HT607 HISTORY OF AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN
Fall Semester 2012
Reformed Theological Seminary
Jackson, Mississippi
Dr. W. Andrew Hoffecker
Emeritus Professor of Church History

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE: This course surveys the history of American Presbyterian from its roots in the Calvinist reformed tradition to events in the 21st c. It will focus on several elements: key historical events and controversies that shaped Presbyterian denominations; major leaders who influenced Presbyterian theology and its prominent institutions; movements which reflected Presbyterian leadership of American religion; and the reciprocal relation between Presbyterian and American culture. Each of the preceding should help students gain an appreciation of Presbyterian’s role in relation to other denominations and American life as a whole.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. TEXTS: The following texts are required for the course:
   - Balmer and Fitzmier, The Presbyterians
   - Armstrong, Maurice A, Lefferts A. Loetscher, Charles A. Anderson, The Presbyterian Enterprise: Sources of American Presbyterian History
   - Longfield, Bradley J., The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and Moderates
   - Fortson, Donald S., Colonial Presbyterian: Old Faith in a New Land
   - Hoffecker, Andrew, Charles Hodge: The Pride of Princeton

   Use the schedule of lectures below to direct your reading from week to week. Pay special attention to documents in The Presbyterian Enterprise. These writings are primary sources written by individuals and groups who participated in the events covered in the reading assignments for each week. Bring The Presbyterian Enterprise to class; we will refer to documents in our discussion.

   In addition to the texts, students will read other selections of their choice from suggested readings that appear with each lecture topic. In all, 1000 pages are required for the course. Keep a record of your reading on the attached Reading Report Sheet and submit it before or along with your final exam.

2. EXAMS: There will be midterm and final exams containing both objective and essay questions. The tests will cover readings assigned and lecture material. Additional information about the exams will be given at a later date so that students may successfully prepare for them.

3. CLASS FORMAT: We will adopt a seminar format for this course. Lecture notes are part of this syllabus. Students should download the lectures for each class, read the sections from the texts assigned for the course that are pertinent to the topic of the day. Class will be devoted to discussion and clarification of those notes and readings. Come prepared to contribute to the discussion.

4. WRITING ASSIGNMENT: Students will select a topic in the history of American Presbyterian as the subject of a 15-20 page term paper. This paper will focus on topics during the last several weeks of the course. Use the lecture titles listed below along with the suggested reading for the lecture in making your choice. You will present the results of your research in class at the point in the semester when your topic appears in the schedule of lectures. Since your paper will of necessity be more narrow than the lecture titles, your classroom presentation should introduce the larger context to the rest of the class before focusing on the topic you have chosen.

   Format for submitting paper:
   1. Include a title page which includes paper title, your name and mailbox number.
   2. Do not submit your paper in a plastic binder.

4. GRADES: Grades for the course will be based upon the following elements:
   - Paper and class presentation: 40%
   - Report on assigned pages: 20%
   - Final exam: 40%

5. CLASS ATTENDANCE: Given the amount of material to be covered in the time allotted, students should make every effort to attend all classes.
**Schedule of Classes and Due Dates**

*Class meets Mondays 1:00-3:00 pm*

**AUG 27**

**Introduction; Historic Roots**

*Suggested Readings – Books*

Leith, John. *An Introduction to the Reformed Tradition: A Way of Being the Christian Community*

McNeill, John T. *The History and Character of Calvinism*

Reid, W. Stanford. *John Calvin: His Influence in the Western World*

*Journal Articles*


Gilborn, Craig. “Samuel Davies Sacred Music” *JPH* 41:63-7 June 1963


Mulder, Philip. “Converting the New Light: Presbyterian Evangelism in Hanover, VA” *JPH* 75:141-51 Fall 1997


**Colonial Presbyterian**

*Suggested Readings – Books:*

Barkley, John Montieth. *Francis Makemie of Ramelton: Father of American Presbyterian*

Fortson, Donald. *Colonial Presbyterian: Old Faith in a New Land*

Hardman, Keith J. *Jonathan Dickinson and the Course of American Presbyterian: 1717-1747* [Ph D Diss]

Hart, D. G. *The Lost Soul of American Protestantism*

LeBeau, Bryan F. *Jonathan Dickinson and the Formative Years of American Presbyterian*


Pilcher, George W. *Samuel Davies: Apostle of Dissent in Colonial Virginia*

Samworth, Herbert L. *Those Astonishing Wonders of His Grace: Jonathan Dickinson and the Great Awakening* [PhD Diss]

Trinterud, Leonard J. *The Forming of an American Tradition: A Re-examination of Colonial Presbyterian*

*Journal Articles:*


**SEP 10**

**The Great Awakening: The Tennent Family; Old/New Side Schism**

*Suggested Readings -- Books:*

Alexander, Archibald. *The Log College: Biographical Sketches of William Tennent*

Balmer, Randall. *A Perfect Babel of Confusion: Dutch Religion and English Culture in the Middle Colonies*
Bonomi, Patricia. *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America*

Coulter, Milton J. *Gilbert Tennent, Son of Thunder: A Case Study of continental Pietism’s Impact on the First Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies*

Harper, Miles D. *Gilbert Tennent, Theologian of the “New Light”*

Hart, D. G. *The Lost Soul of American Protestantism*

Heimart, Alan E. *Religion and the American Mind from the Great Awakening to the Revolution* and Perry Miller, eds. *The Great Awakening*

LeBeau, Bryan F. *Jonathan Dickinson and the Formative Years of American Presbyterian*

Lodge, Martin Ellsworth. *The Great Awakening and the Middle Colonies*


Shereshewsky, Murray S. *Academy Keeping and the Great Awakening: The Presbyterian Academies, College of New Jersey*

Smith, Elwyn Allen. *The Presbyterian Ministry in American Culture*

Tennent, Mary A. *Light and Darkness: The Story of Wm Tennent, Sr and the Log College*

Westerkamp, Marilyn J. *Triumph of the Laity: Scots-Irish Piety and the Great Awakening*

*Journal Articles:*


Fraser, James W. “The Great Awakening and New Patterns of Presbyterian Theological Education,” *JPH* 60:189-208 (1982).


Hardman, Keith J. *The Spiritual Awakeners*


**FOUNDING OF THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY (PRINCETON): JOHN WITHERSPOON**

*Suggested Reading – Books:*

Bartley, David. *John Witherspoon and the Right of Resistance*

Fechner, Roger Jerome. *The Moral Philosophy of John Witherspoon and the Scottish-American Enlightenment*

LeBeau, Bryan F. *Jonathan Dickinson and the Formative Years of American Presbyterian*

Noll, Mark A. *Princeton and the Republic, 1768-1822: The Search for a Christian Enlightenment in the Era of Samuel Stanhope Smith*

Wertenberger, Thomas Jefferson. *Princeton, 1746-1896*

Witte, Wayne William. *John Witherspoon: An Exposition and Interpretation of his Theological Views as the Motivation of his Ecclesiastical, Educational and Political Career in Scotland and America*

*Journal Articles*


Suggested Readings – Books
Curry, Thomas J. *The First Freedoms: Church and State in America to the Passage of the First Amendment*

Journal Articles

**EXPANSION WESTWARD AND SOUTHWARD; THE PLAN OF UNION**

Suggested Reading – Books
Davis, Robert P. et. al. *Virginia Presbyterianterians in American Life: Hanover Presbytery*

Journal Articles

SEP 24 **THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING: REVIVALISM AND SCHISM IN THE WEST**

Suggested Reading – Books
Barrus, Benjamin. *A Study of the Factors Involved in the Origin of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church*
Boles, John B. *The Great Revival, 1787-1805*
Bruce, Dickson D. *And They All Sang Hallelujah: Plain-folk Camp-Meeting Religion, 1800-1845*
Campbell, Thomas H. *Good News on the Frontier: A History of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church*
Conkin, Paul K. *Cane Ridge, America’s Pentecost*
Matthews, Donald G. *Religion in the Old South*
Oliver, Lon D. *A Guide to the Cane Ridge Revival*
Rogers, James R. *The Cane Ridge Meeting House*
Scott, John T. *James McGready: Son of Thunder, Father of the Great Revival*

Journal Articles:

**THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING: NORTHERN REVIVALISM – FINNEY AND NETTLETON**

*Suggested Reading – Books*

- Fraser, James W. *Pedagoge for God’s Kingdom: Lyman Beecher and the 2nd Great Awakening*
- Hardman, Keith J. *Charles Grandison Finney, 1792-1875: Revivalist and Reformer*
- Henry, Stuart C. *Unvanquished Puritan: A Portrait of Lyman Beecher*
- Hewitt, Glenn A. *Regeneration and Morality: A Study of Charles Finney, Charles Hodge, John Nevin and Horace Bushnell*
- McLoughlin, William G. *Modern Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham*
- Smith, Timothy L. *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War*
- Thornbury, John F. *God Sent Revival: The Story of Asahel Nettleton*

*Journal Articles*


**OCT 1**

**NEW LEBANON CONVENTION; URBAN REVIVALISM**

*Suggested Reading: See last lecture*

**PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY: OLD SCHOOL IN THE SOUTH**

*Suggested Reading – Books*

- Bozeman, Theodore D. *Protestants in an Age of Science*
- Calhoun, David B. *Princeton Seminary* (2 vols)
- Farmer, James O. *The Metaphysical Confederacy: James Henley Thornwell and the Synthesis of Southern Values*
- Hoffecker, Andrew, *Piety and the Princeton Theologians*
- Kerr, Hugh T. *Sons of the Prophets: Leaders in Protestantism from Princeton Seminary*
- Loetscher, Lefferts A. *Facing the Enlightenment and Pietism: Archibald Alexander and the Founding of Princeton Theological Seminary*
- Noll, Mark A. *The Princeton Theology, 1812-1921: Scripture, Science, and Theological Method from Archibald Alexander to Benjamin Warfield*
- Vander Stelt, John C. *Philosophy and Scripture: A Study in Old Princeton and Westminster Theology*
- Wells, David F. *Reformed Theology in America: A History of its Modern Development*

*Journal Articles*


OCT  8  READING WEEK – NO CLASS

OCT  15  NEW SCHOOL PRESBYTERIAN: MORAL REFORM: “THE BENEVOLENT EMPIRE”
Suggested Reading – Books:
Bailey, Alvin K. The Strategy of Sheldon Jackson in Opening the West for National Missions
Beecher, Lyman. A Plea for the West
Foreman, Kenneth J. Continuing Problems of American Presbyterian Board and Agency Administration in the 19th and 20th Centuries
Genovese, Eugene. “James Henry Thornwell,” in History and Politics in the Cultural War
Harris, J. Henry. Robert Raikes: The Man Who Founded the Sunday School
Hirrel, Leo P. The Ideology of Antebellum Reform within the New School Calvinist Community
Hodge, Charles. The Church and its Polity
Marsden, George M. The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience: A Case Study of Thought and Theology in Nineteenth-Century America
Rice, Edwin W. The Sunday School Movement 1780-1917 and the American Sunday School Union
Smith, H. Shelton. “The Church and the Social Order in the Old South as Interpreted by James H. Thornwell,” in Finkleman, P. Religion and Slavery
Spring, Gardiner. Memoir of Samuel J. Mills

Journal Articles:
NEW SCHOOL - OLD SCHOOL I: ALBERT BARNES AND LYMAN BEECHER
Suggested Reading – Books
Barnes, Albert. The Church and Slavery
_________. Re-Adjustment of Christianity
Beecher, Lyman. Views in Theology
Kuklick, Bruce. Churchmen and Philosophers
Marsden, George M. The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience: A Case Study of
Thought and Theology in Nineteenth-Century America

Journal Articles

OCT 22 NEW SCHOOL - OLD SCHOOL II: HENRY BOYNTON SMITH; SCHISM
Suggested Readings – Books
Handy, Robert T. A History of Union Theological Seminary
Marsden, George M. The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience: A Case Study of
Thought and Theology in Nineteenth-Century America
_________. “Perspective on the Division of 1837,” in Pressing Toward the Mark: Essays
Commemorating Fifty Years of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, ed, Charles G. Dennison and
Richard C. Gamble
Parker, Harold M. The United Synod of the South: The Southern New School Presbyterian Church
Smith, Henry Boynton. Faith and Philosophy
_________. System of Christian Theology
_________. The Reunion of the Presbyterian Churches, Called New School and Old School: A
Reply to the Princeton Review
Thompson, Ernest Trice. Presbyterianterians in the South, 3 vols
Weeks, Louis B. The Story of Southern Presbyterianterians
Weir, John R. “Henry Boynton Smith, Theologian of New School Presbyterian,” in Dennison, Charles G.
and Richard C. Gamble, eds. Pressing Toward the Mark: Essays Commemorating Fifty Years of
the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Journal Articles
Handy, Robert T. “Union Theological Seminary in New York and American Presbyterian, 1836-1904,”
Hart, D. G. “Divided between Heart and Mind: the Critical Period for Protestant Thought in America,”
Smith, Elwyn A. “The Doctrine of Imputation and the Presbyterian Schism of 1837-1838,” JPH 38:129-151
(1960).
Stoever, William K. B. “Henry Boynton Smith and the German Theology of History,” Union Seminary

NEW SCHOOL - OLD SCHOOL III: DIVISION OVER SLAVERY AND ABOLITIONISM
Suggested Readings – Books
Engelder, Conrad J. The Churches and Slavery: A Study of Attitudes in Major Protestant Denominations
Farmer, James O. The Metaphysical Confederacy: James Henley Thornwell and the Synthesis of Southern
Values
Fox, Early L. The American Colonization Society
Howard, Victor B. The Anti-Slavery Movement in the Presbyterian Church
Lesick, Lawrence T. The Lane Rebels
Marsden, George M. *The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience: A Case Study of Thought and Theology in Nineteenth-Century America*

Thompson, Ernest Trice. *Presbyterianterians in the South*, 3 vols

Weeks, Louis B. *The Story of Southern Presbyterianterians*

**Journal Articles**


**SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN DURING CIVIL WAR**

*Suggested Readings – Books*

See previous lecture

**Journal Articles**


**NORTHERN PRESBYTERIAN DURING CIVIL WAR**

*Suggested Readings*


Farmer, J. O. *The Metaphysical Confederacy: James Henley Thornwell and the Synthesis of Southern Values*

Hickey, Doralyn. *B.M. Palmer: Churchman of the Old South*

Holfild, E. B. *The Gentlemen Theologians: American Theology in Southern Culture 1795-1860*

Overy, D. H. *Robert Lewis Dabney: Apostle of the Old South*

Parker, Harold M. *The United Synod of the South: The Southern New School Presbyterian Church*

Palmer, Benjamin. *The Life and Letters of James Henley Thornwell*

_________. *The South: Her Peril and Her Duty*

Smith, Morton H. *Studies in Southern Presbyterian Theology*

Thompson, Ernest Trice, *Presbyterianterians in the South*, 3 vols

Wells, David A. *Reformed Theology in America: A History of its Modern Development*
Journal Articles

POST-CIVIL WAR REUNION
Suggested Reading – Books
Miller, Samuel. Presbyterian Reunion: A Memorial Volume, 1857-1871
Parker, Harold M. The Independent Presbyterian Church and Reunion in the South
Smith, Joseph T. Address on the Acts and Deliverances of the General Assembly of the Old School Presbyterian Church

Journal Articles

Presbyterianterians and 19th Century Science: Geology and Darwinism
Suggested Reading – Books
Bozeman, Theodore D. Protestants in an Age of Science: The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought
Hovenkamp, Herbert. Science and Religion in America, 1800-1860
Johnson, Deryl F. The Attitudes of the Princeton Theologians Toward Darwinism and Evolution from 1859-1929
Kelley, Delores Goodwin. A Rhetorical Analysis of an 1884-88 Controversy in American Religious Thought: Response within the Presbyterian Church in the US to Evolutionism [PhD Diss]
Noll, Mark A. and David Livingstone, eds. Charles Hodge: What is Darwinism & Other Writings on Science and Religion
Lewis, Tayler, The Six Days of Creation, or, the Scriptural Cosmology
Livingstone, David N. Darwin’s Forgotten Defenders
Upham, Francis W. The Debate between the Church and Science; or the Ancient Hebraic Idea of the Six Days of Creation with an Essay on the Literary Character of Tayler Lewis
Wells, John C. Charles Hodge’s Critique of Darwinism: The Argument to Design

Journal Articles

**Nov 12**

**Rise of Liberal Theology; Heresy Trials**

*Suggested Reading – Books*

- Halsey, Leroy J. *A History of the McCormick Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church*
- Briggs, Charles A. *Inaugural Address and Defense, 1891/1893, Authority of Holy Scripture*
- Hutchison, W. R. *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism*
- Loetscher, Lefferts. *The Broadening Church: A Study of Theological Issues in the Presbyterian Church Since 1869*
- Noll, Mark A. *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship and the Bible in America*
- Shriver, G.H., ed. *American Religious Heretics*

*Journal Articles*


**Presbyterian Seminaries; The Social Gospel**

*Suggested Reading – Books*

- Gladden, Washington. *Christianity and Socialism*
- Handy, Robert T. *The Social Gospel in America, 1870-1920*
- Rauschenbusch, Walter. *A Theology for the Social Gospel*
- Smith, Willard H. *The Social and Religious Thought of William Jennings Bryan*

*Journal Articles*


**Nov 19**

**Confessional Revision**

*Suggested Reading – Books*

- McClanahan, James S. *Benjamin B. Warfield: Historian of Doctrine in Defense of Orthodoxy, 1881-1921*
- Warfield, Benjamin B. *The Confession of Faith as Revised in 1903*
- ___________________ *The Significance of the Westminster Standards as a Creed*
Journal Articles

**FUNDAMENTALISM: J. GRESHAM MACHEN**

*Suggested Reading – Books*
Dennison, Charles G. and Richard C. Gamble, eds. “Part III: Perspectives on the Orthodox Presbyterian Church” in *Pressing Toward the Mark: Essays Commemorating Fifty Years of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church*
Hutchison, William R. *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism*
Loetscher, Lefferts. *The Broadening Church: A Study of Theological Issues in the Presbyterian Church Since 1869*
Longfield, Bradley J. *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and Moderates*
Machen, J. G. *Christianity and Liberalism*
Marsden, George M. *Evangelicalism and American Culture*

__________. *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism*
Nichols, Stephen J., *J. Gresham Machen: A Guided Tour of his Life and Thought*
Miller, Robert M. *Harry Emerson Fosdick: Preacher, Pastor, Prophet*
Rian, Edwin H. *The Presbyterian Conflict*
Sandeen, Ernest R. *The Origins of Fundamentalism: Toward an Historical Interpretation*
__________. *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism*

Journal Articles

**MODERNIST VICTORY: FOUNDED OF WESTMINSTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AND OPC**

*Suggested Reading – Books*
Coalter, Milton, John Mulder and Louis Weeks. *The Confessional Mosaic: Presbyterianerians and Twentieth Century Theology*

__________. *The Pluralistic Vision: Presbyterianerians and Mainstream Protestant Education and Leadership*
Hart, D.G and John Muether. *Fighting the Good Fight: A Brief History of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church*
Hutchison, William R. *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism*
Loetscher, Lefferts. *The Broadening Church: A Study of Theological Issues in the Presbyterian Church Since 1869*
Longfield, Bradley J. *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and Moderates*
Marsden, George M. *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism*

__________. *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*
Mathews, Shailer. *The Faith of Modernism*
Rian, Edwin H. *The Presbyterian Conflict*
Thompson, Murray F. *The Auburn Betrayal*

Journal Articles


**DEC 3**

**THE WAR YEARS AND BEYOND: REUNION OF PCUSA AND PCUS; FOUNDERING OF PCA**

**Suggested Reading – Books**


_____________. *The Pluralistic Vision: Presbyterianterians and Mainstream Protestant Education and Leadership*

Hutchison, William R. *Between the Times: The Travail of the Protestant Establishment in America, 1900-1960*

Roof, Wade C. and William McKinney. *American Mainline Religion: Its changing Shape and Future*

Wuthnow, Robert. *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith since World War II*

**Journal Articles**


**OTHER WRITINGS FOR STUDYING AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN**

Ahlstrom, Sydney E. *A Religious History of the American People*

*American Presbyterian* (previously published as *Journal of Presbyterian History*)

Bowden, Henry W. *Dictionary of American Religious Biography*

Burr, Nelson R. *A Critical Bibliography of Religion in America*

Coalter, Milton, et. al. eds. *The Presbyterian Presence: The Twentieth-Century Experience*

Conkin, Paul K. *The Uneasy Center: Reformed Christianity in Antebellum America*

Dennison, Charles G. and Richard C. Gamble, eds. *Pressing Toward the Mark: Essays Commemorating Fifty Years of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church*

Gaustad, Edwin S. *A Documentary History of Religion in America, 2 vols*

_____________. *A Historical Atlas of Religion in America*

_____________. *A Religious History of America*

Hudson, Winthrop S. *Religion in America: An Historical Account of the Development of American Religious Life*

Hutchison, William R. *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism*

Loetscher, Lefferts A. *A Brief History of Presbyterianterians*

_____________. *The Broadening Church: A Study of the Theological Issues in the Presbyterian Church since 1869*

Noll, Mark. *The Old Religion in the New World: The History of North American Christianity*

Parker, Harold M. *Bibliography of Published Articles on American Presbyterian. 1901-1980*

Piepkorn, A. C. *Profiles in Belief* (vol 2)

Reid, Daniel G. et. al. *Dictionary of Christianity in America*

Smith, H. Shelton, Robert T. Handy, and Lefferts A. Loetscher, *American Christianity: An Historical Interpretation and Representative Documents*


_____________. *A Brief History of the Presbyterianterians*

Trinterud, Leonard. *A Bibliography of American Presbyterian During the Colonial Period*

Wells, David F. *Reformed Theology in America: A History of its Modern Development*
**READING REPORT FOR H651 AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN**

Complete and sign this form and return along with final exam.

