

NATIONAL ERA: CONGREGATIONALISM, SEMINARIES, SECOND AWAKENING

Week 6: Monday, September 27, 2021

CHRISTIANITY IN THE NATIONAL ERA (1760–1880, Cont'd.)

Lecture 1

Topic: The Changes in Congregational Theology
The Second Great Awakening

Due: Noll, 225–265

*** Reminder: First Paper Due on Oct. 6: William Watson, *Dispensationalism Before Darby***

Lecture 2

Topic: The Rise of the Protestant Missions Movement
The New School, Old School Controversy

Due: Noll, 200–228; Gonzalez, 2:417–440

C. The Second Great Awakening in America (1787–1810)

“The Second Awakening ushered in the new Age of Protestantism” (Wells, *No Place For Truth*, 31).

1. The context of the Awakening, the perception of danger.

“The advance of irreligion and indifference must be checked, the champions of orthodoxy chorused. The forces of religion met the challenge, with the result that from one end of the United States to the other, in all denominations, evangelical Protestantism appeared during the closing years of the eighteenth and early years of the nineteenth century in what may be called the Second Great Awakening.” ~ Charles Roy Keller, *The Second Great Awakening in Connecticut*.

“When formidable innovations in Europe threaten destruction to morals and religion, we perceive with pain and fearful apprehension a general dereliction of religious principles and practices among our fellow citizens. ... A visible and prevailing impiety in contempt of laws and institutions of religion and an abounding infidelity, which in many instances tends to atheism itself, the profligacy and corruption of the public morals have advanced with a progress proportioned to our declension in religion.” (*He is actually quoting the General Assembly minutes of the Presbyterian Church of 1798.*)

a) The Re-Evaluation of Calvinism within Congregationalism.

The response of the New Divinity theology

b) The impact of the French Revolution.

Viewed the French Revolution as the harbinger of things to come. The American Federalist clergy in New England saw the events of the 1790s, they perceived a grave danger. They feared democracy and the power of the masses. The French Revolution fed that fear, and it was exacerbated by the Whiskey Rebellion in Western Mass., and the emergence of Democratic clubs in Philadelphia and Boston, the XYZ affair (in which a bribe was demanded of our delegates to get a hearing in the courts of France), and the Alien and Sedition Acts.

John Robison, *Proofs of a Conspiracy Against all the Religions and Governments of Europe*. This book had a great impact on New England divines such as Jedidiah Morse, who advocated the notion of a secret, universally global conspiracy which he identified as the Bavarian Illuminati or Freemasonry, of which George Washington was a member.

They were convinced that the French Revolution was a satanic plot to destroy Christianity.

c) The rise of natural rights philosophy

A fear of the masses

Fears of Deism and Thomas Paine

Fears of anti-Christianity movement

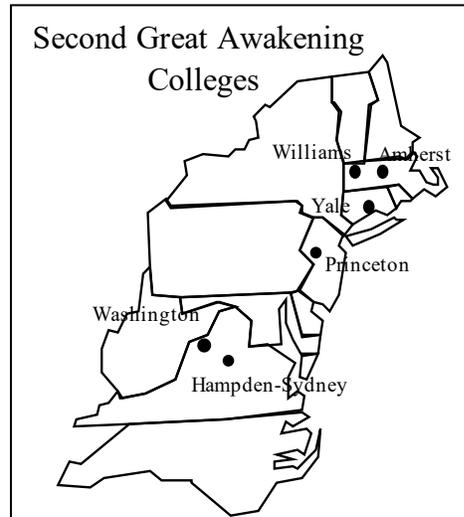
Fear of Jefferson because of his love for the French

d) The stress on liberty and individuality.

e) The moral and spiritual state of the colleges.

By the end of the eighteenth century, they had become secularized.

2. The Eastern Phase of the Awakening: revival in the colleges.



- a) Hampden-Sidney College and Carey Allen.
Hampton-Sidney is where the Eastern Phase begins.
Founded in 1775, a Presbyterian school in Virginia.

