current Bush administration. Since the end of the Second World War the United States has been dominant in most of the cultural industries. American movies, television, food, and music became popular throughout the world. The internet – which was also invented in the US – provided another medium by which American culture traveled throughout the world. America's diverse spectrum of religious sects – including dispensationalists, Pentecostals, Seventh Day Adventists, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc. – zealously propagated their doctrines worldwide. US popular culture has truly spread around the globe.

No one can credibly argue that United States is not an empire- albeit not in the traditional mold. Militarily, economically, politically, and culturally the United States wields a hegemonic influence at the beginning of the twenty first century. From the beginning, America did not hesitate to send its armed forces to other countries to defend its two primary—and sometimes contradictory—foreign policy goals: promotion of US commercial interests and encouragement of secularist democracy alongside free market economics. US government intervention has been accompanied by an ambitious drive on the part of many American organizations and churches to influence the world as well. Other great powers, like the British empire, wielded significant influence, but nothing to the degree of American influence. And whereas the British empire was under an established Protestant government (at least in name), the American empire has been professedly secularist. There is "a comprehensive uni-polarity" derived from American hegemony that nobody has seen since Rome dominated the world. The Romans with their language, currency and the spread of Roman citizenship foreshadowed an early form of Americanized globalization. America ranks alongside ancient Rome, Greece, and Babylon as a world superpower, significantly affecting Christ's church in its day.

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