Assigned reading: 

Balmer and Fitzmeier, *The Presbyterianarians* 

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Armstrong, et. al., *The Presbyterian Enterprise: Sources of American Presbyterian History* 

____________  

Longfield, Bradley, *The Presbyterian Controversy* 

____________  

Fortson, Donald S., *Colonial Presbyterian* 

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The total number of pages I have read for this course is ____________. [include above books and readings listed below]

Signed: ________________________________  Date: ____________

Student’s Name

Please Print: ________________________________

Student’s Name
## Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes

**Course: HT607 History of Christianity I**  
**Professor:** Dr. Hoffecker  
**Campus:** Jackson

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td><strong>Strong</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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A. **16th century Europe**: the Reformed Tradition: foundation of European culture changed drastically with the shift on the religious scene. The Protestant Reformation brought change not only in the institutional church but across the entire cultural scene. Few of western culture’s institutions were left unaltered; or more positively, reformed tradition brought significant transformation to virtually all areas of life. This was not accidental – change resulted from specifics of the reformed world and life view.

B. **Magisterial reformers** – the term itself opens up the typology of different reformers (reminds us that reformation not monolithic). Luther, Zwingli, Calvin differed from radicals and Anabaptists who would follow them chronologically but not theologically. “Magisterial” refers to their relation with the civil magistrate and thus the wider culture – they favored a relation between church and state. Even though they held vastly different views, each believed that both church and state played vital role in the Christian life.

1. **Switzerland**: several figures emerge in the tradition that would influence American Presbyterian: Huldrych Zwingli, Heinrich Bullinger, John Calvin.
   a. **Huldrych Zwingli** (1484-1531) Reformation carried out in Zurich; he was “people’s priest” and participated in public disputations with Catholics; brought reforms in liturgy and practice using Scripture principle which characterized the Reformed movement; sought to spread reforms into Catholic cantons; died in resultant war at Kappel.
   b. **Heinrich Bullinger**: familiar with Luther’s protest; followed in footsteps of Zwingli after his death. Author of First Helvetic Confession and Second Helvitic Confession which served as confessional basis for Swiss Protestantism.
   c. **John Calvin** (1509-1564) Best known and most gifted of Swiss reformers. At first with William Farel and later during his second period of ministry, he laid basis for most thoroughgoing change in the Christian Church, to reform the church according to the Word of God. It could take an entire lecture to list his contributions. The significant point to make = his reform would pervade all of life giving rise to distinctive reformed world and life view.

C. **Theological distinctives**:

1. **Reformed theology**: sovereignty of God; covenant perspective which provides basis for divine and human activity (shows essential biblical foundation of reformed tradition). This would powerfully influence not only European religious and political movements such as Holland and England, but also America.

2. **Human depravity**: while many have rejected the biblical concept of original sin, this distinctive figured prominently in American culture. Led to federal theology, corporate and individual responsibility. Views of the atonement. Culturally it led to belief in political balance of powers in govt structure.
3. **Holiness of life**: usually thought the distinctive of other groups (thus the holiness movements). But reformed believers sought to bring about social sanctification. While it sometimes became a legalistic formality even in Geneva, a life of moral and religious conforming to biblical norms shaped Calvinistic patterns.

4. **Community of faith**: Calvinist church reflected in polity, sacraments, church membership, role of political order. Both reformer broke with **Medieval view** (church over state).
   a. **Luther more conservative**: church and state in tension; Christians can fulfill political calling, but with only limited success (state exercises considerable power via princes (*cujus regio*).)
   b. **Calvin’s view of model Christian community**: believers in fulfilling their calling transform every area of life; church and state cooperate to make model Christian community. In *Institutes* IV Calvin explored a distinctive feature of Reformed faith: the **political order listed as a means of grace**. This view pounded out in Calvin’s struggle with the magistrate over who exercises power of excommunication, the spiritual or temporal sword.

5. **Polity**: Presbyterian form of govt = one of the three classic forms. Church based on representative system of govt in which authority is lodged in a specially elected group of people called Presbytery. Featured a hierarchy of judicatories or church courts beginning with local and ascending to synod and general assembly; each had distinctive responsibilities and working within geographical boundaries. At each level both ordained and lay elders labored together (parity of elders) serving as bishops had within an Episcopal system. It represented a compromise between the old Episcopal order and the independence / autonomy of Baptist order.

D. **Reformed Protestantism in Europe** before transplanted into New World. By mid-16th c. **Reformed faith enculturated in various forms** in Switz, France, Germany, Eastern Europe, Netherlands and British Isles. Some of more remarkable events: struggle of Huguenots and devastation of the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre; Synod of Dordt systematized Calvinist thought; Scottish Church under Knox established ligaments of Presbyterian (applied Genevan model to entire country; Puritan element established briefly in England (Thomas Cartwright, Westminster Confession and Catechisms, Directory of Worship, Form of Presbyterian Govt). Therefore, not only was the reformation not monolithic, neither is the reformed tradition. Instead, what we find are a variety of ways in which reformed views implemented in different countries.

II. The **Colonial Period** [Leonard J. Trinterud, *The Forming of an American Tradition: A Re-examination of Colonial Presbyterian* (Phila: Westminster Press, 1949)] **Presbyterian came to America in midst of other denominations seeking their places** as well. Thus contemporaneous with Congregationalists and Baptists in New England and Anglicanism in the Southern colonies. [Interesting question: Who was the first American Presbyterian? Samuel Logan, “Transition to the New World” in *Pressing Toward the Mark*: examine various groups in England and New World not just for their theology but also their ecclesiology.]

   A. **Unremarkable Beginnings**: Founding of New England by Pilgrims (1620), a separatist movement within Church of England, and Puritans (1628), nonseparatists, or Congregationalists. Important to distinguish Congregationalists from Presbyterian: Congregationalists ordination belonged within The congregation, not Presbyterian; power of excommunication also resides within local body, not some higher judicatory. Don’t confuse
the adventures of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies. History of Congregationalism includes some prosaic elements capable of capturing America’s imagination— including such memorable events as First Thanksgiving, Salem Witch trials, antinomian controversy with Anne Hutchinson and the unceremonious booting of Roger Williams with the coming of Presbyterian. Presbyterian beginnings were far more commonplace.

B. **Migration of Scots to Ireland in late 17th c.** Made possible by conspiracies in Ireland against British crown; this resulted in land being made available to poverty-stricken Scots who were willing to migrate to Ulster to start a new life. Migration of Scots peaked in 1690-97. Thus Presbyterian transplanted as fierce Scots refused to embrace the Church of England. They carried with them memories of a staunch refusal to give in to two Stuart kings (Charles I and II) who attempted to coerce them into becoming Anglicans.

1. **Factors leading to Presbyterian migration to America.** The migration to Ireland did not end Scots' economic situation as hoped; a famine, failure of linen industry and further religious oppression (Test Act of 1704 which prohibited holding office by non Anglicans)

2. Many **Scots-Irish further migrated to America in the 18th c.** There were scattered groups of Presbyterian in the colonies (primarily in Middle Colonies) prior to immigration of Scots-Irish. **Middle Colonies = religious pluralism (Timothy L. Smith) prevailed.** Thus PA and NJ became the heartland of Presbyterian in America. Numbers of Presbyterian grew as others moved from other parts of colonies; colonists then requested Northern Ireland for ministers to meet spiritual need.

C. **Francis Makemie** (1658-1708) the reputed founder of American Presbyterian, (“Father of American Presbyterian”) arrived in 1683. Educated at Univ of Glasgow; ordained as missionary to America. Although he landed in Maryland, he itinerated as a “missionary at large” primarily in the Middle colonies (actually Barbados was his base; but he traveled and founded churches in Maryland, Virginia, NY and New England). He received funds from United Brethren (Congregational and Presbyterian) in London. At this time **two strands of Presbyterian:** New England strain, known for their experiential piety; and Scots Irish, famous for their confessional emphasis. Logan: “Makemie seems to be the catalyst drawing together many of the incipient strands of Presbyterian in the middle colonies.” (123)

1. **Makemie jailed.** Governor of NY charged and jailed Makemie in 1707 for preaching without a license; held in prison from January to March. Makemie responded that he had a license, a calling from God to preach and that he had religious and civil rights as an Englishman. He claimed that the English Toleration Act (1689) applied to the colonies as well. **Makemie acquitted** by a court which recognized his license issued in Barbados. The case represents a milestone in religious toleration; Presbyterianarians reputed for acknowledging the rights of dissenting churches.

2. **Formation of first Presbytery.** By opening of 18th c., churches planted in four major cities: Newark (1667), Woodbridge (1680), Fairfield (1692), Phila (1692) and a few other settlements. Growth necessitated formation of first Presbytery in 1706. Makemie (moderator) and six other ministers (variety of backgrounds represented: one Scottish, two Scots-Irish, three New England). Rather than focus on their differences (geographical origin, tradition) they sought unity. **Situation similar to what motivated the Saybrook Platform (1708)** among Congregationalists in New England. By this meeting Congregationalists became a somewhat connectional church and compromised traditional Congregational independency. Similarities of
belief and practice made possible a relation between Congregationalists and Presbyterians in the Middle Colonies.

3. **Rapid growth.** Group grew quickly due to immigration, especially to PA; 25 ministers by **1716 led to formation of synod** consisting of Presbyterian of Long Island (churches in NJ and NY), Philadelphia (PA), New Castle (DE) and Snow Hill (MD – but the latter never came into being. Denomination grew to 3,000 worshipping in @ 40 churches.

4. **Several issues would need to be addressed:** how would disciplinary authority function within Presbyteries and the synod? Should standardized procedures be adopted to accept ministers and candidates for ministry? What should pastors subscribe?

D. **Samuel Davies (1723-1761)** Major influence in early Presbyterian. Born in DE of Welsh stock; studied with Francis Blair in PA and moved to VA in 1746 where he had to overcome establishment prejudice against non-Anglicans. Following a 500-mile circuit, Davies ministered to dissenting congregations which met informally. His indefatigable organization and evangelism led to a revival in the colonial period. His warm piety and ministerial zeal set a standard that characterized early Presbyterian. Hanover became the first VA presbytery in 1755.

1. **Efforts for Princeton.** In England and Scotland (mid 1750s), Davies (along with Gilbert Tennent) garnered support for the fledgling College of NJ (became Princeton) which became, as we shall see the first genuine national college in America.

2. **Elected President of Princeton (1759)** But Davies died just 18 months after taking office. He is remembered for his outstanding preaching ability, intellectual leadership and advocacy against establishment of religion.

III. **Adopting Act 1729.** Initial peaceful beginnings did not last. Major division mentioned above led to conflict between New England and Scots Irish strands of Presbyterianism. How would the newly formed denomination define itself – by a strict confessionalism, or by its distinctive piety? Issue arose over the question of subscription to the Westminster Confession which has precedent in England and Scotland.

A. **Subscription in Great Britain.** Fortson: In 1690 the Scotch Parliament ratified the Westminster Confession as the confession of the church. All those licensed to preach, all entering into the ministry and all ministers and elders were to subscribe: “I do sincerely own and declare the above Confession of Faith … to be the true doctrine, which I will constantly adhere to.” The Scottish Kirk consistently favored strict subscription to the Confession with only minor reservations related to govt and ch/st relations.

B. **Irish Pacific Act 1720.** An attempt at compromise to harmonize the strict vs conciliatory parties. Debate has focused on attempts [e.g., Briggs in *American Presbyterian*] to claim that in Ireland the emphasis was not on strict Reformed doctrine but on broad Christian orthodoxy. The Pacific Act satisfied no one; resulted in division between subscriptionists and non-subscriptionists. This division still fresh in people’s minds in colonies when the issue came up. Trinterud claimed the Pacific Act was model for Adopting Act. Fortson disagrees; similarities however exist.

C. **England’s Semi-Arian crisis (1718-9).** London ministers divided into 3 groups: subscribers, non-subscribers and neutrals. All 3 parties essentially orthodox on the Trinity, but could not agree on subscribing to a creed as the proper method of handling the issue. Some
nonsubscribers eventually conformed with the Ch of England; a few embraced Arianism. It appeared to some the unwillingness to subscribe signified harboring heresy.

D. **Beginning of subscription controversy.** Balmer & F: In America, case of **Robert Cross**, Scots-Irish pastor of New Castle Presbyterian. Some questioned his moral qualities [he was found guilty of fornication, and suspended from ministry for 4 Sundays] as his credentials examined in Phila (1721). How would Presbyterian define and discipline themselves? **George Gillespie** (New Castle Presbyterian): outraged at mild sentence for Cross, called for strict subscription and discipline based on the Westminster Standards.

E. **Jonathan Dickinson** (1688-1747) [Freundt article in Evangelical Dictionary of Theology] Yale grad, pastor at Elizabethtown and leader of New England group. [Dickinson was a major figure, overlooked by many; contemporary of Edwards; likened by some as influential in his era [Heimert and Miller] LeBeau’s recent book, Jonathan Dickinson and the Formative Years of American Presbyterian joins Keith J. Hardman’s PhD Diss, “Jonathan Dickinson and the Course of American Presbyterian, 1717-1747.” LeBeau’s chapters focus: Dickinson exemplified moderate New Sider position in Great Awakening; key participant in subscriptionist controversy; defended Calvinism against Anglicanism and Baptists; critiqued Enlightenment in defending moderate Calvinism; led moderate awakenerers [welcomed Whitefield to his pulpit, but pulled radicals to more moderate position; he worked to heal the schism but died before rupture healed.]

1. **Dickinson challenged strict subscription idea.** He held that requiring assent to Westminster Confession elevated a creed created by men above the Bible. No one person or group of people fully understands the Bible, thus any system will be imperfect.

2. **Dickinson proposed alternative procedure:** a more helpful test for ministry was to explore person’s religious experience, rather than their theological beliefs. Warm-hearted piety most important sign of Christian profession. He argued that strict subscription = a reversion to Romanism or Anglicanism. How could one affirm the “glorious contradiction” of affirming ch 20 of the Confession that upholds “God alone is Lord of the conscience” while simultaneously submitting to strict authority of the remainder of the chapters?

D. **John Thompson of New Castle** took an opposing position; all candidates for the ministry should subscribe to Westminster Standards. He contended that lack of subscription would lead to weakness in doctrinal orthodoxy. In addition each Synod is independent and needs to take the lead in assuring the church would be served with sound pastors. The theological content of the creed correctly embodied the teaching of the Bible.

1. Thompson has frequently been vilified for his opposition to the Awakening, and revivalists accused him of being unregenerate. Thompson represents what D. G. Hart calls the “lost soul of American Protestantism” – the confessionalist perspective.

2. Whereas revivalists insisted on a datable conversion experience as indispensable for a minister, Thompson and other Old Side Presbyterians argued that credible evidence of a person’s standing in Christ was not testimony of their experience. Instead candidates for the ministry should be questioned only regarding their doctrines and beliefs. No judicatory can inquire into the “secrets of the heart.”

3. The controversy between Thompson and revivalists was the first stage of what Hart calls “a perennial rivalry in American religious history not between conservative and liberal Protestantism but between conversionist or pietistic Protestantism and its
churchly or confessional competitor.” (Hart, *The Lost Soul of American Protestantism*, p. 40)

E. **Schism averted.** Tension mounted within the young denomination. It threatened to split Presbyterian into two camps. What later brought schism to the denomination in the Great Awakening split between New and Old Siders was averted in 1729 by a compromise – the Adopting Act.

F. **Adopting Act of 1729 [convened in Phila]**. People lined up behind the positions of **Dickinson and Thompson**. Twenty members present, seven absent. New England clerics tended to side with Dickinson and Scots-Irish joined Thompson. At issue were two conflicting ideas of what constitutes orthodoxy and qualification for the ministry. Freedom of conscience essential, yet a formal creed was necessary of the good of the church. Committee of 8 well balanced between various views [subscribers, non-subscribers and scruples]. A proposal would have to emerge to satisfy all parties if unity was to be preserved.

1. **Document framed by Dickinson.** The act distinguished between **essential and nonessential elements of the Confession**.
   a. **Morning session.** Passed the foundational principles of subscription. Each candidate must state that the Westminster standards were “in all the essential and necessary articles, good forms of sound words and systems of Christian doctrine.” The terms “essential and necessary” emerge as the most important terminology in the document; they occur 5 times in the act.
   b. Then the candidate must indicate where he could not affirm belief; he must **state his “scruples” to the ordaining body**; the body would then consider whether the scruple was essential enough to warrant exclusion. Thus candidates had room to differ, and **Presbyteries had the responsibility**. Presbytery would then decide whether or not the differences reached into items that were “essential and necessary” or not. Thus judgment was left in the hands of individual Presbyteries rather than a strict subscription being demanded of all ministers. **This decision remained the guiding principle of American Presbyterian**. While neither position was totally embodied in the decision, it upheld the Confessional standards while allowing some room for difference of opinion. Charles Hodge commenting on the decision in the 19th c. said that he was one of very few who could have subscribed to the entire confession without reservation!!
   c. **Afternoon session.** Then the Synod implemented the Act among themselves. Each member stated his scruples. The exceptions focused on Ch 20 and 23 concerning the role of the civil magistrate and its role in over the Synod.