At Hampden-Sydney College, which had a capacity of eighty students, only one student had any religious affections. One writer, Thompson, a historian of Presbyterianism, says, "There was not one who was known to be any way serious and thoughtful on religion. The students treated religion and religious persons with great contempt and ridicule."

1787 summer. Carey Allen a ne'er do well attended a revival. He is so overcome by his need for salvation that he passes out on the floor. As a result of his newfound peace he returned to H-S in the fall and organized a prayer meeting with William Hill and James Blythe who came to faith due to his testimony.

When other students heard they tried to break in on them.

Thompson, one of the scholars of Southern Presbyterianism quotes the direct source:

"Although we sung and prayed with suppressed voices, not wishing it should be made known what we were about, we were overheard by some of the students. A noisy mob was raised, which collected in the passage between our door and began to thump at the door and whoop and swear and threaten vengeance if they did not forbear and cease all such exercises in the college for the future. Information of this riot was given to Mr. Smith ..."

James Blair Smith, the college president

- b) William and Mary, Anglican college

William Warren Sweet writes that there was nudeness and infidelity—streakers in that day, if you would.

- b) Yale College and Timothy Dwight

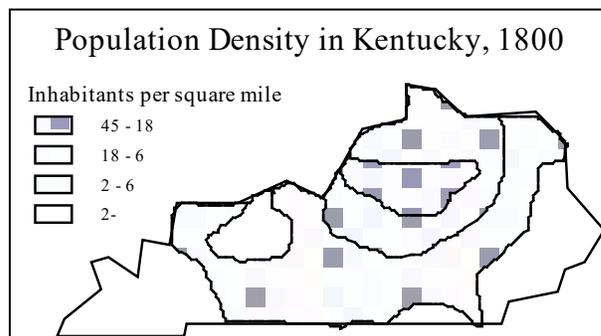
The greatest example, perhaps, of the decline of the colonial colleges and, in this sense, under the sweep of what they called French Infidelity, is the example of Yale College. Now it is at Yale and at Hampden-Sydney and at Princeton that there will be major religious revivals that will catapult those institutions as religious training and sending centers in the nineteenth century.

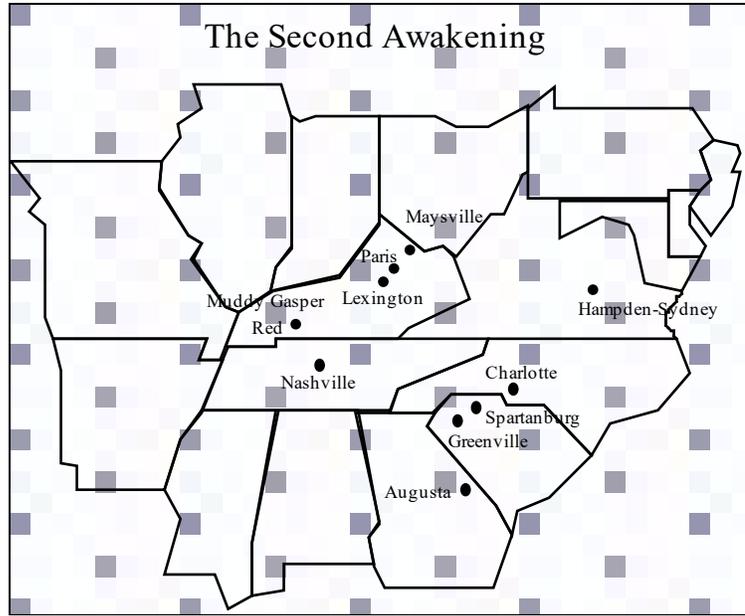
Lyman Beecher, a student at Yale College, records in his journal that during his day, “College was in a most ungodly state. The college church was almost extinct. Most of the students were skeptical, and rowdies were plenty. That was the day of the infidelity of the Tom Paine school. Boys that dressed flax in the barn, as I used to, read Tom Paine and believed him. Most of the class before me were infidels and called each other Voltaire and Rousseau.”