2. **Clearly the act was a compromise:** Hodge: both parties wanted to avoid a schism, yet both wanted their own views to prevail. “Their only expedient was to find some common ground on which they could stand.”

3. The **compromise held the denomination together until the Great Awakening** when the same concerns that initiated the controversy surfaced again.

4. **Samuel Hemphill case (1735)**. LeBeau cites details as evidence that Dickinson’s compromise had clear limits. Hemphill stated no scruples at his ordination, yet he espoused deistic principles in his preaching [emphasized laws of nature without any reference to necessity of faith in Christ for salvation]. Charges lodged against Hemphill in Phila Presbyterian; interesting historical sidelight = Benjamin Franklin
polemic writings brought case to public view [Franklin’s vitriolic attacks on Presbytery-- he called H’s critics bigots, “Rev. Asses’”]. At the trial, Dickinson defended Church’s right to defend its own orthodoxy; he even quoted Locke’s Letter of Toleration 1689).

5. **Synod of 1736.** Clear evidence of conservative attempt to interpret Adopting Act in conservative manner. It quoted only the afternoon session of 1729. Thereby it omitted the foundational principles regarding essential and necessary and implied that only matters relating to ch 20, 23 [civil magistrate] could be permissible scruples. The strict subscriptionists were reacting to the trial of Hemphill and wanted to forestall any attempt to undermine the Confession. Had Dickinson and others attended the meeting, they would have objected to the procedure. Thus seeds for future schism already present in 1736.

F. **Interpreting the Adopting Act:** Trinterud / Briggs interpretation strongly favors less stringent view of subscription. James Payton’s questions in “The Background and Significance of the Adopting Act of 1729” in Pressing Toward the Mark. Positions on the Adopting Act span a spectrum from positive view that herein is the genius of American Presbyterian (protects liberty of conscience; avoids rationalistic subscriptionism; protects spiritual life of clergy and laity) to the opposing view that it corrupts Presbyterian and introduces latitudinarianism even before the Plan of Union in 1801 (implicitly encouraged individualism; avoids the question of what it means to be a confessional church; by distinguishing between essential and necessary and other elements, it blunted development up to that time of increasing precision in faith. Synod of 1736 indicates that strict subscriptionist view gaining precedence. Dickinson and others not present. Seeds of schism already evident. New Side custom to refer to morning session
Lecture #2 Presbyterianism and the Great Awakening Dr. Hoffecker

I. **Introduction**: Last lecture we examined the two parties that comprised colonial Presbyterian, New England Puritans and Scots Irish. Each brought different emphasis to American Presbyterian. We also examined how the Adopting Act of 1729 enabled the denomination to avoid a major division. It established compromise that would long guide the church.

A. **Great Awakening**. But the peace that the Adopting Act established would be sorely tested by the tumultuous events of what H. Richard Niebuhr has called “America’s conversion,” the Great Awakening.

B. **Why the necessity of a revival?** Early American religious life not quite “the good old days” that one might suppose!! In fact by 1733, the General Synod noted the severe decline in spiritual vitality in the Presbyterian denomination. The low estate evident by the fact that outside of New England not one in twenty people were members of the church (Loetscher). Grandchildren of devout Puritans were often resolute in their unbelief.

C. **Decline of Puritan Congregationalism**. Many historians trace the beginning of the decline in Puritan America to an attempt to resolve the “third generation” problem widely experienced in Puritan congregations. What is the status of children of parents who had been baptized but had never become full members of the church?

1. **Synods in Cambridge, MA (1646-49)** discussed the issue and proposals made to baptize children; but no decisions made.

2. **Half Way Covenant (1662)** Finally the infamous “Half Way Covenant” reached; this allowed for people to be “half-way” but not full members of the covenant. While not all Puritans allowed the practice (some ferociously resisted the practice), it began because disturbing number of children of first generation Puritans often did not follow in their parents’ faith. When third generation born, the grandparents wanted grandchildren to be recognized as genuine covenant children. The Half Way Covenant allowed children of people who were baptized but not full church members to be baptized, like their parents. Both parents and their children were but “half-way” members of the church; full church membership came only upon profession of regeneration. While such a practice was well meaning, it clearly compromised the intention of covenant theology; also indicated decline of religious piety.

II. **Tennent Family and the Log College**. Played vital role in the shaping of American Presbyterian: education of ministers, setting stage for Great Awakening, relation between piety and theology.

A. **William Tennent, Sr.** (c. 1673-1746) the patriarch of the family, an Irish-born Scotsman, ordained in the Episcopal Church of Ireland. After he immigrated to America (1716), he married a Presbyterian minister’s daughter and transferred into the Presbytery without reordination. He moved from Bedford, NY to Neshaminy, PA. In the context of the Subscription Controversy (1720s) and with the motive of maintaining “experimental orthodoxy,” he began mentoring several students for the ministry. This included his four sons. Tennent held to position that was to characterize 18th c Presbyterian: he believed that religion should be experimental in nature and that its ministry should be well educated. (Some have used the phrase “order and ardor” to describe Presbyterian distinctives.) As Presbyterian expanded into sparsely populated areas, the need for pastors rose sharply ahead of the supply from across the Atlantic.

1. **Tennent’s Log College**: Schools for ministers in pietist tradition began informally as pastors trained men for the ministry in their own homes. Tennent, however, had
trained his four sons in early 1720s; then (dates range from 1725-1736 as time date of origin) he initiated a school in a 20'X 20' log house in Neshaminy, PA, which became known derisively as a “Log College.” This term used in 18th c for training schools for the ministry. (First Presbyterian seminary not started until 1812 in Princeton.)

a. Reading in Presbyterian Enterprise (33, 34): Evangelist George Whitefield spoke in his journal of Tennent’s college in glowing terms of “breeding up gracious Youths, and sending them out from Time to Time into our Lord’s Vineyard.” He mentions that the term the College was spoken with contempt (by “Carnal Ministers” – those who recognized only the training received in England). Comparison similar to Knox on Geneva. But Whitefield praised the work in words similar to Knox’s words about Geneva: “To me it seemed to resemble the school of the old prophets.” No less than eighteen clergy graduated from Tennent’s school. Loetscher: “Presbyterians look back with real pride to this humble but truly bit of pioneer Presbyterian education.” Similar “Log Colleges” appeared in other parts of the Middle Colonies.

B. Gilbert Tennent (1703-64), Born in Ireland, Gilbert was William’s eldest son, most gifted and natural leader. Family immigrated to America in 1718. Gilbert received MA from Yale in 1725. Licensed by the Phila Presbytery; he ministered briefly in New Castle, DE and then assumed pastorate in New Brunswick, NJ at same time his brother started at Freehold, NJ.

1. Revival among Dutch Reformed, Theodore J. Frelinghuysen close by in Raritan. Before immigrating to America in 1720, he served two churches in Holland. Just as Francis Makemie sent to America by Scots-Irish, Frelinghuysen commissioned by Dutch in 1720 to serve four churches; he was deeply saddened to find perfunctory religion and low spiritual life. His fervent pietism evident in his scolding fellow ministers for using the Lord’s Prayer in public worship. He undertook strict supervision of Lord’s Supper and series of evangelistic sermons to stir up vital Christian life. Frelinghuysen met staunch opposition from his congregation. Some wealthy members of the churches strongly resisted Frelinghuysen and sought assistance from other Dutch pastors to oppose his efforts. Nevertheless, Frelinghuysen prevailed as many converts won in the controversy. He preached the necessity of vital conversion experience and life of holiness. By 1726, revival in full fire.

2. Tennent’s participation in revival Influenced by Frelinghuysen, Gilbert Tennent repented of his own apathy and undertook to emulate Frelinghuysen’s ministry. (late 1720s - early 30s). Tennent assisted his father’s efforts with the Log College and contributed his own revivalist zeal to minority of pastors within the Presbytery. In his pastorate in New Brunswick Tennent demanded a spiritual conversion experience as basis for church membership; he undertook visitation in homes. His congregations reacted like Frelinghuysen’s – some strongly supported his efforts, others recoiled against it; result = congregational turmoil.

a. Accounts of revival in PE. (37, 8) Samuel Blair’s account indicates the methods used by the Log College men. They preached doctrinal sermons; emotional response from congregation; Blair attempted to moderate the response. He describes the experiences: fainting, weeping, unusual bodily motions. He mentions laying open people’s sinful condition, encouraged people to “close with Christ.” He discouraged
people from seeking “extraordinary ways – visions, dreams or “immediate inspiration.”

C. **Scots-Irish reaction. Rising tide of Scots-Irish from waves of immigration.** Growth swelled the ranks of anti-revivalists and emboldened them to take action against revivalists. Opponents of revival, known as Old Lights, argued that enthusiasm undermined the rational character of Christian faith. They also strongly resented itinerancy – New Lights who invaded Old Light territories and attempted to disrupt churches.

D. **Opposition arose gradually, by degrees.** 1738: Synod passed several acts that attempted to keep New Lights from assuming leadership in church (including attack upon Log College men); Old Lights demanded that ministers receive education at either British universities or established colonial colleges. Old Lights used synod to discredit and prevent their admission to Presbytery. Both sides hurled accusations at one another, many unsubstantiated.

1. **Response by Tennent’s opponents.** (PE, 35) Those who stood for strict subscription and against the revivals responded in kind. They encouraged **attendance at college in New England or Europe.**
2. **Attempt to control itinerants.** (PE 39, 40) The rising popularity of New Lights became evident as New Light preachers invited to preach outside their own congregations. Also, people began vacating Old Light churches. In desperation, Old Lights passed resolutions to stem the tide of the revival
   a. **No minister can preach in congregation belonging to another Presbytery.**
   Purpose is to prevent divisions; one must first gain permission to labor within the Presbytery
   b. To overcome previous mistakes


1. **Tennent’s “Danger of an Unconverted Ministry”** (March 8, 1740) Antagonism between pro- and anti-revivalist factions led to Gilbert Tennent’s famous sermon (“second to none in invective” Loetscher) preached at Nottingham, PA (he was intruding in another Presbytery; it was preached to a “vacant congregation”) and then published in Phila. Its distribution fueled the struggle. Tennent later admitted the wrong that the sermon occasioned.
2. **Strongly censorious in spirit.** (PE 42) Tennent hurled denunciations; he called Old Lights “Pharisees,” **blind, dead dogs**; calling anti-revivalists “the ministry of Natural men”; thus he charged many with being unregenerate. He likened such pastors to a person who does not know how to swim yet teaches other nonswimmers and he dies like a fool. He ended the sermon by calling people to leave their churches and seek instruction under genuine pastors. (43)
3. **Tennent’s retraction** (1742) Years later, Tennent penned a letter to Jonathan Dickinson expressing profound regret for the damage his sermon and other activities caused the Presbyterian Church.
III. New Side / Old Side Schism (1741-58) The Synod could hardly endure such division and rancor. Synod met in Phila. When Old Lights realized their dominance in numbers, they took action.

A. Old Lights (27 ministers) issued a protest against “Brunswick-Party” (22 ministers) – “these brethren have no right to be acknowledged as members of this judicatory of Christ.” In so doing, the Old Lights expelled the New Lights, and they declared themselves as the Synod (later the Synod of Philadelphia popularly called “Old Side”). This procedure was illegal, but the damage was done. Leader of Old Side: Francis Alison who charged revivalists of disorderliness (“contrary to all Presbyterian rules”), criticized psychology of revivalists and their association with George Whitefield. His attempt to found a rival Old Side theological school failed.

B. New Lights responded by declaring they were “Conjunct Presbyteries of New Brunswick and Londonderry.” They faced strenuous task of reorganizing their churches while simultaneously maintaining their revival efforts on the frontier. Later they joined forces with New York Presbytery of Jonathan Dickinson constituting New York Synod (1745) (popularly known as the New Side). The New Siders continued to use the Adopting Act of 1729; ministers were to demonstrate competent ministerial knowledge and orthodoxy but also to display appropriate “vital godliness.” They obviously encouraged participation in the revival. Under the leadership of Samuel Davies, Samuel Finley, and Samuel Blair revival spread into PA and VA.

C. Schism lasted 17 years – until 1758. During that time, New Side experienced tremendous growth as the revival flourished (number of ministers more than tripled in size to 73). In contrast the Old Side actually lost ground by declining in number from 27 to 23. The New Siders took the lead in trying to reunite with Old Side as Gilbert Tennent admitted in Irenicum Ecclesiasticarum (1749) his earlier censoriousness actually precipitated the schism.

1. Reunion in Phila: Long negotiations preceded reunion in Phila. Tennent elected moderator. Terms indicate New Light prominence: Adopting Act upheld; Presbyteries were to license and approve candidates; education as well as “experimental acquaintance with religion” required equally in ministers; revivals approved as work of Holy Spirit. Groups reunited to form the Synod of New York and Philadelphia.

2. Old Side tradition. Old Siders continued to favor doctrinal strictness as basis for selection of ministers. They also looked for leadership on the other side of the Atlantic. Some Old Siders left the denomination. The Old Side principles never died out; they figured prominently in the Presbyterian educational tradition – specifically at the College of NJ (Princeton) under the leadership of John Witherspoon after 1768 and under Archibald Alexander at Princeton Seminary after 1812. What remained in strained relation smoldered to erupt again in the 19th c as the New - Old School controversy.

3. Later debates over subscription. Conservatives would continue to argue that the old Synod of Phila was correct in interpreting 1729 in terms of the afternoon minute and the strict reinterpretation of 1736. Receiving the “system” of the Confession meant embracing the whole confession without exception since the originally scrupled chapters had been amended in 1788. A larger group of Presbyterians recalled the original intent of the morning minute; “system” referred to the Confession’s Calvinistic doctrines and distinguished between doctrines “essential” to the system and those that were not. A still smaller group believed that “system of doctrine” meant doctrines shared in common with all Christian churches, a “catholic
Christianity.” Thus a basis existed for deep division that would erupt in another schism in the 19th c.

IV. **Effect of the Great Awakening.** Permeated all American denominations – in fact it fostered the very concept of denominationalism as a distinctive American religious phenomenon. Conversions led to influx of membership on virtually all religious groups. Thus the movement affected all groups; but it probably affected Episcopalians the least. Led to emphasis on personal religious conversion experience.

A. **Theological temper.** The term “evangelicalism” in America now takes on a different meaning from Europe. In Europe the term used first of Luther’s followers as he recovered the gospel (ευαγγελίον). In America the word begins to be used as a term for those who supported revivalism. Was it a revolt against Calvinism? While that may be the case in later American history, it was far from the case in 1st Great Awakening. Instead evangelicalism stressed the centrality of personal religious experience. Christianity not to be understood as mere outward formalistic ritual or intellectual assent to doctrine. In New England under the influence of Jonathan Edwards careful theological discussion took place as basis for religious experience. Such was not always the case in the rest of the colonies. Resulted in “New England Theology” which was Calvinist in form with clear experiential overtones. Thus the earliest expression of revivalism in America = Calvinist in orientation

B. **Denominationalism in America.** Denominations in America were not like the established churches in Europe; but neither were they like the anti-cultural Anabaptist sects. Sects in Europe tended to view themselves as exclusively the true church as distinct from nominal groups of Christians in state churches. “Denomination” in contrast = neutral or inclusive term signifying that the group is but one of several ecclesiastical bodies called by a particular name but still part of larger group, the Church, to which other denominations belong. Thus denominationalism became a peculiar American religious phenomenon. Even those groups like the Presbyterian and other Calvinist groups who were more confessional in emphasis, followed denominational patterns in American religious life.

C. **John Wesley and George Whitefield** contributed to growing consensus of denominationalism. Wesley said he despised all terms which distinguished various groups. “Dost thou love and fear God? It is enough! I give thee the right hand of fellowship.”

Whitefield consistently weighed in against denominations. In typical dramatic fashion, he preached from a courthouse balcony in Phila, looked to heaven and cried: “Father Abraham, whom have you in heaven? Any Episcopalians? No! Any Independents or Methodists? No, no, no! Whom have you there? We don’t know those names here. All who are here are Christians … Oh, is this the case? Then God help us to forget party names and to become Christians in deed and truth.”

V. **Founding of Princeton College.** Ministerial education in US in early 19th c was conducted by anti-revivalists. Both Harvard and Yale opposed the awakening. Therefore, the New Lights sought to establish a school that would train ministers who favored religious experience. Thus the College of New Jersey, from which both Princeton College and later Seminary would develop, was founded in 1746 shortly after the death of William Tennent.

A. **Jonathan Dickinson again figured prominently.** Classes began in Elizabethtown (later Elizabeth) NJ. Dickinson became first president as he taught ten students in his parsonage. But he died within five months. Freundt points out that in his lifetime Dickinson was perhaps the “most distinguished Presbyterian minister in the colonial period, with an international
reputation as a theologian second only to Jonathan Edwards.” He led Presbyterians through several prominent controversies: “he defended Calvinism against Arminianism and Deism, Presbyterian against episcopacy, and Nonconformity against Anglicanism.”

B. **Dickinson succeeded by Aaron Burr, son-in-law of Jonathan Edwards** who served for ten years during which time the school moved to Princeton, and the college name was changed. But the tradition of New Light religion continued to be honored as New Side Presbyterians cooperated with others associated with the revival.

C. Burr **succeeded by Jonathan Edwards in 1758**. Thus the New Lights’ most celebrated evangelical took the reigns of the new school. But again, an untimely death took Edwards (from smallpox vaccination) after he served for a mere two months.

D. The **next two presidents also had their terms cut short by death**. Thus in two short decades, in the words of Ahlstrom, “the College of New Jersey had devoured the best leadership of both the New England party and Log College men.”

E. **Election of John Witherspoon**. As the numbers of nominally Presbyterian immigrants continued to burgeon, the trustees viewed the College’s role in the training of ministers as of utmost importance. Trustees also wanted a person who would satisfy the Old Siders, who had devised a plan to seize control of the college. But their scheme came to naught when it was leaked. New Lights then marshaled forces to elect Witherspoon who initially refused. Through series of events Benjamin Rush persuaded Witherspoon to reconsider. Thus the choice of president was as crucial as ever if the college was to continue in its New Light religious heritage. The choice proved a most propitious one – Reverend John Witherspoon (1723-94), a native of Scotland and thus unusually attractive to Scotch-Irish constituents.

1. **Witherspoon’s characteristics**. An impressive man, already **widely acknowledged as an evangelical leader in the Kirk of Scotland** (knew continental Reformed theology which endeared him to potential Old Light foes). He was intellectually gifted, fully conversant in the philosophy of Scottish Common Sense. Thus he filled the vacuum resulting from the death of the church’s most capable men.

2. **Leadership**. In addition to his gifts in theology and philosophy, he proved to be a **political leader to a nation on the verge of seeking its independence**. Witherspoon became ardent apologist for liberty; his signature was the only clergyman’s at the bottom of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

3. When he arrived in Phila in Aug of 1768, he received a tumultuous welcome and was **escorted to Princeton with great fanfare**. Under his leadership, Princeton became arguably the finest school in the Middle Colonies.

F. **Scottish Philosophy began to overshadow New England Edwardeanism**. Many attribute to Witherspoon the spread of common sense philosophy. The Scottish renaissance overcame Hume’s skepticism in philosophy. Under Hume’s refinement of Lockean empiricism, knowledge consisted of only what one had experienced. For something to be true, it had to be experienced, otherwise it was mere speculation. Hume’s ideas considered the demolishing blow against orthodox Christianity with its dependence on arguments from cause and effect for the existence of God.

1. Scottish philosophers such as **Thomas Reid, posed an alternative to Humean skepticism** in the idea of common sense realism. Our ideas of cause and effect are reliable as are sense experience and moral experience of right and wrong.

2. **Witherspoon brought a thorough understanding of Scottish philosophy with him to Princeton**. And he set about to eliminate any traces of skepticism from the curriculum. This common sense philosophy became the lingua franca of the 19th c,
and thus Witherspoon contributed powerfully to American intellectual scene; Reformed theologians as well as Unitarians as well as theological positions in between on the spectrum of ideas.

G. Summary: Presbyterian and evangelicalism. Thus Presbyterian became enmeshed in key movement of 18th c American religion. And its leaders assumed significant roles in shaping evangelicalism. While schism divided the denomination early over the role of religious experience, eventually the denomination sought a balance between theological orthodoxy and vital experience.
I. **Introduction: “Roots again”: Religion and politics in 16th c. Europe.** In first lecture I referred to relation between political and religious order as a special interest of Reformed faith. Various struggles for independence grew out of Reformed worldview. Such a view counters modern notion that political liberation was a product of secular Enlightenment. The following events in Reformed groups provide background for American political liberty:

A. **Calvin’s ministry in Geneva.** Calvin struggled to maintain independence of church from state. Calvin went beyond Luther by establishing theological justification and guidelines for change in instances involving unjust govt.

B. **Scotland under Knox** seeking political and religious independence (from influence of French / English); when independence gained, nobles deserted Knox’s pious plan for Scotland.

C. **Huguenot struggle** for freedom in France (Edict of Nantes issued by Henry IV of Navarre [1598] which allowed Protestants and Catholics to live together in one nation [frequently violated by Cardinal Richelieu]; the edict was rescinded in 1685 by Louis XIV; and Huguenots fled France thus depleting nation of industrious merchant class)

D. **Dutch Calvinists** in Netherlands sought independence from Spain.

E. **English Puritans;** attempts to purify English church; Presbyterian established commonwealth after overthrow of monarchy in 1640’s.

II. **Colonial movement for independence in America** Thus when we turn our attention to American Revolution, Presbyterian could draw upon heritage of involvement in struggles for political and religious liberty. Ahlstrom in *A Religious History of the American People* makes a case for Reformed tradition’s role in American independence. In discussing the shaping of colonial culture, he points out that Puritanism provided motivation for self-sufficiency. While ecclesiastical establishment and limitations on franchise and slavery limited real democratic freedom, nevertheless a sense of common destiny was taking shape. Biblical ideas on law, covenant, and freedom undergirded growing American mind. Events leading to independence:

A. **Request for resident Anglican bishop.** One of incentives driving American consciousness for religious freedom involved American Tory **Samuel Johnson**, who scandalized his New Haven parish by renouncing his Congregational

B. ordination and received holy orders. [Johnson wrote the 1st philosophy text in America; he criticized Calvinism and the Great Awakening.] In 1722 he **requested England appoint a resident American bishop.** Such a proposal galvanized a strong response not only from American Presbyterian but also from many others that opposed any attempt to establish Anglicanism on American soil. One can hardly overemphasize most colonists’ antipathy to remnants of Episcopal system (Bridenbaugh refers to the pre-Revolutionary “Great Fear of Episcopacy”). Not only were Scotch-Irish staunchly opposed, but also many dissenting sects dispersed throughout the Middle Colonies.

C. **Aftermath of Great Awakening.** We have already seen that religious declension and secularization began early. But the **Great Awakening successfully lifted evangelical spirits** and countered not only the call for a bishop but fostered growing sentiment for self-government.

D. As crisis mounted, the **churches lined up on both sides of almost every issue.** It is well known, for example, that Methodist John Wesley sharply opposed Francis Asbury on the
Revolution. Asbury remained in America even thought Methodists were suspect because of its ties to Anglicanism. What about Presbyterian stand?

II. **Presbyterians and the Revolutionary Cause**. Presbyterian, like every other denomination, found themselves divided on political issues in the 1760s and 1770s. No denomination escaped differences of opinion on the cause for liberty. Tories and patriots inhabited every group. Some conservatives, for example, recoiled at the very idea of political independence from Britain, despite the long-standing animosity between Anglicanism and Presbyterian. But the bulk of Presbyterian sided with the patriotic cause.

A. **Conservatives** (Tories or Loyalists). They objected to British infringement on political and civil rights because of their position as merchants and upper class status. Fearing long term economic disaster if colonies separated from the British Empire, they opposed outright rebellion and attempted to blunt radical rhetoric calling for independence. Ironically, as we shall see, Scots in America – not Scotch-Irish – were widely identifiable as pro-English. Pockets of Scotch people existed throughout the colonies, some embarrassingly close to Witherspoon in Princeton and Phila.

B. **Patriots** (Whigs). Whigs argued against the encroaching power of govt and advocated the cause of liberty. Govt rested on a compact between leader and people. Especially suspect was appearance of new tax laws that did not have the support of colonists – such acts called for response to abuses. Loetscher claims in his chapter on the revolution “**Presbyterian were second to none** in their patriotic devotion to the cause of American independence.” Balmer and Fitzmier quote an Anglican loyalist: “I do not know one Presbyterian minister, nor have I been able, after strict inquiry, to hear of any who did not by preaching and every effort in their power promote all the measures of the Continental Congress, however extravagant.” Hudson points out that **no denomination was more suited to the cause of independence as Presbyterian**. Next to Congregationalists they were the most numerous, and were on the cutting edge, as it were, of the expanding country. Some even identified the revolutionary cause as a Presbyterian rebellion. An agent of Lord Dartmouth declared “When the war is over, [it will become apparent that] “Presbyterian is really at the bottom of this whole conspiracy.” Clearly impatient with moderate calls for restraint, ardent patriots used fiery language to speak out against British tyranny and upper class colonial society. They called to memory the fact that many had come to America to escape oppressive situation in their homeland.

1. **Presbyterian used social contract theory of govt** made famous by John Locke that had clear parallels with covenant theology. Just as secular patriots spoke out against King George III’s breaking his contract with his American subjects, Presbyterian pastors stated that their parishioners were free from any obligation to obey his dictates.

2. **Repeal of the Stamp Act (1766)** But the first response to change in political situation, led to this pastoral letter which has clear Presbyterian principles in mind. Rather than focus on the cause of liberty, it drives home providence, abuses, offenses against god and the necessity of public repentance of his people. Following points in **PE (78-80)**

   a. **God’s providence**. Readers urged to reflect upon God’s latest providences. God brought calamities upon his people that should lead them to forsake sin and seek his mercies.
b. **Abuses listed**: unusual taxes, restriction of trade, “almost total stagnation of business”

c. **Public offenses against God**: violation of Sabbath, neglect of worship, profane swearing luxury

d. **Call for repentance**: pay honor to the king: “Let this first

3. **Public pronouncements. May, 1775 the Synod of New York and Phila met in Phila.** In the preceding month the first blood had been spilt at Lexington, MA, and in the same month the Second Continental Congress was convened. The colonies teemed with excitement of the revolutionary cause. The Synod pastoral letter distinctly resembles the response to the repeal of Stamp Act: it called for a day of humble prayer and fasting and issued a statement, a pastoral letter. PE (82, 84)

a. **Note subdued tone of the document.** It espouses general themes of reformed theology: **General providence**: God permits his people to live under oppression, but his general method = those who live obediently experience his favor and blessing.

b. It **advocated patriotic feelings** while still confessing loyalty to King George. It even assumes that George may have acted under bad advice from his subordinates in colonies.

c. Treat **Continental Congress** with respect. Offer prayers for its success.

d. **Encourage moral living**: discourage luxury, gaming, and other forms of social profligacy. A **general fast**; “continue habitually in the exercise of prayer, and to have frequent occasional voluntary meetings for solemn intercession with God on the important trial.”

e. It was **the first political/social pronouncement by the denomination**.

f. Such practices would proliferate in the early 19th c. for reform programs. In the South such involvement in the political arena would be frowned upon. And in the 20th c. such pronouncements would expand with great vigor.

4. **Oct. 1776: Hanover Presbyterian in VA endorsed the Declaration of Independence**: “we embrace [it] as the Magna Carta of our commonwealth.” PE 89-92 This response mirrors the principles of the Declaration.

a. **Supports call for liberty.** While dissenters [i.e., Presbyterian] seek liberty, they desire to seek it in peace: “to secure us the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of our consciences…”

b. **Enumerate grievances.** Requirement to pay taxes to support establishment. They seek no established faith; all faiths ought to be able to function without restraint [including Islam]. They list the ways in which establishment hinders the temporal interests of any community [note why the growing territories – they don’t want freedoms abridged.

c. **Jesus did not seek civil sword.** He refused civil authority. If religion continued as in days of the apostles, it would succeed under God’s providence.

d. **Roles of civil govt.** To be separate from the church; it exists to secure “life, liberty and property” and to restrain the wickedness of men, propagate valid laws that extend to all equally. “Therefore, we ask no ecclesiastical establishment for ourselves; neither can we approve of them when granted to others.”
III. Role of clergy. One Tory referred to the role of American clergy as “Mr. Otis’s black regiment, the dissenting clergy.” And pulpits were used to press the claims of the revolution into every town. Winthrop Hudson states that while preachers stirred up interest and advocated action, little claim made for American righteousness or divine assistance against the British. He cites number of statements from 1775 to 1780 calling for repentance and revival. Emphasis did not focus on the evil of the British but on the necessity for repentance and God’s dispensing his providence. Thus calls for days of humiliation, prayer and fasting in which people called upon God for mercy and forgiveness.

A. John Witherspoon (1723-94) Witherspoon illustrates both restraint and advocacy. He emerged as the most prominent Presbyterian minister for the patriot cause. By the time of his arrival to assume the presidency at Princeton, students were already strongly disposed to the cause of independence. They opposed the Stamp Act in 1765; they refused to wear graduation garb from British fabric and wore colonial homespun clothing; the college’s supply of tea burned after the Boston Tea Party. Loyalists hoped Witherspoon would support a moderate course and not become embroiled in colonial affairs. He took the exact opposite course by encouraging “a hotbed of radical sentiment.” (Trinterud) In key years of 1775-6 Witherspoon increased his activity first in NJ then on national level. He used sermons, essays, and satirical broadsides to make the case for liberty. Thus he joined together clerical and political role. Like others, he saw intrinsic connections of various liberties: “There is not a single instance in history in which civil liberty was lost and religious liberty preserved entirely. If therefore we yield up our temporal property, we at the same time deliver the conscience into bondage.” (Quoted in B&F) Liberty is indivisible. (cf., J. Howard Pew’s freedom philosophy)

1. Service in Continental Congress. Witherspoon joined two other Princeton grads as delegates to the Continental Congress. British recognized Witherspoon’s involvement; they burned him in effigy in July 1776 on Long Island. Finally, he signed the Declaration of Independence, the only clergy to do so.

2. Key sermon / address on political matters in 1776.
   a. May 17, 1776: Sermon: “The Dominion of Providence Over the Passions of Men” Witherspoon’s first sermon on political topic. Interesting that so little fiery rhetoric present – rather he advocates key Presbyterian principles: [i.] what motivates colonists: united in expressing deep convictions about freedom; English measures are coercive; resistance does not arise from mere sedition or selfishness. He exhorts his hearers to act on these principles “and resist the influence of every other….”; [ii.] the benefits of sound religion: [iii.] elaborates “industry” as a powerful moral virtue [“a moral virtue of the greatest moment, absolutely necessary to national prosperity” which he identifies with God’s blessing]. Farmers who labor diligently in the fields will make soldiers able to stand the heat of battle; [iv.] virtue of frugality – interpreted as moderation and temperance. Closes with another comment about sound religion as foundation for their cause: “the man of piety and inward principle that we may expect to find the uncorrupted patriot, the useful citizen, and the invincible soldier. God grant, that in America true religion and civil liberty may be inseparable, and that the unjust attempts to destroy the one may, in the issue, tend to the support and establishment of both.”
   b. “Address to the Natives of Scotland Residing in America” [Tait: “John Witherspoon and the Scottish Loyalists,”] published as addendum to the
preceding sermon (it bears the same moderate tone as the sermon). Scots among the most disliked groups because of their views. Witherspoon offered several points to dislodge Scots from their pro-British ideas: [i.] **God’s plan.** America discovered and grew as a result of God’s providence that assured its destiny in the future. (Cf., growing belief in “universal myth” of manifest destiny – that colonies = God’s American Israel. Edwards popularized idea of God establishing his kingdom in America); [ii.] **new form of govt arising** (Witherspoon and others depended on John Locke); [iii.] liberty bursting into life in America **had its roots in Britain.**

C. **Jacob Green** (1722-1790) Father of Ashbel Green of Princeton. Mark Noll’s article in *JPH* (1976). Educated at Harvard, influenced by Gilbert Tennent in GA; pastor of Presbyterian Ch in Morris Co, NJ. He was a charter member of Trustees of College of NJ; served in interim after Jonathan Edwards and before Samuel Davies. Green not only ardently supported the Revolution, he struck at other evils. In “Observations on the Reconciliation of Great Britain and the Colonies, by a Friend of American Liberty” (1776). In a fast sermon he made a telling attack upon slavery. “What a dreadful absurdity and shocking consideration, that people who are so strenuously contending for liberty, should at the same time encourage and promote slavery. Is not freedom the inalienable right of all? How can we complain of Britain’s oppression while holding people in slavery?” In 1820 he launched a public broadside: “Slave owners are Tories of the worst sort. He came under censure for his outspoken views

D. **Tories.** Brief mention of loyalists and their activities. *JPH* devotes a section “The Pain of Loyalists” to this group if you are interested in who they were and what they did. Tory view represented by the poet Jonathan Odell (1737-1818. Educated at Princeton, but he took Anglican orders and served in Burlington, NJ. Like others, he had to go into hiding during the Revolution. With rapier wit he struck out against several prominent Presbyterians: George Duffield, pastor of Phila’s Third Presbyterian Ch and chaplain to Congress and John Witherspoon. On Witherspoon he wrote:

- Member of Congress we must hail him next:
- Come out of Babylon, was now his text,
- Fierce as the fiercest, foremost of the first,
- He’d rail at Kings, with venom well-nigh burst;
- Not uniformly grand – for some bye end
- To dirtiest acts of treason he’d descend.
- I’ve known him seek the dungeon dark as night,
- Imprison’d Tories to convert or fright;
- Whilst to myself I’ve humm’d, in dismal tune,
- I’d rather be a dog than Witherspoon.
- Be patient, reader – for the issue trust,
- His day will come – remember, Heav’n is just.”

E. **Effects of Revolution.** Counter-indicative!! Introduced a secularizing tendency as Enlightenment principles sometimes dominated discussion. Deism or “Republican Religion” intruded; this produced an alien way of considering political matters (especially as in Thomas Paine and Ethan Allen). Also, the predominance of political issues resulted in de-emphasis on religion as foundation for discussion. But on the other hand, the most important element = introduction of religious liberty.
F. **Aftermath of the Revolution.** Following the revolution, American denominations faced task of reorganization. Presbyterian did not face problem of breaking ties with old country and establishing uniquely American forms of govt as did Episcopalians and Methodists.

1. Those denominations that possessed Episcopalian polity faced significant reorganization (Methodists, for example, faced additional challenge of being a minority group within Anglicanism. American Methodists organized their church at “Christmas Conference” of 1784. Methodism thus began a century of expansion: “the chief engine of evangelical Arminianism in this country.” Ahlstrom)

2. **Effects of disestablishment.** Greater problem = issue of disestablishment for those churches which had enjoyed established position prior to revolution, e.g., Congregationalists in New England. Presbyterian never had major role in New England. A long and bitter struggle ensued between Congregationalists and other “dissenters.” In CT, for example, the hold was broken in 1818; but in MA Congregationalists maintained their Puritan hold until 1833.

3. **The Middle Colonies.** In the Middle Colonies where Presbyterian and other denominations existed, the pattern of religious pluralism had long been practiced. Presbyterian, Quakers, Dutch Reformed, Lutherans, Anglicans and Baptists coexisted (policy went back to Penn’s policy of toleration when colony first formed). Cooperation among the denominations resulting from losses due to wartime hardships led to ecumenical spirit.

4. **Virginia.** In VA belief that one religion could be established while others tolerated widely held. Presbyterian fought against being taxed to support the established Anglicanism. Eventually Thomas Jefferson drafted his famous “Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom” in 1779. The issue was not resolved until 1786.

IV. **Presbyterian after the Revolution.** Just as other denominations organized themselves on a national basis, so did Presbyterian. Growth of Princeton, continued immigration of Scotch-Irish. But more of a challenge = constitutional issues. As the church experienced tremendous growth, how would it be organized?

A. **Debate over form of the national church.** Problem arose as the church grew in numbers of congregants, attendance at Synod decreased (this despite requirement of ministers to attend!!). How to address this problem? By forming a committee!! As delegates discussed various options for the structure of the national church, no clear consensus emerged.

1. **Some expressed opposition to model of British and Scottish national church** which would place too much authority at the General Assembly level. These people wanted Presbyteries to be more prominent. Others wanted to use the Scottish Church as a model (William Stahelope Smith, Witherspoon’s successor).

2. **Synod of 1787** finally drafted a report that was sent to the Presbyteries for approval. It differed from older documents by its stress on the autonomy of the Presbytery. In British and Scottish models the General Assembly held the central authority. Americans wanted to place more emphasis on the Presbytery. Synods and General Assemblies were to be “agencies for unifying the life of the Church, considering appeals, and promoting the general welfare of the Church as a whole.” (Trinterud)

B. **Formation of General Assembly (May, 1788).** Synod held its last meeting; formed a national church. The church approved a Plan of Govt and Discipline, a Directory of Worship and revised the Westminster Confession to allow for a disestablished church. The Westminster Standards were to be the basis for the church
1. **Provided for four synods** (NY and NJ, Phila, VA and Carolinas) and 16
   Presbyteries. Presbyterian retained the power of ordination. Church included 419
   congregations, 177 ministers.

2. **First General Assembly met the next year (1789)** at Second Presbyterian Church,
   Phila convened by aging John Witherspoon who was almost blind at this time. John
   Rogers became first moderator.

3. **Presbyterian and US Constitution.** Ironically, first **US Congress under the
   Constitution was also meeting**. Some have pointed out that similarities in their
   respective constitutions point to Presbyterian as not only the archetypal American
   denomination but that it exercised an extraordinary influence on early public life in
   America! To support this, people point to Witherspoon’s role in both the church and
   the Continental Congress. As Balmer and Loetscher both point out, most critical
   historians downplay the circumstances. Rather than say that Presbyterian per se had a
   direct influence, it would be better to say, according to Balmer, “**both groups
   descended – genetically and/or intellectually – from progressive political
   theorists of Scotland and England.**” (39) Both share ideas of representative govt.