“The champions of orthodoxy in Connecticut felt that they had ample grounds for viewing the spread of infidelity as a plague and as a disaster for society. The Deistic concept of God as a Creator who let creatures move and have their being in accordance with natural law was offensive to belief that God was Judge and Father—a Supreme Being who was always close to His creatures.” (Keller)

- c) Princeton College and Ashbel Green
At Princeton College in this era, many complained of lax morality.

3. The Western Phase of the Awakening: the camp meetings.





- a) James McGready and Logan County, Kentucky (1758–1817).
Begins in Logan County, 1798.

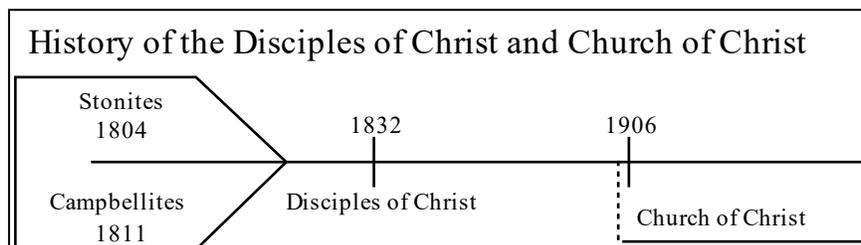
July, 1800, first camp meeting. It lasted four days. People are in their wagons, cleared land, built speaker’s benches.

Unfortunately became out of control, as many souls were conceived as saved, some said.

Barking, fainting, yelping, running around in circles, emotionally out of control. For many of these people went most of the year without seeing anyone else.

- b) Barton Stone (1772–1844) and Bourbon County, Kentucky.

The revival at Cane Ridge.



Converted under James McGready
1796 itinerated in Tennessee and Kentucky.
Later pastored two Presbyterian churches in Kentucky, at Cane Ridge, and at Concord.

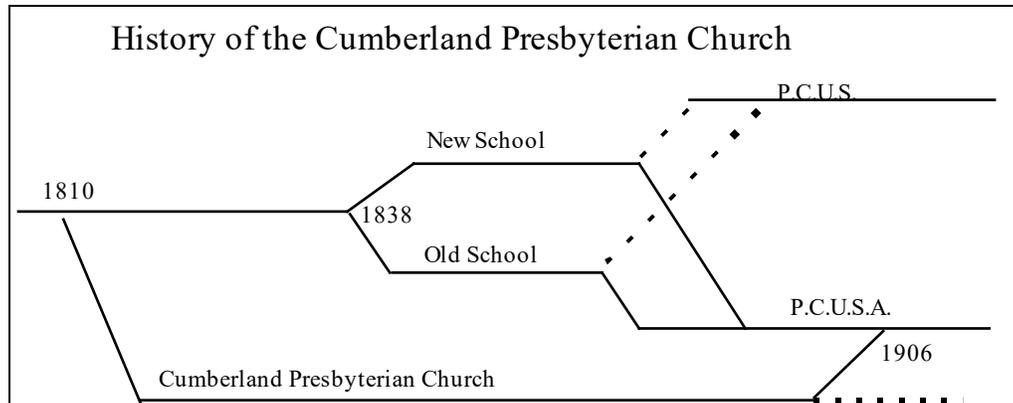
1801 Cambridge Revival: 10,000–23,000 people estimated.
18 Presbyterian pastors, and as many Baptists and
Methodists for two weeks of revival preaching.

James Finley wrote:

“The roar was like the roar of Niagara. The vast sea of human beings seemed to be agitated as if by a storm. I counted seven ministers all preaching at one time. Some on stumps; others in wagons, and one was standing on a tree which had in falling lodged against another. Some of the people were singing, others praying, some crying for mercy in the most piteous accents, while others were shouting most vociferously. While witnessing these scenes, a particularly strange sensation such as I have never felt before came over me. My heart beat tumultuously, my knees trembled, my lip quivered and I felt as though I must fall to the ground. A strong, supernatural power seemed to pervade the entire mass of mind there collected. Soon after I left and went into the woods, and there I stoved in rally and man up my courage. After some time, I returned to the scene of excitement, the waves of which if possible had risen still higher. The same awfulness of feeling came over me. I stepped to a log where I could have a better view of the surging sea of humanity. The scene that then presented itself to my mind was indescribable. At one time I saw at least 500 swept down in a moment as if a battering ram of a thousand guns had been opened upon them, and then immediately followed shrieks and shouts that rent the very heavens. I fled for the woods a second time and wished I had stayed at home.”