V. **Presbyterian in the aftermath of Disestablishment**

   A. **Presbyterian prosperity.** Loetscher’s comment on the Presbyterian Church as it entered the
      1800s: “[The Presbyterian Church] was perhaps the most influential single denomination in
      the country. It had a learned ministry, a sizable membership that was distributed, though not
      uniformly, over the country as a whole, with many on the rapidly expanding frontiers. It also
      had an efficient central govt supplied by a new General Assembly. prestige from its
      unquestioned patriotism; and – together with many of the other churches – renewed spiritual
      vigor from the recent revival.” (80)

   B. While prosperity marked the close of the 18th c., **lurking ahead loomed tremendous issues:**
      union with Congregationalists, another awakening, need for social reform, the conundrum of
      slavery, civil war, theological controversy and changes in modern science. Presbyterian
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3. **Synod of 1788**. Altered the Westminster Confession to conform to the American context. The original context of Confession affirmed the role of govt to exert control over the church as part of the price of religious establishment. The American context allowed freedom to denominations.

   a. **Role of magistrate.** Chapter 23 declared: “for the better effecting whereof, [the civil magistrate] has the power to call synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God.” The **American revision** assert that civil magistrates, as “nursing fathers,” had the duty “to protect the church of our common Lord, without giving the preference to any denomination of Christians above the rest, in such a manner that all ecclesiastical persons whatever shall enjoy the full, free, and unquestioned liberty of discharging every part of the sacred functions without violence or danger.”

   b. **Affirmed religious liberty.** American revision affirmed the principle of religious freedom and asserted that the civil magistrate had a duty to protect that liberty, even including the freedom of infidels: ‘It is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the person and good name of all their people, in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered, either upon pretense of religion or of infidelity, to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury.”

   c. **First time since Constantine that Christianity was out of power in the west.** Thus the power of the state removed over the church guaranteed by ecclesiastical establishment.

   d. **Ironically,** freed from religious establishment, Presbyterian in the 19th century in its Old School form would cultivate a distinctive identity far richer than its European counterparts that were still part of the religious establishment.

   e. **Further irony:*** in the long run, Presbyterian at times displayed excessive loyalty to the new nation. Cf., Noll’s book *America’s God* which shows how
religion cozied up to American political and cultural goals [civil religion] more than preaching the gospel of the New Testament.

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F. While prosperity marked the close of the 18th c, lurking ahead loomed tremendous issues: union with Congregationalists, another awakening, need for social reform, the conundrum of slavery, civil war, theological controversy and changes in modern science. Presbyterian would have their hands full!!

II. **Expansion of Presbyterian Church.** We have noted several times the tremendous rate of expansion of the Presbyterian, fueled by waves of immigration from Scotch-Irish. So characteristic was the rate of growth of Christian denominations in the 19th c that Kenneth Scott Latourette has dubbed it “the Great Century.” The title seems appropriate for what Presbyterian would experience in the decades ahead.

A. **Westward and Southward growth.** At first the Scots-Irish settled mainly in the Middle Colonies. The 1720s witnessed a large number of immigrants due to hardships at home. They arrived at the port of Phila and moved not only across the state but also into the Valley of VA. Some moved farther south to North Carolina which eventually become one of the major centers of Presbyterian in the South. Scots-Irish, poor by the world’s standards, settled
on the frontier where land was cheap, work hard, and prayer fervent. A favorite saying of them, as of their Scottish ancestors, “when the crops failed, they could live on the shorter catechism.”

1. **New Side ministers visited settlers.** Most notable was Samuel Davies, who later became Pres of the College of New Jersey. Davies obtained licenses in VA for preaching points.

2. The result = **New Side Presbyterian of Hanover** (1755) which included most of the state of VA. Hanover Presbyterian became active in evangelism in the rest of the state and then into NC and SC. Hanover, thus became major source of Presbyterian in the South.

B. **Settlers on the frontier continued to move into what are now Kentucky and Tennessee before the Revolution.** Presbyterian were among those who pushed into these new areas after the war was over. Thus Scotch-Irish moved across PA used the Ohio River to move into the Midwest and after the Louisiana Purchase into the upper Southwest and down to the Gulf of Mexico.

C. Other potential Presbyterians of Puritan background moved into **western NY** from New England.

D. **Other Presbyterian groups.** Not all Scots-Irish left their original tradition when they became part of the religious scene in America. Two groups had dissented and then seceded from the state church of Scotland. And in America they retained their identity.

1. **Covenanters.** This group in Scotland after 1660 **refused to accept Charles II** and what was called the Restoration in Scotland. Some of these “old dissenters” continued this practice even after the “Glorious Revolution” (1688) which ended the Restoration and brought William and Mary to the English throne and religious toleration. The Covenanters displayed determination that typified Scottish independence. They argued that they did not want to participate in an arrangement which made the church subservient to the state. They established the Reformed Presbyterian in 1743 and then the Reformed Presbyterian Church in 1811. (This group has maintained itself to the present day.) **Lay members of this group came to America in the early 1700s:** they did not receive a minister until 1750. They did not organize the Reformed Presbyterian until 1773 near Harrisburg, PA.

2. **Seceders.** A similar situation to the Covenanters arose in 1733 in Scotland. Ebenezer Erskine led a group out of the Kirk of Scotland because of their opposition to “lay patronage.” By this practice, ministers received sums from wealthy patrons without the support of congregational approval. Such policies led to the clergy becoming more worldly.

   a. Erskine’s Seceders became known as the **Associate Synod of the Secession Church.** It grew rapidly and numbered over 24 charges by 1747.

3. In America the Covenanters and Seceders were widely scattered. Thus they naturally grew together. **A plan of union brought them to form the Associate Reformed Synod.** Not all Seceders joined in the merger. Finally in 1858 they united to form the United Presbyterian Church which continued for a century when it merged with the Presbyterian USA in 1958.

4. **Relation with other Scots-Irish.** Along with other Scots-Irish Presbyterians, Covenanters and Seceders shared a conservative heritage. But the Covenanters and Seceders focused on the Scottish covenants, closed communion and emphasized the fine points of doctrine. The Scots-Irish debated subscription and the role of religious
experience. And the latter group, as we shall see, were willing to set aside major parts of the Westminster Confession in order to cooperate with Congregationalists on a Plan of Union in 1801.

5. In the colonial period, the main issue was not what elements of Scottish ideas could be retained, but what “American” features would figure most prominently.

III. **Plan of Union (1801)** The prosperity of the Presbyterian Church noted at the end of last lecture, the success of the Second Great Awakening (our next subject) and a rising tide called the “Benevolent Empire” (discussed after Great Awakening) contributed to Presbyterian cultural leadership. But Presbyterians also engaged in relations with other prominent religious groups. Most significant = joint efforts with New England Congregationalists. We have noted that Presbyterian shared with Congregationalists a common historical and theological heritage.

A. **Colonial period.** During the formative American years, these two traditions had several elements in common. Perhaps most significantly they adhered to same Calvinist theological tenets as well as simple Puritan type of worship. Both of these elements rooted in 17th c. Westminster tradition.

1. **Polity differences.** The chief differences separating the two groups = church government. Congregationalists have no controlling authority like Presbyterians over individual congregations; (thus their distinctive name). Every congregation exists entirely independent of others. Any cooperation between congregations was optional. Here we see why the Cambridge Synod’s Half Way Covenant represents a major step away from their tradition.

2. **Saybrook Platform.** But even this difference, we have already seen that Congregationalists did have some association in efforts like the Saybrook Platform signed in Connecticut September (1708) which attempted to stem the tide of disunity among the established churches and restore discipline among both the clergy and their congregations. In its “Fifteen Articles” the platform provided for “associations” of pastors and elders and county “consociations” of churches, each with broad powers to rule in disputes between churches, to proceed against erring churches and pastors, and to license the latter. The Platform was but a brief conservative victory against a non-conformist tide which had begun with the Half Way Covenant.

B. **Associations between Presbyterians and Congregationalists.** Association between Congregationalists and Presbyterians began during the pre-revolutionary period – specifically concerted effort between CT Congregationalists and New Side Presbyterians to oppose episcopacy in America. As we have already seen, they met yearly from 1766 – 1775 to provide a united front against the Anglican threat. During the Revolution, these meetings discontinued; but in 1790 a proposal raised in the CT General Association. Its purpose: “to renew and strengthen every bond of union between brethren so nearly agreed in doctrine and forms of worship…” Eventually annual meetings reinstated. **As the Second Great Awakening proceeded**, both groups came into contact with each other as they sent missionaries to frontiers of central and western NY. Due to common background and purpose certain pragmatic issues were bound to arise. Would the two groups establish duplicating structures in the areas where they were competing? Why set up similar churches when they held such similar beliefs and had the same goals in mind?

1. **Jonathan Edwards, Jr.** Various roles in both Congregationalists and Presbyterians led to Edwards’ contribution to Plan of Union. He received his education at Princeton; served as pastor of the White Haven Church in New Haven, which in 1786
became involved in the CT General Assn. As early as 1791, the younger Edwards became personally involved in the yearly meetings. Simultaneously, with the permission from his church, Edwards also served Presbyterian churches in NY and NJ. But prolonged dissension led to his departure from White Haven Church; he served another pastorate briefly and then was President of Union College in CT – a joint venture of Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed and Congregationalists. Edwards eventually joined Presbyterian of Albany (1800). In that year he also attended the General Association of CT. Because of his interest in missionary work, he helped organize CT Miss Society which sent many men to serve in NY. Presbyterian records also show interest in missionary work in what was called “western reserve.” Thus an atmosphere created that brought into being the Plan of Union of 1801. He attended as a Presbyterian delegate to General Association of CT in 1800. At the meeting discussion initiated for cooperation in missionary activity. Attention focused on how to work together in new settlements.

2. **1801: Provisions of Plan of Union, PE 102-4** The plan was devised to allow congregations from both groups to be connected with both denominations at the same time. Numerous congregations formed using this plan in NY, OH, IN, IL, WI, and MI. Purpose clearly stated: “to promote mutual forbearance and accommodation, between those inhabitants of the new settlements who hold the Presbyterian and … the Congregational form of ch govt.”

   a. **Pastors from both denominations could serve in either denomination.** Presbyterian pastors could serve in Congregational churches and vice versa.

   b. The **polity adopted by each** congregation would be that of the majority of members.

   c. Their elders would represent Presbyterian Church in the Congregational Associations; Congregational churches, on the other hand, would be represented in Presbyteries by committeemen.

   d. Disputed cases might be referred to either a Presbytery or a special council.

3. **Evaluation.**

   a. **Advocates** of the plan exuberantly praised the plan for its pragmatic benefits. Loetscher, for example, points out that Congregationalists were so satisfied with the arrangement that they formed no separate association of ministers in NY west of the Military Tract.

   b. **Opponents** saw it as just that, a pragmatic compromise which diluted denominational distinctives. Foes derisively called the arrangement “Presbygational” (why not “Congreterian”?) We will see that this was a major issue which would divide Presbyterians into two “schools” as time went on. They would become known as New and Old School Presbyterians. New Schoolers would praise its benefits; Old Schoolers blamed it for in part facilitating departure from Calvinist orthodoxy (Nathaniel W. Taylor’s New Haven theology) which we will examine in some detail later.
I. Second Great Awakening. Before the 18th c. ran its course, new elements were afoot to thrust all of American religion into the next c. Balmer uses the term “rousing start” to describe American religion as it entered the 19th c. a series of revivals. And these revivals differed considerably in several ways: [1] time of duration: while 1st lasted “3-5 years at most” the 2nd extended “not less than a quarter of a century” [Murray]. [2] Theater of operation: 1st limited primarily to eastern seaboard (New England and Middle Colonies), the 2nd covered a vast geographical area that barely knew any bounds. [3] Theological bases: 1st proceeded from Calvinist theological base; 2nd witnessed a decided shift from Calvinism to Arminianism. [4] Use of means or techniques: 1st used traditional “means of grace”; 2nd witnessed the appearance of the famous “New Measures.” Eventually a series of revivals would comprise the Second Great Awakening. It would primarily entail three theaters of activity. [1] Western frontier in KY (Cane Ridge, known for its emotional excesses). [2] The northern phase in New England (which witnessed the appearance of New England Theology, a substantial alteration to old Calvinism). [3] Charles G. Finney’s New Measure revivalism in the Burned Over District of western NY state. Our purpose today is to investigate the diversity of factors that comprise the Second Great Awakening.

II. Difficulties for Presbyterians. Despite their background in the 1st Awakening, the 19th c. version posed difficulties for Presbyterian. In addition to seeking to save souls, Presbyterian also laid great store to education and instruction. Specifically they placed great emphasis on the Westminster standards which demanded careful scrutiny. Ahlstrom: Presbyterian demanded a “teaching church.” Catechetical instruction was not very adaptable to simplistic demands of frontier preaching. As their pastors took part in the awakening, key parts of the Westminster Confession were often neglected. They depended on catechetical teaching, faithful preaching and a ministry fully capable of carrying out these tasks. Because of the demands of their Westminster heritage, Presbyterian faced two options: they could modify their message; that is, adopt Arminian methods or follow another school of theology like the New Haven views of Nathaniel W. Taylor. A second course of action was to break away from the denomination that required a strict theology and educational emphasis. Unfortunately, different Presbyterian followed both courses of action. Thus, the period became one of conflict and division. Doctrinal controversy and schism became dominant features of Presbyterian history in the 19th c.

III. Virginia the forgotten phase of the Second Great Awakening (1787-1837). Frequently historians focus only on the above three phases. We will get to these in turn. However, our interest in American Presbyterian must also take in another geographical realm of the Second Great Awakening that both connects us back to the first Awakening and would find acceptance among many who otherwise generally opposed the revivals – the revivals that occurred in VA. Arthur D. Thomas calls this phenomenon “Reasonable Revivalism: Presbyterian Evangelization of Educated Virginians.” JPH 61 (1983). As we will see, this revivalism differed substantially both in theological perspective and in method of operation from what would characterize KY, New England and western NY.

A. “Reasonable Revivalism.” Used by leading VA preachers to appeal to the educated, cultured, “the genteel” Virginians. Men like John Holt Rice (1777-1831) one of founders of Hampden-Sydney Academy (later Union Theological Seminary); turned down offer to be Pres of Princeton; friend of Archibald Alexander (first professor of Princeton Seminary).

1. Primary features of VA revivalists. According to Thomas they set the stage for revival by writing and preaching on the evidences of Christianity (proponents used
Common Sense Realism to demonstrate the rational superiority of Christianity. They also focused their attention on intellectual centers, frequently staging revivals on college campuses. In carrying out the revival they conducted services with “decorum” and “reason.” Finally, their strategy centered on converting influential infidels.

2. **Examples of restrained revivals.** Thomas’ account very engaging. He enumerates revivals at Hampden-Sydney (1787-90; 1802, 1814-15; 1822; 1827-8; 1831; 1833; 1837). So frequently did they occur that one must almost list the years in which they did not occur! Thomas continues by showing how leaders assiduously labored to avoid the excesses of emotional outbursts we will describe in KY. **John Blair Smith,** President of Hampden-Sydney College, squelched any incipient signs of emotion. Upon spotting any crying or other emotional expression, he would immediately say, “You must compose your feelings my brethren. God is not the author of confusion but of peace in all his churches.” **Leaders cited Jonathan Edwards’ Treatise Concerning Religious Affections** so that hearers could test the validity of their experiences. While outbursts occasionally erupted, leaders did their best to bring them under control. Thomas recounts the events surrounding the **Richmond theater fire** (1811) and its profound impact. During a production of the French philosophe Diderot, whom evangelicals considered an infidel, fire broke out claiming the lives of over 70 victims. As a result Richmond experienced conversions, and an Episcopal Church was built on the site of the fire. **Infidelity in VA suffered severe setback** as prominent lawyers, writers, intellectuals professed faith in Christ. This is the type of revivalism that conservative Presbyterian – Princetonians and other Old Schoolers – would support in the controversy that waged within the denomination during the 19th c.

IV. **Revivals on the Frontier.** The Baptists and itinerant Methodists are best known for their work on the frontier.

A. **Methodist Peter Cartwright in his Autobiography** published in 1856, claimed to have baptized 12,000 persons and preached 14,000 sermons in KY and IL. He includes **some choice comments about Presbyterians.** [1] **Opposition to the revivals,** “Old starched Presbyterian preachers” preached against the revivals, he said. “The predestinarians of almost all sorts put forth a mighty effort to stop the work of God.” He claimed the Methodists “kept moderately balanced; for we had excellent preachers to steer the ship or guide the flock. But some of our members ran wild and indulged in some extravagances that were hard to control.” [2] Cartwright also commented on **Presbyterian theology:** they had to “give up [the] points of high Calvinism [unconditional election, reprobation, perseverance of the saints from the Westminster Confession].” [3] Finally Cartwright commented on the **educational requirements of Presbyterians.** While Presbyterians required preachers to have a liberal education before they could be licensed to preach, “this qualification was dispensed with, and a great many fine men were licensed to preach without this literary qualification or subscribing to those high-toned doctrines of Calvinism.” Cartwright’s comments identify key issues that confronted Presbyterian and their participation in the Second Great Awakening. Presbyterians, as it turned out, played a major role. They were among the first to work the mountains. But would they balance order and ardor as successfully in the Second Great Awakening as they did in the First? What difference would the revivals’ appearance on the fringe of civilization have on their form and theological basis?
B. **Why a revival necessary**. Logan Co. KY according to Cartwright was nicknamed “Rogues’ Harbor” because of all its inhabitants who moved there to avoid the consequences of their life back East. In addition, Presbyterian fought each other over Psalmody. Poor leadership also dominated. David Rice: “the people starved the ministers and the ministers starved the people.” One preacher noted because he “chilled and petrified every one that listened to him.” (Murray, 148)

C. **James McGready** (c. 1758-1817) a Presbyterian preacher from NC who studied at a Log College under a Princeton graduate, John McMillan, from Western PA. He was ordained by Redstone Presbyterian in PA; led three parishes in KY, Red River, Gasper River and Muddy River, all in famous Logan County on the southwestern corner bordering on TN. While visiting VA he witnessed the revival and returned to Carolinas with others and into KY.

1. **Communion at Gasper River** (1800). McGready announced that a “Communion” would convene at Gasper River. A Communion dated from earlier Scottish practice of having the Lord’s Supper only very rarely (twice a year). The occasion called for a major celebration – attended by people from outside the congregation who would be hosted for the 4-5 days of the communion season. Some grew so that that they convened out of doors. Word spread quickly and frontiersmen came by the scores – in wagons, on foot. Gasper River, therefore, was the first camp meeting, drawing people from up to 100 miles away. Camp meetings became a religious service of several days’ length, held outdoors. People slept in tents, others in covered wagons. Platform built from which preachers proclaimed the gospel.
   a. **Description of camp meetings.** These camp meetings were known for emotional intensity that appeared to many a series of undisciplined excesses. Two reports in PE 111-114
      i. **Mayhem described** using the closing line from book of Judges: “everyman did after the sight of his own eyes.” Close in to the preachers were “devout and orderly worshippers”; while farther out as far as one could see were “the disorderly and dissipated.”
      ii. **Emotion breaks out.** The crowd moves in to wherever the action is; separate groups of commotion existed simultaneously – singing, bodily movement, exhorting.
   b. **Description of the jerks.** Preacher exhorts people to pray out loud, shout, etc. “The jerks were by far the most violent and shocking I had ever seen. Their heads moved sharply in all directions, their eyes bulged.” Cartwright’s description said that some women could crack their long hair like a wagoner’s whip. Note how section ends: “some wept – some leapt – and some danced and jerked, and jerked and danced a long time after they rose from table.” The reporter later conversed about licensing men in Cumberland Presbyterian who were “illiterate and tainted with Arminianism.” (PE, 113) An unsympathetic review!!
   c. **Communion service.** Characterized by weeping, leaping and dancing after they rose from taking communion. One lady’s dance lasted 20-30 minutes.
   d. **One person (Barton Stone) distinguished six different types of bodily activity:** Falling (People dropped as if shot dead, lying almost dead still for up to an hour [Murray]), jerks, dancing, barking, running and singing.

misconception about McGready who became known as a “Son of Thunder.” He experienced conversion at a sacramental meeting and became a veteran revivalist. Because of what followed Cane Ridge other revivalists, people assumed that McGready also rejected, as they did, the Calvinist doctrines that supported the First Great Awakening. But that was far from the case.

a. **Historians cast McGready in the same mold as others** who followed. But McGready was the only one of five Presbyterian who were condemned for rejecting the Westminster Confession and actually held a firmly Calvinist theological view of conversion. He persistently fought a battle on two fronts: against Arminian revivalists on one side and anti-revivalists on the other.

b. **McGready attacked his erstwhile convert, Barton Stone**, because he moved toward “free will and free grace.” Contrary to that view McGready held to Puritan total depravity and irresistible grace. Insisting that Arminians rendered grace meaningless, McGready actually upheld traditional Augustinian and reformed principles. Thus, he really served like a latter-day Edwards. He defended revivals as genuine, he admitted that emotional outbursts may occur, and he insisted that the absolute necessity of genuine revival is a firm theological foundation.

D. **Cane Ridge, Aug 1801.** Included Presbyterian, Meth and Baptists and ministers from all three groups. **Barton W. Stone** (1772-1844) adopted McGready’s methods and announced that a great “sacramental occasion” would occur at Cane Ridge Church in 1801. Huge numbers swarmed to the area where they stayed for about a week (it would have gone longer, but provisions ran out for huge crowds). **Scenes described by Weisberger, They Gathered at the River.** Several venues set for preaching about 100-150 yards apart: platforms, in the meetinghouse; Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterian, Blacks.

1. **A mammoth gathering.** People came from distances of 50 to 100 hundred miles. The number attending estimate from 10 to 20,000 – a very significant figure considering the population of Lexington, KY, the largest settlement in the entire state was less than 2,000 people. To meet the needs of huge crowds, preaching stands erected so that several preachers could hold forth at the same time. Hecklers and blasphemers were also present as the din approached the roar of Niagara Falls.

2. **Participants.** While the meeting was officially Presbyterian, other ministers took part. Many people who attended were not members of churches. Ministers, therefore, had to hand out lead tokens (one report = 750 tokens) for admission to the communion service. The revival resulted in burgeoning church attendance. Ahlstrom and others comment that the KY revivals have challenged the descriptive powers of historians. It must have been quite a scene to observe.

E. **Conservatives respond.** Similar to response to 1st Great Awakening. Many Presbyterian viewed revivals with suspicion because of their **emotional excesses, suspect theological base** (rise of Arminian theology) and **schismatic results** (people divided into new denominations, some of which were heretical [Shakers, Quakers]. Archibald Alexander, who would become Princeton’s first professor; close friend of VA revivalists, spoke of “disastrous results of this religious excitement.” He recognized that God’s Spirit obviously present and “many sincere converts were made” especially at the initial outbreak of the revival. But toward the end too much attention attributed to emotion, “bodily infirmity … as though these were supernatural phenomena….” He summarized: “the general result of this great
excitement, was an almost total desolation of the Presbyterian churches in KY and part
of TN.’’

1. **Lengthy controversy followed** between the adherents to West Confession and more
Arminian revivalists. Issues involved subscription to West Confession and its
teaching on predestination; educational requirements for ministers; extent of
synodical control over Presbyteries.

2. **David Rice** (sometimes reverently called “Father” John Rice), an anti-revivalist and
anti-abolitionist) even went so far as to imply that Cane Ridge revival reflected a
religious anarchy akin to the French Revolution. Strict Calvinists called upon
participants to bring their theology into accordance with the Westminster Confession.

**F. Another view of frontier revivals: Leigh, Eric Schmidt, Holy Fairs: Scottish**

**Communions and American Revivals in the Early Modern Period.** Published in 1989,
provides a helpful corrective to how the “communion seasons” mentioned above were
interpreted. The “sacramental occasions” grew out of the Scottish tradition of holding
communion festivals in the summer or early fall; they lasted several days and were occasions
when people professed their faith and testified movingly of God’s work in their lives. In
being transplanted to America by Scottish Presbyterians, these celebrations were not always
the cataclysmic upheavals that interpreters have given as the norm for the Second Great
Awakening.

**V. Schism Results: Formation of Cumberland Presbytery.** The revival led to many conversions and
a burgeoning membership among Presbyterians. To meet growing needs the existing Cumberland
Presbytery loosened the requirements for ordination. **Finis Ewing** and others ordained. This
brought about censure from the Synod. The General Assembly supported the Synod’s actions
unanimously in 1809. When attempts at reconciliation failed, those who were dismissed formed an
independent Cumberland Presbytery in 1810. This Presbytery grew with the continuation of the
revival into a **synod with three Presbyteries by 1813.**

A. **Circular Letter** in *PE*, 117 **Finis Ewing** was one of the signers. Claiming they are guilty of
no heresy and that their grievances had not been addressed, the writers constitute themselves
a Presbytery. They mention the basis for licensing candidates: they receive the Confession,
“except the idea of fatality” as taught under the “mysterious doctrine of predestination.” In
other contexts Ewing mentions the doctrine of eternal reprobation, and the view that Christ
died only for the elect and the view of decrees which led to “fatality.” Note also that they
would examine candidates in English grammar, geography, and natural and moral
philosophy and church history.

1. Cumberland men viewed themselves as a **median position** between Calvinism and
Arminianism. **Much ink has been spilled over the above reasons.** Barrus’ article
probes the matter as have several histories; Barrus cites Robert Davidson’s **History of
the Presbyterian Church in the State of KY** (1847) which refers to ministers licensed
and ordained by Cumberland as “illiterate exhorters with Arminian sentiments.”
Apparently this characterization went unchallenged and found its way into several
major histories such as Wm Sweet’s and McNeill’s **The History and Character of
Calvinism.**

B. **Cumberland changes to the Westminster Confession.** The group adopted an altered
Westminster Confession in 1814 to approximate an Arminian theology. They **deleted parts
of the Confession**, those dealing with Divine Decrees, Providence and Effectual Calling.
Their revisions reduced the effect of the Fall, adding that man can, with God’s help, prepare
himself for the reception of grace: “the plan of the Bible is grace and duty.” Such a revision fit well with the growing consensus in the frontier that man plays a significant role in forging his destiny. This “medium theology” held the view that God gave man “fair opportunity” to be saved. They espoused unlimited atonement, universal grace, conditional election, eternal security of believers and the salvation of all dying in infancy. Burrows’ article further explores how Cumberland leaders developed into conservative and liberal factions. The process culminated in Confession of 1883 which made key changes in the view of the Fall, atonement in a decidedly liberal direction.

C. Eventually formed the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1829. They adapted revival techniques such as the camp meeting. The denomination experienced significant growth on the frontier – grew five-fold between 1835 and 1869. They formed Presbyteries from PA to CA (primarily in rural areas in KY, TN, AL, MS, AK, IN, IL and MO). The Cumberland Ch reunited with the PCUSA in 1906. By the end of the century, a clearly progressive theology had evolved.

VI. Stonites withdraw. Kentucky synod charged followers of Barton Stone (1772-1844) with several abuses. Stone preached in NC, VA, TN; he was ordained in 1790. He was a significant participant in the Cane Ridge revival mentioned earlier. Rather than submit to a trial, the Stonites withdrew and formed new Springfield Presbyterian in 1803.

A. Stonites become “Christians.” Their departure from reformed principles evident in their Apology for Renouncing the Jurisdiction of the Synod of Kentucky. They realized they should not even be a “Presbytery” because Presbyteries were not found in the Bible.

1. In 1804 they issued “Last Will and Testament of the Presbytery of Springfield,” renounced their connection with “traditions of men” and appropriately adopted the moniker of all sects – belief in the Bible alone – and adopted the name “Christians.”

2. They emphasized local church autonomy and sought to restore the primitive unity of the New Testament church. Thus in one fell swoop they became Arminian in their theology, congregational in their polity and sectarian in their view of church and ministry.

B. Followers of Stone join other groups. Later some members became Shakers, two returned to Presbyterian and others (1831) associated with followers of Alexander Campbell, the Campbellites. This group, associated with Restoration Movement, was also part of the rising tide of primitivism based on the Bible. The Campbellites preferred the term “Disciples of Christ” although Stone used term “Christian Church.”

1. The Restoration Movement gained significant momentum in the later 19th c – by 1869 it claimed over 190,000 followers which made it the 6th largest religious group in the country. Because of their convictions, they resolutely refused to be known as a denomination because it contradicted the Christian unity they sought, and the Bible never used such a name.

2. Ironically, the movement split into three factions in the 20th c: Disciples of Christ, Christian Church, Churches of Christ. Even Barton Stone himself changed his views about “oversight” when he saw Shaker beliefs gaining a hearing among his followers. And two others who originally signed the Last Will and Testament acknowledged some minimal written expression of doctrinal consensus; they returned to Presbyterian in 1811.
Long term effect of frontier revivals. Presbyterian in the long run did not respond favorably to frontier camp meeting revivals for the reasons mentioned above. Camp meetings had a much larger impact on Methodists and Baptists. Hudson points out that by 1811, about 400 camp meetings were scattered throughout the country. Methodists “domesticated” the camp meetings to make them more respectable. Thus they functioned not only on the frontier but also in other sections of the country.

A. Groups policed areas where they were held and the meetings became more sober. In fact in several main locations like Chautauqua NY, Ocean Grove NJ, Junaluska NC, Oak Bluffs MA, and Bayview MI, they became annual outings. Families gathered on campgrounds, met in grand tabernacles for a week of inspiration. Ocean Grove NJ = a unique Methodist community; each Saturday evening cars had to be removed from the town for none were allowed on Sundays; all stores were closed, only restaurants remained open. Billy Graham came several times in the 1950s speaking to huge crowds which thronged the tabernacle. Thus camp meetings were transformed into yearly conference centers or summer resorts.

B. Thus the frontier revival served only a limited time because the frontier itself lasted only a brief interim between original settling and development into communities with schools and churches.

C. We turn our attention now to revivals in the north.
I. **Introduction: From KY to the North East.** We now move to a third theater of 19th c. revivalism – Western NY. So far we have witnessed two distinct types of revival in VA and KY. The former resembled the Awakening in the colonies prior to the Revolutionary War based on Reformed theological principles. The KY revival on the other hand frequently departed from reformed theology and resulted in conflict and schism. A greater conflict loomed in the North, again growing out of the revival. Religion boomed with the expansion of civilization in western NY as the Erie Canal opened a 341-mi. waterway. With economic growth also came religious activity. So frequently did revivals overtake towns like Auburn, Rome and Utica that the area in western NY became known as “the burned over district.” (cf., book by Whitney Cross of the same title.) It brought to prominence the 19th c. revivalist par excellence, Charles Grandison Finney.

A. **Revivalism in New England in late 18th c.** This is the type of revivalism seen in VA. Pastors were approved as missionaries and evangelists by Presbyteries, synods and associations. Such men would be released from their regular responsibilities to go on missionary tours to evangelize and visit new settlements. The sending group nearest the frontier bore the responsibilities of establishing new churches. The Synod of VA was most active in this regard. Before Finney arrived on the scene, therefore, revivals occurred but in a more restrained form; they occurred within churches and under the leadership of pastors using the “ordinary means of grace.”

B. **New Methods of revival needed.** But by 1800, many people claimed that a more organized method needed as people stampeded to the frontier. Proponents of the new type of revivals contended that the old style of religious revival could not meet the needs of the burgeoning areas. Growth outstripped supply. Sheer numbers rendered inadequate using short-term missionaries to meet the need of expanding numbers.

II. **Revivalism in North.** When we move to the northeast we find two additional phases of the Second Great Awakening, distinct from the frontier phase: western NY and New England “New Divinity.” This revival was no less significant for the history of Presbyterian. While some key figures hailed from Congregational churches of New England, others labored in Presbyterian churches in central and western NY State; and the two forces came together in one key meeting in 1827.

A. **Asahel Nettleton** (1783-1844) Raised in a Half Way covenant home in CT; converted in a revival in 1800. Originally a farmer, but after his conversion Nettleton studied at Yale where he helped other students in their spiritual struggles as a revival swept through the college in 1807. Nettleton became a **protégé of Timothy Dwight** (1752-1817) famous nephew of Jonathan Edwards and later President of Yale. Dwight zealously preached revivals at Yale (debate now disputes whether Dwight began or simply forwarded revivals on the campus). Upon his graduation, CT Congregational Association sent Nettleton as a missionary to preach in areas “desolated” by the westward movement. Thus he became an itinerant revivalist.

1. **Nettleton’s revivals.** For over a decade, Nettleton itinerated throughout New England and New York. His preaching was marked by significant yet restrained results. Nettleton’s efforts not marked by abuses, emotional outbursts that characterized frontier. In a manner reminiscent of the “reasonable revivalism” of VA, he cooperated with local ministers to bring about steady, continuing blessing to churches.

   a. **Nettleton’s methods.** When a traveling evangelist like Nettleton appeared, he would stay with a local pastor and conduct services under his leadership. Such procedures prevented any possibility of outside intrusion producing
disruption among the churches (as in 1st GA). While at times his preaching showed some dramatic flair, the staple of Nettleton’s sermons was **straightforward teaching on Calvinist doctrine**. As Weisberger states, “as a rhetorician, Nettleton did not exactly crackle.” But what he lacked in dramatic preaching style he more than made up in pastoral ministry. Following services he made himself available for private counseling to all who struggled with their spiritual condition. He would engage anyone willing to listen. Weisburger points out that the “touch of human kindness” characterized his evangelism more than “blood and thunder” preaching.

b. **Revival spreads.** Initially Nettleton went from small town to small town. But others noticed his effectiveness; until in 1819 he broke into Schenectady and some 800 people were converted under his ministry. Then he went to New Haven a year later where a revival was under way. Still later, he branched out into MA. Nettleton, Lyman Beecher, and other Old Schoolers whom we will meet soon, were the conservative “Watchmen of the East” who strongly opposed the progressive techniques of western revivalists.

2. **Nettleton’s activity sharply contrasts** with revivalism as defined and practiced by most prominent of 2nd Great Awakening preachers, Charles G. Finney.

B. **Charles Grandison Finney** (1792-1875). One of the truly colorful figures of the 19th c. Finney pointedly noted before his conversion, that Christianity lacked a passion commensurate with the belief in hell awaiting the unsaved. He remarked that Christians were frequently indifferent to the lost estate of sinners. If he were converted, Finney boasted, he would devote himself to “[pulling] men out of the fire.”

1. **Finney’s background in law.** While attending the Presbyterian Ch, Finney led the choir and debated theological points with his pastor who complained that Finney even stood in the way of some people being converted. But Finney was not yet a believer. He did not experience conversion until he was 29 years old. He responded immediately to one of his deacons he met the next morning: “Deacon, I have a retainer from the Lord Jesus Christ to plead his cause, and I cannot plead yours.”

2. **Finney’s theological training.** Finney undertook theological studies with George W. Gale, his Presbyterian pastor at Adams, NY. Gale held traditional doctrines of human depravity and divine grace. Great controversy over how and when Finney professed unorthodox theology. Gale remembered that the early Finney was not nearly as radical in his theology as the later Finney at Oberlin ("some peculiarities" but nothing which would prevent his being ordained). Therefore, Finney’s remarks in his Memoirs that he worked to subvert Calvinism from the very outset of his ministry in 1820s is suspect.

   a. **Finney in his Memoirs** reflected that he had refused to go to seminary, even though ministers offered to pay his way. He especially rejected going to Princeton because he viewed seminary training – with its orthodox, Westminster theology – as a hindrance to effective evangelism. (Commenting on local Presbyterian minister, Finney said: “I was confident that they had been wrongly educated, and they were not ministers that met my ideal of what a minister of Christ should be.” Memoirs) He rejected the concept of total depravity and original sin because of their inhibiting influence on the gospel. He coined the pejorative term “cannotism” for the Calvinist / Augustinian view that man’s will is fallen in sin.
b. **Finney licensed.** The Saint Lawrence Presbyterian licensed Finney in 1823. Finney admitted at his licensure examination that he had not even read the Westminster Confession but that he received it so far as he understood it. He received ordination a year later.

c. **Finney as frontier missionary.** Lack of orthodoxy did not stop Finney from immediate success in the pulpit. For nearly two years Finney labored in western NY State, as assistant to George Gale. The new convert preached at local communities with immediate success. At 6' 2” he cut a striking figure and commanded attention in the pulpit. He led revivals in villages and towns of western NY: Rome, Utica, Boonville, and Verona. Though he was neither the first nor last to illustrate the point, Finney’s popularity and rapid rise to prominence violates Paul’s prohibition of putting young and inexperienced men into leadership positions. He also possessed an enormous ego that accompanied his success.

d. **Frequently Finney’s revivals characterized as similar to frontier revivals.** Some likened Finney “backwoods” invasion of civilization to Andrew Jackson’s entrance to the White House. But in both cases the image is incorrect. Neither Jackson nor Finney was a primitive redneck. Finney, after all, had been trained as lawyer; and he ended his career as professor and president of Oberlin College. The impact of his revivals experienced mainly by business people and professionals.

e. **Finney’s preaching.** He spoke without great emotion, yet powerfully as a lawyer argues a case in court. Whitney Cross: “The exceptional feature was the phenomenal dignity of this awakening. No agonizing souls fell in the aisles, no raptured ones shouted hallelujahs …. The great evangelist, ‘in an unclerical suit of gray,’ acted ‘like a lawyer arguing … before a court and jury,’ talking precisely, logically, with wit, verve, and informality. Lawyers, real-estate magnates, millers, manufacturers, and commercial tycoons led the parade of the regenerated.” But Finney’s method and message came under attack – his new measures and redefinition of revivals.

III. **New Measures.** What proved immensely controversial, however, were Finney’s new techniques or new measures used to ensure the success of the revivals.

A. **Old Means: Reformed character of 1st Great Awakening.** Has God provided special means to ensure a revival? In the 1st Awakening, this question would evoke a unified response – no. Belief in the sovereignty of God meant that God appoints when revivals were to occur – thus the title of Jonathan Edwards’ “the surprising work of God.” God has appointed prayer and preaching to further the gospel. God commands them of faithful churches as a matter of everyday living. Iain Murray, *Revivals and Revivalism:* “There are no greater means which may be employed at special times to secure supposedly greater results. It is therefore the Spirit of God who makes the same means more effective at some seasons than at others.” (p 127)

B. **Previous revivals:** depended on ordinary means of grace – prayer, biblical preaching, disciplines of Christian life – which the faithful undertook and waited for God to bless with conversions according to his sovereign plan. Other “old measures” include a period of probation [2 months – year] between conversion and full membership; guarding against emotional outbreaks; limiting the number of meetings [preaching and prayer services];
avoiding abusive language in sermons and prayers; women not allowed to pray. Murray enumerates instances of participants in the Awakening itself who concluded that differences in response to the gospel could be attributed only to the presence or absence of God’s blessing because pastors used the same methods in attempting to be faithful to God’s commands. (Quoted John 3:8)

C. **Finney’s use of New Measures**. Finney, however, likened his development of new measures to his lawyering; he would never permit the potential winning of the case be dependent on conventional legal practices. **New times called for new measures. New measures not original with Finney.** Iain Murray emphatically contends that Finney did not create the **new measures**. While he clearly popularized them, Murray contends they originated with Methodists a quarter c. earlier. But he honed them to perfection as the primary means by which a revival may be produced.

D. **Direct address in preaching**. Preaching style included short, clipped, repetitive sentences. Finney would not refer to sinners in the third person; instead he would refer to sinners using the personal pronoun “you.” More than that he would not hesitate to refer to prominent persons present by name. He mentioned people who deliberately did not attend his meetings or opposed his campaigns.