Weisberger, in his book on the Second Awakening, describes various emotional exercises that could be observed at those camp meetings. He says that “under the compunctions of incessant preaching, the neuromuscular system tended to render its own testimony.” And he says it rendered its own testimony and what, to the frontier spirit, were bountiful gifts of the Holy Spirit. He describes them: falling exercises, laughing exercises, the jerks, the rolling exercise, “treeing the devil,” A lot of this was enhanced by spirits other than the Holy Spirit.

4. The impact of the Awakening.
 - a) The emergence of new denominations.
 - (1) The Cumberland Presbyterian Church (1810).



(a) Reaction against High Calvinism.

Leaders were Finis Ewing and Samuel King and Samuel McAdow—frontier Presbyterian revivalists who in 1810 led a break or splinter from the Presbyterian community.

Two emphases: less stress on the sovereignty of God in salvation and less stress on academics.

1810—broke away and formed a circuit system based on revivalist techniques and spread throughout the south, by the 1820s had over 75,000 members.

(2) The Christian Restoration Movement, the Christian Movement, or the Disciples Movement (1832).

Two groups, the followers of Barton Stone and the followers of Thomas and Alexander Campbell.

(3) The Shakers (1804–1805).

Mother Ann Lee

Emphasis on perfectionism and celibacy

The last Shaker died in the 1990s.

b) The growth of the denominations numerically.

In the Colonial period the largest denominations were the Congregationalists and Anglicans. After the Second Great Awakening the Baptists and Methodists were the largest.

c) The establishment of new schools.

In addition, there were many educational schools formed like Washington Academy (later Washington College and Washington and Lee in 1798).

Hamilton College, later became Miami of Ohio, 1812.

Blount College, later became the University of Tennessee, or

Transylvania College
Wabash or Davidson. The list seemingly goes on and on, to
Amherst and Colby and Emory and so forth.

- d) The decline of deism.
- e) The identification of religious and national goals.
- f) The shift to the use of “means” in revivalism.

“Radically altering the ‘evangel’ from a concern with the object of faith, the Second Great Awakening and the revivalism that emerged from it focused on the act and experience of faith, in dependence on the proper ‘excitements ... to trigger the right response’ ” [Michael Horton, “The Crisis of Evangelical Christianity” *Modern Reformation* (January/February 1994): 14].

- g) The development of the missions enterprise.

(1) Home and continental missions.

(a) State and regional societies.

1816 The American Bible Society, which had a goal of putting a Bible into every home in America. By 1821, they had printed over 29,000 Bibles, over 30,000 New Testaments, and by 1838, missionaries under the American Bible Society had printed and distributed over 2.3 million Bibles and scattered them across America.

1803 The American Tract Society

1824 American Sunday School Union

(b) Denominational missions.

1798 Congregationalists in Connecticut formed the Connecticut Missionary Society

1799 the Massachusetts Missionary Society

1801 the Rhode Island Missionary Society

1825 the American Home Missionary Society

1816 the Presbyterian Board of Missions

1832 the Baptist Home Missionary Society

1819 the Methodist Missionary and Bible Society

(2) Foreign missions.

Skip this until next class.

Parenthesis: The Rise of the Modern Missionary Movement.

1. Introduction.

2. The early forerunners of modern missions.
 - a) Adrian Sarvira (1513–1613).

 - b) Justinian von Weltz (1621–68).

3. The context of the rise of modern missions.
 - a) The world exploration.

 - b) The development of worldwide trade companies.

 - c) The diffusion of learning.

 - d) The example of Catholic missions.

4. The early forms of missions activity.
 - a) The trading companies.

 - b) The rise of mission societies.
 - Walloon Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church (1644).

- Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (1701).
- Danish-Halle Mission (1704).
- Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge (1707).
- Moravian Missions (1732).

5. The birth of “Modern” Missions.

a) In England.

- The Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen and William Carey (1761–1834).
- London Missionary Society (1795).
- Glasgow and Edinburgh Missionary Society (1796).
- The Church Missionary Society (1799).

b) In Germany.

- Basel Missionary Society (1816).
- Berlin Missionary Society (1824).

c) In America.

- The Second Great Awakening, Samuel J. Mills (1783–1818) and Missions.
- The Haystack Prayer Meeting (1806).
- The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1810).
- The American Baptist Missionary Union (1814).

- The Presbyterian Board (1837).
6. The rise of Faith Missions.
- a) J. Hudson Taylor (1834–1905) and China Inland Mission (1865).
 - b) H. Grattan Guinness and Livingston Inland Mission (1870).
 - c) A. B. Simpson and the Christian and Missionary Alliance (1886).
 - d) C. I. Scofield and the Central American Mission (1890).

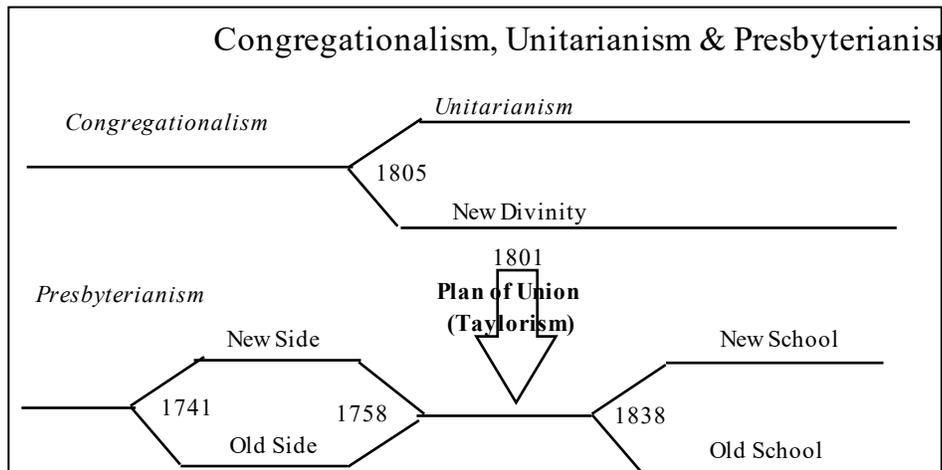
Class 6, Lecture Two

New School, Old School Controversy

Due: Noll, 200-228; Gonzalez, 2:417-440

- D. The Old School/New School Schism in Presbyterianism.
 New School favored the New England/New Divinity theology/Taylorism/New Haven
 Old School favored orthodoxy