E. **Allowing women to pray and testify at public meetings**. Such a custom contrasted sharply with current practice. In his day, using women to testify marked a disturbance of domestic tranquility. Women were used in revivals because they usually responded first; thus, pragmatic concerns ruled here, not advancing the role of women. (Sweet)

F. **Mobilizing an entire community to support revival**. Groups of workers labored to prepare for the revival. They also canvassed the community to invite people to attend focusing especially on the homes of the unsaved.

G. **Protracted campaigns**. The urban counterpart of the camp meetings. Just as camp meetings provided a lengthy period for people to attend the revival, campaigns provided a kind of group pressure to participate. Birth of modern revival campaigns. They have now become the staple of revivalism; included series of meetings and services which lasted a week or more. Instead of the normal patterns of weekly worship – Sunday services and mid-week prayer meeting – Finney’s campaigns scheduled nightly services for a week or more. Prayer meetings were held at “unseasonable times” – that is for farmers (normal worship held at 11:00 am to enable farmers to get early chores completed). Thus **an entire community was mobilized and put on a different schedule** to highlight the revivalist campaign. Revivals became a community affair. Hudson states that revival campaigns represented **camp meetings “come to town.”**

H. **Anxious bench**. Became the most controversial of new measures; defended by those who supported revivalism or it became symbol of all evil for opponents. Sinners struggling under conviction were called forward to sit in designated pew roughly akin to witness stand in court of law. There they became the center of attention as people prayed for them to repent of their sins and be saved.

I. **Inquiry rooms**. Following up dramatic spiritual struggles on the anxious bench were prolonged sessions in separate rooms. Here, counselors helped sinners in their struggle for conversion.

J. **Sweet**: “What distinguished Finney’s variety of new measures from the old measures of preceding revivalists was not so much the measures themselves, but the intensity and indiscretion with which they were applied. The controversy over new measures revivalism, then, arose primarily from the mischief of style.” (n. 39)
IV. **Finney’s theological views as evident in New Measures.** Key to understanding Finney and the 2\textsuperscript{nd} GA = the new theological views that undergirded his revivalism. Leonard I. Sweet’s article, “The View of Man Inherent in New Measures Revivalism,” *Church History* (1976). Here we see why the St Lawrence Presbyterian reluctantly licensed him and why Finney’s answer about the West Confession is significant – was he or was he not aware of the Calvinist doctrines?

A. **View of human nature.** Instead of the Calvinist view of total depravity, Finney believed that “man’s nature is all right.” The problem lay in the human will. One must find ways to urge man to repent. The “crippling error” of Calvinism, why it cannot support genuine revivalism, = its “cannotism.” Commands to be converted pointed to man’s ability to change his heart.

B. **Divine Agency.** Despite human ability to be converted, divine agency was still needed. His most famous statement in *Lectures of Revivals of Religion*: “Religion is the work of man. It is something for man to do.” Note the rigorous logic entailed in Finney’s argument.

1. **Man, an excitable being.** Revival of religion presupposes a declension. How are we to reverse this declension? Note the frequency of highlighted words, “excite” and “excitement.” God does not create these. But he has constituted us excitable beings. Revivalists must learn how to exploit man’s excitability.

2. **Revival not a miracle.** A miracle presupposes interference by God. In this sense a revival is not a miracle. It is also not a power above the ordinary powers of nature. His famous definition: “It consists entirely in the *right exercise* of the powers of nature. It is just that, and nothing else.” They only exercise powers they always had. How similar to *ex opere operato* view of the sacraments.

3. **Agencies for revival.** Here Finney enumerates three: [1] God’s ordinary providence and the “special agency of the Holy Spirit” who has direct access to the human mind and uses the truth to drive it home. [2] the agency of man. Here the key is using the truth. The preacher is a moral agent promoting revival. [3] Agency of the sinner. He obeys the truth.

   a. **Reciprocal relation between human and divine agency.** When pressed about the relationship between human and divine agency, Finney said that one was as indispensable as the other.

   b. **View of regeneration.** Illustrates Finney’s *synergism*. The Holy Spirit does not create a new heart; rather the Holy Spirit persuades individuals to make right choices. On the other hand, people will not make the right choices unless so prompted by the Spirit. Thus, the real agent of regeneration is the person: “Sinners are required to make themselves a new heart, which they could not do, if they were not active in this change.” (Smith’s “The Theology of Charles Finney: A System of Self Reformation,” *Trinity Journal* (1992). Finney even preached a sermon entitled “Sinners Bound to Change Their Own Hearts.”

   c. The reason that **revivals ceased for years after Edwards and Whitefield** is that their successors relied on the old use of means, waiting for God to answer. Thus fresh measures were needed. What resulted is that Finney admitted that sometimes he stressed human agency too much. In fact, he tended to vacillate between the two. He stated that what was needed was ministers who had the wisdom to use old and when to use the new. **Sweet**: Finney adopted a method: “to exploit a full range of measures on a trial and error basis.”
discarding those that failed and devising new ones until he hit upon ‘something that will succeed in the salvation of souls.’” Perry Miller’s comment: Finney’s handbook was one which mechanized revivals and also warned against revivals being mechanized.

C. **Finney’s summary.** “Revival is the result of the right use of the appropriate means. But God’s agency required. Instead of his legal analogy of special means, he now uses one from farming: “What are the laws of nature, according to which, it is supposed, that grain yields a crop? They are nothing but the constituted manner of the operations of God.” He even points out that God inspired the image in the parable of the sower. Growth of grain results from natural laws, growth of revivals results from philosophical cause.

D. **Evaluation.** In the end, Finney’s theological basis for revivalism displays a remarkable similarity to a rather blatant pragmatism. Part of Princeton’s caricature of his methods included comments about his “rational revolt”; he was attacked as a cold logician; one person remarked that Finney’s presentations were “all calm and sober reasoning.” To ensure that sinners would respond, Finney stressed not the faithful explanation of scripture and its doctrinal significance. Sweet: “**Form controlled content**…. Truth was measured not in terms of faithful exposition of doctrinal heirlooms, but in terms of numerical success in saving souls. The test of the veracity and validity of a measure or message was its performance. It worked, God was behind it, for God was a sanctifier of success.” Sweet’s final illustration was Finney’s use of prayer: “Prayer became less a conversation with God that an address to his audience. Those who asserted that Finney’s prayers sounded as if God were deaf missed the point. Finney’s prayers actually were directed to the deaf ears of man.”
I. **New Lebanon Convention** (1827). First public controversy involving people supporting the revival. Two parties involved, those who adopted and those who were disturbed at methods used in promoting revival. Later concern extended to the message that evangelists used to bring about conversions. Nettleton, believing in Finney’s sincerity, met with Finney at end of 1826 to convince him of the dangers of his revival practices.

A. **Nettleton’s letter** (Jan 1827). Asahel Nettleton as we have seen actively participated in evangelism at the turn of the century. He preached in Albany near Troy where Finney had been active. Nettleton wrote a letter, without attacking Finney personally, to be circulated among pastors expressing concern about abuses associated with younger men conducting revivals. He mentioned that for some thirty years revivals occurred with safeguards to prevent abuses.

B. **Finney’s response.** Accused Nettleton of fostering a spirit appropriate to worldly opponents of revival. Letters exchanged without a resolution. Nettleton appealed to Lyman Beecher, a known foe of techniques in revivalism, for support against Finney’s new measures.

C. **Lyman Beecher** (1775-1863) emerged as leading advocate of revivalism in New England. He became devoted student of Nathaniel W. Taylor, author of New Haven Theology, a radical recasting of Calvinism (*Concio ad Clerum* in 1828). In this “advice to clergy” Taylor redefined several elements of traditional Calvinism to make it more compatible with revivalist preaching. He softened the view of original sin and changed how people interpreted God’s sovereignty: [1] he said that sin lay in the sinning, not in disposition to sin or a sinful nature; [2] fallen men still have the power not to sin (“power to the contrary” as opposed to Augustine’s *non posse non peccare* and Calvin’s “total depravity”); [3] God’s sovereignty consists not in election and predestination but in his rule as a moral governor; [4] human beings are subject to emotional appeals [cf., Finney]. Beecher ardently supported revivals at First Church, Litchfield, and in CT. He ministered in Congregational for several years, but then returned to Presbyterian. He used revivalism to counter strong influence of Unitarianism in New England.

1. **Beecher’s Dilemma.** Beecher did not want to enter into a controversy. He feared the ruckus that Unitarians would make out of a division among the revivalists.

2. **Nettleton wanted support of Beecher.** Reluctantly, Beecher entered into a peacemaking role by sending a letter to Finney and another ministers over “irregularities” of the NY revivals.

C. Finney preached a rousing sermon on Amos’ words “Can two walk together unless they be agreed?” implying that any who opposed revivals were lukewarm Christians.

D. **Eight representatives from each party met** 18-27 July 1827 at Lebanon, NY, just east of the MA border, to discuss their differences. Meeting involved eight participants from each side of the issue.

1. **First Awakening all over again?** Beecher and Nettleton were convinced that much that was passing as a revival was genuine. Even Princetonians admitted that much good came from Finney’s revivals. Many conversions were genuine. **Focusing on the emotion** which frequently emerged at revivals (remember Edwards included emotion as one of the negative signs of a genuine revival; that is, emotion not a sign of genuine revival). Opponents pointed out that **new measures, not included in Scripture, were calculated to bring about emotion** – direct appeals, naming unconverted people, using inquiry meetings to manipulate conversions. While the
emotional manifestations were not as extreme as in KY, Finney’s methods were nevertheless in principle just as manipulative. Nettleton and his cohorts did not deny that many conversions were genuine, but they denied the means used to bring them about. Did not many false conversions result from such practices? The net effect, was to bring genuine revival into disrepute.

2. Lyman Beecher’s reaction. “I know your [Finney’s] plan and you know I do. You mean to come into CN, and carry a streak of fire to Boston. But if you attempt it, as the Lord liveth, I’ll meet you at the State line, and call out all the artillery-men, and fight every inch of the way to Boston, and I’ll fight you there.” Finney in his Memoirs denied that Beecher had said anything of the sort.

3. Thus the atmosphere of the sessions was tense. Both sides made their points: opponents opined that abuses must be eliminated; advocates contended that exaggerated rumors about errors must be rejected. Weisberger summarized the convention: both sides had blown off steam, but neither side gave ground, and no truly definitive conclusion reached.

4. But, the most important result = Finney escaped any censure and Nettleton’s influence dimmed. Eventually Beecher even welcomed Finney to Boston [in 1831]: Beecher perceived the pragmatic benefits of keeping evangelicals united against Unitarianism. And Beecher also broke with Nettleton. He believed that Nettleton’s dogged insistence on attacking Finney would lead to schism.

5. Iain Murray: Beecher’s shift toward Finney and away from Nettleton is “one of the surprises of church history.” Beecher once said that Finney and Nettleton are as far apart in talent, wisdom and experience as corporal and Bonaparte were in the French army!

II. False theology. In addition to New Measures, opponents also focused on revivalists’ [especially Finney] divergence from traditional Calvinist doctrine. These differences became clearly evident as Finney’s sermons were printed and distributed. And his ideas rose directly from his conception of what a revival of religion is.

A. Harvesting souls / harvesting grain. Finney drew a simple analogy between farming and revival preaching. If one holds to Calvinist sovereignty of God in farming, the farmer will simply wait for gain to appear without working for it. The result of such an idea in farming would be that people would starve to death. Harvesting souls was absolutely similar to harvesting grain.

B. Redefining revival. A spiritual awakening is not a miracle nor dependent on a miracle. In the most famous passage from his Lectures on Revival of Religion, Finney states baldly: “It [revival] is a purely philosophical result of the right use of the constituted means – as much so as any other effect produced by the application of means.”

1. Repudiation of original sin. Man does not possess a fallen nature; it is man’s will, not his nature that causes him to sin. Arguing like Pelagius centuries earlier he said that because God commands us, we must be able to choose. “He has no right to command unless we have power to obey.” Regarding conversion: Man can change his own heart.

2. Regeneration was to come about by the use of argument. “God never did and man never can, convert a sinner except with the truth.”
3. Finney even went so far as to say that his new measures were dependent on a new theology. Thus the “anxious bench” was vital to evangelism to make them quick as they ought to be.

4. Revival is a work of man. Finney thus instructed that revivals are not the work of a sovereign God; they are not to be passively awaited. Instead, make use of the constituted means: “If the church will do her duty, the millennium may come in this country in three years.”

5. What is lacking but that ministers have not correctly understood the nature of revivals. The Holy Spirit’s aid is available to all; the sinner need only yield to the truth preached; and measures exist that will induce conversions and revivals.


III. Urban revivals. Finney was not intimidated. His popularity led to his being invited to major eastern cities: in 1827 he went to Wilmington, DE; then Phila and finally in 1828 to the Big Apple, NYC. In Ahlstrom’s words, he became a “free-lance” revivalist.

A. Philadelphia. In Phila Finney actually stayed for a year preaching in the city that he said was “almost total darkness” (and the Philadelphians hadn’t even booed Santa Claus yet!)

B. New York City. 1832 Finney succumbed to pleas of wealthy Lewis Tappan who offered to buy a theater to provide a venue for his preaching.

C. Eventually Finney became an independent Congregationalist and minister of Broadway Tabernacle. But he left to accept the position of professor of theology (1835) and then President at Oberlin College (1851-66). There he became famous advocating not only his revival theology (Ahlstrom says he was almost the inventor of “modern high-pressure revivalism”), the new measures but also his perfectionism. He also was one of the most divisive figures in the 19th c. as tensions continued to be felt in Presbyterian as we will see in the New / Old School schism. One of last shots at Presbyterian appeared in his Lectures on Revivals of Religion: “No doubt there is a jubilee in hell every year about the time of the meeting of the General Assembly.”

D. Abolitionism. His emphasis extended beyond revivalism and theology as his students took up the cudgels for abolitionism.
I. **Introduction: Early Presbyterian**. Presbyterian experienced progress in the early part of the 19th c. due to the Plan of Union. The denomination competed with Methodists, Baptists and Disciples. Membership reports show sustained growth: in 1800 13,470 members, 500 churches; by 1820 it expanded to over 72,000 in 1,299 churches and in 1837, 226,557 members in 2,865 churches. Most growth as expected was in western NY and in OH where the Plan of Union bore its expected fruit. Nevertheless Presbyterian confronted some significant problems one of which we have already seen in revivalism. Not the least of its worries was a problem of shortage of ministers. How would this need be met? Consider the following background.

II. **Training of ministers in colonial period. Middle Colonies** = center of Presbyterian. First Presbytery established in Phila in 1706; first synod met ten years later. Where were ministers trained? Formal schooling was offered either in Europe or at Harvard and Yale. However, most ministers were discipled by pastors; they lived and studied with them in the “log colleges.” Instruction consisted of [apprenticeship](#): reading under pastor’s guidance; also opportunity for practical experience. Students [boarded at home of the pastor](#); wives also contributed by feeding and counseling. Some pastors gained reputation for instructing; they directed studies for more than one student at a time.

III. **History of Princeton College**:
A. **Presidency of John Witherspoon** (1723-1794) born and educated in Scotland. Descended from a line of Calvinist leaders; leader of evangelical party in Scotland.
   1. **Sought by trustees to continue Scotch Irish tradition at Princeton**. Wrote two treatises on justification and regeneration. His sermons upheld the authority of the Bible, human depravity and the doctrines of grace. Took two years for trustees to convince him to come. Finally accepted in 1768.
   2. **Witherspoon made Princeton the intellectual and spiritual center of Scotch Irish in America**. Thus advocating orthodox doctrine and holding the line against infidelity of all kinds would become the hallmark of Princeton teaching. He believed that the philosophy of common sense realism was eminently capable of assisting orthodox teaching. Because the [fundamental tenets of the Bible and those of common sense are compatible](#), Calvinists can make great use of them in their teaching.

A. **Formation of other seminaries**. Princeton was not the first school for training Presbyterian pastors in America. We have already noted the formation of “log colleges” as the means of training clergy. **First appearance of newer model was Andover Seminary in Massachusetts** (1808). Established in reaction to Harvard’s appointment of Unitarian Henry Ware to Hollis professorship in 1805. Within a mere three years Trinitarians formed the new seminary which enrolled 36 students.
B. **Decline in Princeton College after Witherspoon**. Samuel Stanhope Smith, Witherspoon’s son-in-law, succeeded as seventh president. While the college made some gains under his leadership, he was perceived as weakening the theological emphasis in the curriculum and also being ineffective in handling a student revolt 1807. What would be the College’s approach to the growing field of science? Would it be compatible with its religious heritage?
Could the College accomplish several missions: could it continue to turn out ministers as well as distinguished political leaders?

1. **Witherspoon’s legacy.** Ironically Witherspoon’s own presidency had mixed results. Was the seminary turning out people who would serve the church or the nation as a whole?
   a. **Positively,** he had increased the College’s stature as a national leader in education until it rivaled Harvard and Yale in the northeast. Financially the institution prospered. And Witherspoon’s political leadership not only served his country well, but set the College in the direction of preparing graduates for public life.
   b. **New directions.** Princeton had stood for Presbyterian commitment to theological orthodoxy. But modifications to the curriculum had lasting impact. Rejection of philosophical idealism and instituting Scottish philosophy changed the theological emphases. Instead of strict adherence to natural depravity and necessity of supernatural revelation, more “progressive notions” (Balmer and Fitzmeier) of human agency, stress on science and moral philosophy assumed a prominent place in the curriculum.

2. **Training of ministers.** Was the College training men for the ministry or the service of their country? The percentage of those trained for the ministry fell after Witherspoon’s presidency. From 1776 to 1783 17 grads (21%) became ministers; from 1784-94 the number fell to 13%.

C. **State of ministry in the Presbyterian Church in post-Revolutionary era.** Princeton College turning out degrees in public life; decrease in ministerial grads. Ashbel Green, pastor in Phila, and Samuel Miller, pastor in NY City, advocated formation of Presbyterian Seminary. Cited almost 400 vacancies in pulpits throughout country. When Smith got wind of plans to start an independent seminary, he attempted to thwart it by pointing out the advantages of the College in training men. But he failed to convince Alexander, Green and Miller.
   1. **Miller’s address to G.A.** Miller delivered an impassioned plea to the General Assembly (1805); phrase “Give us ministers” repeated like strokes of a metronome.
   2. **Status of Presbyterian Denomination.** David Wells in *Reformed Theology in America* points out that Presbyterians were not alone in their dilemma: preparation of pastors lagged far behind the need in all denominations in the 19th c: in 1801 in MA of 1,008 churches only 749 had ministers; in 1828 significant vacancies among Baptists and Episcopalians. As the population of America grew, preparation of pastors did not keep pace.

D. **Perceived declension in American religious life.** Noll highlights in his article: “Founding of Princeton Theological Seminary.” Green, Miller and Alexander perceived moral and spiritual crisis in American life. Concern grew that the church did not possess the resources to meet this infidelity.
   1. **Troubles of Europe threatened to engulf America.** In 1798 the French Revolution described by General Assembly as potentially harmful to entire western civilization.
   2. **Demographics and secularism.** Alarming growth of population and expansion into western territories. Society was becoming secularized at alarming rate.
   3. **Christian faith losing ground to forces of irreligion.** Whereas former leaders like Witherspoon openly advocated Christian truth and values, new leaders, such as
Thomas Jefferson in government, appeared neutral in their religious convictions which boded ill for the country.