1. The Turmoil over the impact of New England Theology.

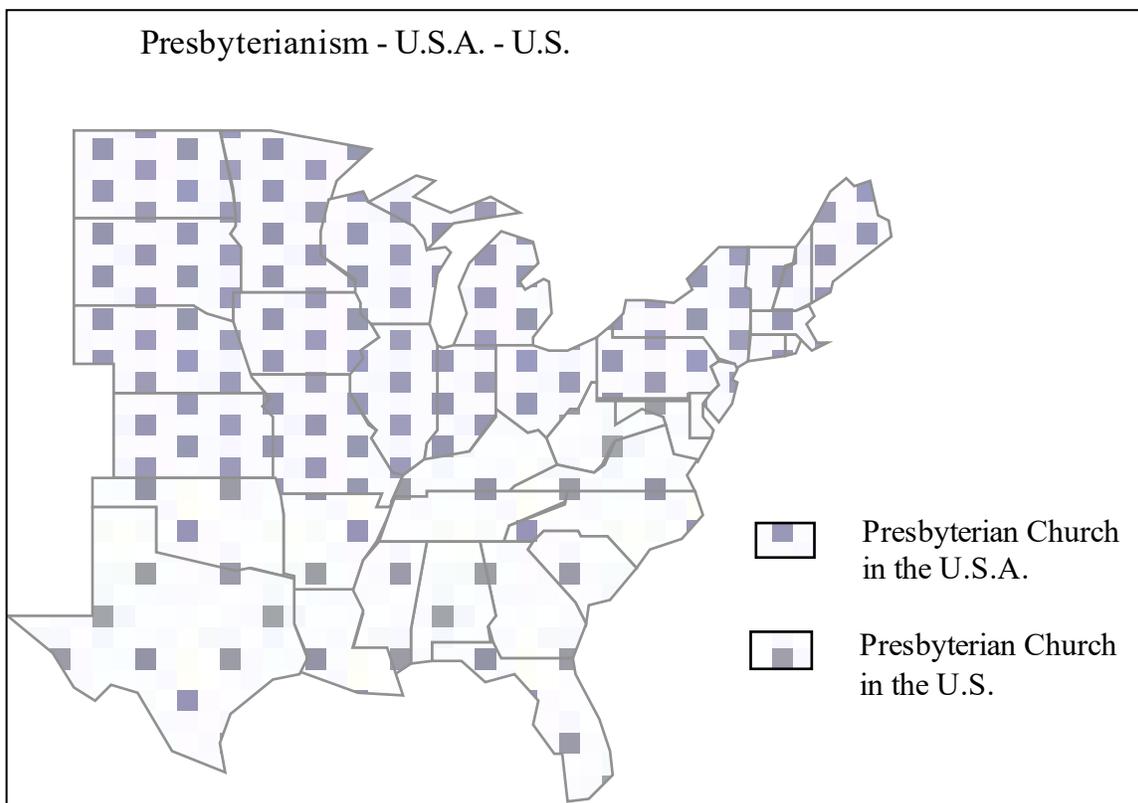


- a) The roots of the conflict go back to the Plan of Union (1801). New theological currents from New England penetrated the frontier. Scots-Irish reacted to the influence of Taylorism on Presbyterianism; Taylorism reacted to “strict” Calvinism. Ashbel Green, editor of the *Christian Advocate*, clashed with Eleazer Fitch, a champion of Taylorism.
- b) 1828 – Nathaniel Taylor of Yale Divinity School at commencement mutilated their doctrine of original sin. He called it the “native lostness of man.”
- c) 1829 – Albert Barnes (Presbyterian), pastor at Morristown, New Jersey, preached a sermon entitled “Way of Salvation” (denied imputed guilt). He announced his agreement with Taylor.
 1830 – He was called to First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, the mother church of the denomination. Opposed by Ashbel Green.
 1831 – charged with denying original sin, found guilty by the presbytery, but acquitted by General Assembly.
 1835 – charged again but again acquitted by General Assembly.
- d) 1835 – Lyman Beecher. President of Lane Theological Seminary. A Plan of Union school. Although Congregationalist, members of

the Presbytery of Cincinnati accused him of heresy concerning original sin, human ability, and passive regeneration. Found guilty by the Presbytery and not guilty by the General Assembly

- e) 1836 – Union Seminary, New York formed; independent of General Assembly, following the new theological drifts.
- f) Taylorites in the church attempted to use the slavery issue in the General Assembly to divide the “strict” Calvinists since they were in the North and South; Taylorites were majoratively in the North.

2. The schism (1837–38) resulting from the clash over New England Theology.



- a) Conservatives (Old School) removed the church from participation in the Plan of Union. (Four synods organized under the Plan were read out of the church).
- b) New Schoolers sought re-admission in 1838 upon the “Auburn Declaration” a theologically ambiguous statement. Failed. Schism complete. (120,000) – formed the New School (almost entirely in the North). Debate over who was the true owner of the property.

Supreme Court recognized the Old School. Now there were 2 schools of Pres. church. Warfare between Princeton and Union.

- c) Old School declared to be the legal successor of the older denomination. 126,000 communicants.
Center – Princeton Seminary and molded by the thought of Charles Hodge. Trained over 3,000 men and said “a new idea never originated” in his fifty years.

New School center – Union, New York. Tension between the schools continued into the 1920s.