4. **Such conditions called for drastic measures by Presbyterians** to preserve the church and promote its mission in the world – a seminary that would train ministers to meet the needs of this ecclesiastical and cultural crisis. Gave rise to tradition that Presbyterians were known for demanding an educated clergy. Miller frequently referred to Andover and its efforts to meet the current need.

5. **Cultural significance.** All of the above factors reflect the tendency in American history for evangelical leaders to view themselves as guardians of American culture – to preserve its main institutions and their underlying bases in Christian truth / ethics [cf., earlier magisterial reformers arguing the same points in their advocacy of civil govt as a means of grace].

E. **Response in General Assembly.** Archibald Alexander addressed the problem as retiring moderator in 1808. He argued that the situation would not change until “every Presbytery, or at least every Synod, shall have under its direction a seminary established for the single purpose of educating youth for the ministry.” (Noll, p 77) **General Assembly in 1809 posed three possibilities:** (1) one central seminary to serve the entire denomination; (2) one seminary to serve North and another to serve South; (3) one seminary in each of the synods. The response for a single seminary to serve the entire church led to Princeton.

1. **Two emphases:** it would produce ministers “able and learned” and possessing “real piety.” They would also “be lovers as well as defenders of the truth as it is in Jesus, friends of revivals of religion, and a blessing to the church of God.” (Note New and Old Side emphases.)

2. **Plan of the Seminary.** Drawn up primarily by Ashbel Green. Carefully outlined the curriculum to ensure the proper training of Presbyterian ministers. [The full text of “Plan of a Theological Seminary” appears in David Calhoun, Princeton Seminary vol 1: Faith and Learning 1812-1868, pp 418-430.]
   a. **Control by G. A.** Control of seminary in Gen Assembly through board which it elected. The directors would elect professors, oversee instruction and guarantee the purity of teaching. Control over faculty extended to approving changes in courses taught. [Article III, Sec 3] These provisions became extremely important as the 19th c progressed. Controversies developed within the denomination over governance and theological perspective. As we will see, some wanted the perspective of the seminary greatly enlarged beyond its original conservative heritage to include perspectives other than traditional Calvinism.
   b. **Curriculum:** Training in original languages; students should be well versed in church history (let’s hear it for church history!!); conversant with “principal arguments and writings” pertaining to the “deistical controversy.”
   c. **Adherence to Westminster standards** “solemnly, and ex animo adopt, receive, and subscribe the Confession of Faith, and Catechisms and Form of Government and Discipline of the Pres Ch in the US.” Throughout 19th and early 20th c, Princetonians considered themselves the guardians of Westminster tradition. They opposed efforts to revise the Confession; they considered it the touchstone of orthodoxy.

3. **Inauguration of Archibald Alexander:** August 12, 1812. Alexander delivered hour and a half inaugural sermon on John 5:39 “Search the Scriptures.” His sermon
echoed elements which we discussed in the “Plan of the Seminary.” The establishment of this seminary would meet the needs in American culture referred to above.

a. Alexander established the basics of what would become “Old Princeton. In many ways his influence extended to all areas of the curriculum. His *Evidences of Christianity* set the pattern of using Scottish philosophy as the primary means of doing apologetics.

b. He used Francis Turretin, reformed scholastic theologian as his basic text. Hodge continued to use Turretin until he published his own three volume *Systematic Theology* in the mid 19th c.

c. Of all the Princetonians Alexander was probably most favorably inclined to revivalism due to his participation in revivals in VA.

d. His *Thoughts on Religious Experience* set the tone for the Princeton piety.

4. **Samuel Miller second professor.** Alexander joined by Samuel Miller in 1813 as professor of church history and then Charles Hodge as professor of oriental languages in 1822.

F. **Princeton’s via media.** Princeton Seminary, therefore, grew out of a context in which the best of the New England Puritan influence was combined with firm adherence to Scots-Irish orthodoxy; this balance shaped the theological and experiential tone of the institution. Princetonians labored consistently to maintain balance between confessionalism of Scots-Irish and the warm piety of the English Puritans. Hodge’s *Systematic Theology* (1873) replaced the scholastic teaching of Francis Turretin, Genevan divine of 17th c. Hodge’s work became basis for Reformed orthodoxy; used to attack Nathaniel W. Taylor’s New Haven Theology and Andover’s Amasa Park.

G. Calhoun notes in his *Princeton Seminary: Princeton Theological Seminary “was one of the centers – in its earlier years, perhaps the center – of American Evangelicalism during the nineteenth century.”* He adds a comment from my thesis advisor at Brown, Dr. William G. McLoughlin, leading interpreter of American intellectual history: “The story of American evangelicalism is the story of America itself in the years 1800-1900.” (from his book *American Evangelicals 1800-1900*).

H. **Princeton also viewed itself as the moderate group within American religion.** Alexander and Hodge posed issues in such a way that they advocated a via media on doctrinal and practical matters. Such claims rather easy to sustain at the founding of Princeton. Princetonians had the advantage in the early 19th c. of having objectivist deists and rationalists occupying their left flank and subjectivist mystics and romantics (including transcendentalists in New England) on their right. Hodge made his mediating view a major theme in his chapter on theological method in his *Systematic Theology*. Of course as the 19th c wore on and enemies to the right tended to diminish, they found it more difficult to maintain the claim that they were a mediating view. Therefore, they eventually became the leading advocates of Old School theology in the Presbyterian Church.

I. **Princeton emerged as the most prominent Presbyterian school in the country.** Most remembered remark by Charles Hodge: “I am not afraid to say that a new idea never originated in this seminary.” Less well known was the remark by Francis L. Patton upon the centennial celebration of seminary in 1912: “[the] theological position of Princeton Seminary is exactly the same today that it was a hundred years ago.” Both Princeton’s advocates and opponents have had a field day with these statements.

J. **Key institutions at Princeton:**
1. **Reformed confessionalism.** They wholly supported the Westminster standards. Before Hodge’s *Systematic Theology* appeared, Alexander and Hodge used Francis Turretin’s scholastic theology from the 17th c.

2. **Vibrant piety:** weekly conferences Sunday afternoon in Oratory. Cf., “Plan of a Theological Seminary” article 5 for detailed prescriptions regarding the spiritual lives of seminary students.

3. **Biblical Repertory and Reformed Review**
   a. Perhaps the main reason for Princeton’s effectiveness in its heyday was its **main organ of dissemination**, the *Princeton Review*. It became the mouthpiece through which Hodge, who created the journal in 1825 and edited it for 40 years (he called it his “ball and chain”!!); and his successors spread orthodox Protestantism to a waiting audience. Hodge described the journal: “an organ for upholding sound Presbyterian, the cause of the country and the honor of our common Redeemer.”
   b. **Meaty format.** Not looking anything like the religious magazines of today, it published lengthy (30-50 pages!!) critical reviews that took on all comers – i.e., any who dared pose innovations in the theological landscape of the 19th c. Take any issue, movement or theological system promulgated in golden age of American theological controversy, and you can find Princeton’s view exposited at length in this prestigious journal – from Finney and his “new measures” to New Divinity, Transcendentalism, Mercersburg theology and Horace Bushnell.
   c. **General Assembly news.** Every General Assembly analyzed in detail. One writer once commented that the worst time to have your article published in *PR* was in the issue in which Charles Hodge gave a trenchant review of the General Assembly, because everyone upon receiving a copy of the *PR* would immediately turn to read Hodge’s review first. Your contribution, no matter how weighty or brilliant, would have to wait! Thus all matters internal to Presbyterian in America as well as national issues such as slavery and temperance (both of which Hodge opposed), received careful attention. (Cf., Charles Lippy, “The Princeton Review” in *Religious Periodicals of the United States: Academic and Scholarly Journals* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1986).

V. **Other seminaries established that were Princeton’s competitors:**
   A. 1636 **Harvard:** Established pattern of American higher education by its foundation to provide education for ministers. First classes in 1638. Harvard also has dubious distinction of being first to divert from orthodoxy with the election of Unitarian, Henry Ware, to chair of Hollis Chair of Divinity in 1805.
   B. 1818: **Auburn** in western NY by Geneva Presbyterian; cooperated with Plan of Union churches in west. On the Auburn website, the seminary is described as “an open and progressive institution, slightly eccentric, with an unusual ability to respond to change.” The seminary was founded to function across denominational lines to prepare clergy for the American frontier and foreign missions. The school participated in the great social movements of the time: the struggles against slavery and for women’s suffrage, temperance, and reforms that uplifted the poor. Auburn was one of the first theological schools in the country to educate women and to enroll students from Asia.
In the beginning of the 20th c it figured prominently in fundamentalist modernist battle over the authority of the Bible. In 1939 the Great Depression forced the seminary to move from Auburn to the campus of Union Theological Seminary in Manhattan in 1939. The two seminaries have never merged. Union offers degree programs; Auburn focuses on lifelong learning for clergy and laity, and on research addressing the needs of religious communities and the academy.

C. 1822: **Yale Divinity School**: formed also to meet the need for pastors in opening of 19th c; when Taylorism emerged, Hartford Theological Seminary founded in 1833.

D. 1823: **Union** at Hampden-Sydney, later moved to Richmond; became a southern rival to Princeton under leadership of Robert L. Dabney. The current website makes no mention of Dabney; but it does acknowledge its traditional roots: “In the early years of Union’s existence as a theological institution, the curriculum of the seminary was shaped along classical lines to ensure that clergy were competently trained in biblical exegesis, theology, church history, and pastoral studies.”

E. 1827: **Western** (antecedents in 1780s) in western PA; roots back to 1780s. Western began with the establishment of classical academies in Washington, PA, the first in 1785 by Joseph Smith and another in 1787 by John McMillan. Out of these academies, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA created Western Seminary. It was indeed a western seminary in 1825, furnishing a ministry for the rapidly opening frontier territories along the Ohio River. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary formed in 1959 by the union of Western and Pittsburgh-Xenia Theological Seminary.

F. 1828: **Columbia** in SC; James Henley Thornwell most prominent theologian. Founded in Lexington, Georgia, in 1828, the seminary moved to its first long-term home in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1830. During the 1920’s, the seminary moved to Decatur, Georgia, on the outskirts of Atlanta.

G. 1829: **Lane** in Cincinnati; founded by Old Schoolers; but Lyman Beecher called as president in 1832 and led the school to revivalism. Lane Theological Seminary was founded in Cincinnati in 1830. Within a few years of its founding, Lane Theological Seminary was divided over the issue of slavery. The school suffered from financial difficulties, forcing Beecher to lease campus land to private homeowners. In 1932, Lane Theological Seminary became part of the McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago.

H. 1830: **McCormick** in Chicago. Initially named Indiana Seminary, McCormick was established in Hanover, Indiana. In 1840 the Seminary, renamed the Seminary of the Northwest, moved to New Albany, Indiana. Cyrus H. McCormick, inventor of the reaper named after him and a zealous Presbyterian layman, played a key role in moving the Seminary to Chicago. From 1859 into the twentieth century, he and his heirs were the school’s financial mainstay, providing buildings, endowing professorships, and paying the annual operating deficit. Shortly after McCormick’s death in 1884, the school was renamed McCormick Theological Seminary.

I. 1836: **Union** in NY, started as Presbyterian (The New York Theological Seminary) but remained independent; Union became nemesis of Princeton and the hotbed of liberalism. Most of the organizers favored New School ideas (revivalism, experiential emphasis as opposed to strict subscription). Nevertheless, all professors required to affirm: “I believe the Script of the Old and New Testament to be the word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice; and I do now, in the presence of God and the Directors of this Seminary, solemnly and sincerely receive the Westminster Confession of Faith as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures. I do also, in like manner, approve of the
Presbyterian Form of Govt and I do solemnly promise that I will not teach or inculcate anything which shall appear to me to be subversive of said system of doctrines, or of the principles of said Form of Govt, so long as I shall continue to be a Professor in the Seminary.” Cf., Robert T. Handy, “Union Theological Seminary in New York and American Presbyterian 1836-1904,” American Presbyterians: Journal of Presbyterian History 66 (Summer 1988), 115-122.
I. Introduction: Early 19th c. America: Ahlstrom: “The Golden Day of Democratic Evangelicalism” Secular texts often refer to the decades following the War of 1812 as the “Era of good feelings.” Not only did the nation as a whole experience growth but religious denominations flourished as well, primarily through the burgeoning of cooperative, benevolent agencies that were a product of the new American religious experiment, and specifically the Second Great Awakening. We have already seen the uniqueness of the nation’s religious development. Never before had a nation taken upon itself the task of organizing its religious activity without the benefit of state or political establishment. But the challenges did not end with denominations getting themselves organized. Hardly had Presbyterians created their national church in the General Assembly in 1789, than new opportunities presented themselves.

A. Beecher’s “Plea for the West” (1835) Included in PE pp 140-143. This famous lecture given by Lyman Beecher delivered during a fund raising tour for Lane Theological Seminary captured the sense of urgency in the early 19th c that Protestants engage in a mighty campaign to seize cultural leadership. Beecher paints a picture of the vigor (population growth in west from 150,000 to 5,000,000 in 40 years) yet challenge to capture the West. His impassioned plea was that “faithful ministers” will be provided along with schools, libraries, colleges “and all the apparatus for the perpetuity of republican institutions.” He repeats a cry, “We must educate! We must educate! Or we must perish by our own prosperity.” P. 141

1. Interesting presuppositions: In our hasty rush for wealth, “we outrun our literary and religious institutions.” (p 141) Then he states that “there is no danger that our agriculture and arts will not prosper; the danger is that our intelligence and virtue will falter and fall back into a dark minded, vicious populace – a poor, uneducated reckless mass of infuriated animalism, to rush on resistless as the tornado, or to burn as if set on fire of hell….” This is a classic definition of what sociologists call “cultural lag” – technology and its moral consequences outstrips moral and spiritual development.

2. Nativism and anti-Catholicism. Beecher projects what will happen if the nation does not respond to the need – people will flock to the calls of demagogues; immigrants will overtake the land (note Nativist); and Catholics will prevail. Beecher like many Americans believed that Roman Catholicism with the Pope as its head was diametrically opposed to America’s democratic institutions. It posed a triple threat to the West: political, social and religious.

B. The opportunity. The opening phase of the Second Great Awakening and rapid expansion of America into the West and Southwest offered Presbyterians marvelous opportunities for ministry. In part, Britain played a role by presenting a contemporary example of missions and reforming zeal that Americans sought to emulate. The modern missionary movement initiated by William Carey and Baptist Missionary Society in late18th c. and movements in England for prison reform projected living models for American Christians.

C. How to organize? The main question became, for Presbyterians, how to organize these activities. Should the church itself be the organizing agent, or should individuals provide the impetus? That is, should people form voluntary associations that are not formally associated with the institutional church? In today’s language, should nonecclesiastical or para-church ministries fulfill the mission of the church or should churches themselves create outreach groups to minister to needs both in American culture and beyond our immediate environs?
1. **Advantages of voluntary associations.** Nonecclesiastical groups have two advantages: they would encompass individuals from several denominations, thus pooling resources of like-minded individuals. It would actually entail only those with a burden for that particular work (those actually called by God to perform ministry).

2. **Disadvantage of voluntary associations.** The Plan of Union again!! If Presbyterians organized with others on the same principle of the Plan of Union, Presbyterians would ignore or exclude from their efforts the theological and historical background that their denomination offered. How would such groups be ordered? What methods of discipline, both theological and moral would prevail?
   a. **Reformed heritage.** When one considers the historical precedents provided by Calvin's Geneva, cutting oneself off from those earlier efforts would seem wrongheaded at least and irresponsible at worst.
   b. Voluntary agencies would also *separate the church from immediate contact* with the fields of mission that the voluntary societies attempted to reach. Would this not isolate believers who were not immediately involved in missions and reform from the work that needed to be done?

3. **Implications for Presbyterians.** If the church were to take upon itself these new tasks, how would the simplicity of the four courts of the church be affected? Would not new executive functions appear; and would that not infringe on the long honored parity of the elders? Would the adoption of these tasks not impose on church members a responsibility that they might not have acknowledged? In other words, Presbyterians had to confront the implications for the nature of the church and the requirements of membership in a way they had not done so before. Loetscher: “The question was not ‘whether’ but ‘how.’” Obviously the problem has not been definitively resolved even into the 20th c!!

II. **Voluntary Societies: The Age of Benevolence.** In the early part of the 19th c., Presbyterians participated in the voluntary society movement, while later they conducted missions and contributed to social reform through church agencies. Their earlier participation reflected the growing American patriotism and the common heritage that shaped the movement into the frontier. Enthusiasts for this cooperative effort see in the flurry of activity a precursor of the 20th c. ecumenical movement. Texts refer to the “Benevolent Empire” [phrase used by historian Martin Marty, U of Chicago] of Protestant good works. Protestants mounted a virtual crusade against every conceivable social ill. Forming societies to tackle social problems reflect influence of British Dissenting groups which attempted to eliminate similar evils in England. In both instances, the initiative came from individuals (showing their association with revivalism in both countries). They were nondenominational rather than interdenominational. A network of evangelical leaders, some ordained and others from the laity, exercised a leavening effect that permeated a large part of the country. But the primary leadership came from Presbyterians and Congregationalists.

   A. **Foreign missions.** In the area of mission, Presbyterians waffled between whether to focus their missionary efforts through voluntary societies or through the official structure of the General Assembly. In actual fact, they used both methods. The first method they used grew out of the Plan of Union – Presbyterians and Congregationalists would cooperate in evangelizing the West. From 1790 until 1837, the General Assembly actually encouraged several interdenominational agencies to the church. Only as Old – New School differences emerge did a sharp contention become evident.
1. **First Voluntary Society: American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions** (1810). *Samuel Mills* in 1806 led a group of students from Williams College in the study of missions. At the famous “haystack prayer meeting” they pledged themselves to missionary service. While most of them entered Andover Seminary, they and others appealed to the Congregational General Association of MA to initiate foreign missionary activity. From that request the American Board was born. In **Feb of 1812, five missionaries sailed for India**. By 1879 direct and indirect influences from the haystack prayer meeting resulted in formation of **five separate foreign missionary boards**. (Ashbel Green and Samuel Miller became members of the American Board – they were two of the most vocal Presbyterians for missions and they participated initially in interdenominational labors.)

2. **(1811) The American Board urged the General Assembly** (following the intent of the Plan of Union) to form a board to cooperate with them. The General Assembly declined, however, and urged interested individuals to work through the American Board instead. Presbyterians focused their concern more on home missions (evangelizing the West) than on foreign missions. Thus the initial phase of voluntary society as means of spreading the gospel versus a board within the denomination itself failed to gain acceptance. This would become a major dividing point between New and Old School views as the 19th c. proceeded.

3. **Sheldon Jackson** (1858 Princeton grad; became “The Bishop of All Beyond” as he turned his attention to the far West and eventually made his way to Alaska planting churches. He is still known among Alaskans as the one who pioneered importing reindeer from Siberia to provide stable food supply for natives.

B. **Home missions. Expansion into the West.** Winning the West and Southwest to the Christian faith presented a major challenge to the 19th c. denominations. The Louisiana Purchase in 1803 effectively doubled the size of the American territory. Thousands flocked to the area as they sought to increase their fortune. Loetscher reports that one could count 236 westward trekking wagons near Pittsburgh, PA in a single day. The expansion grew so quickly that by 1829 nine of the eleven new states were west of the Alleghenies, and six of these were Southern or Border states. And the new states harbored more than a third of the population. Would the churches meet the obvious need?

1. **Presbyterianism well suited to meet this need.** Not only were the Scots-Irish scattered along the frontier from New England to the Carolinas, but also the denomination responded to the need for educated ministers.
   a. **1802, General Assembly created a Standing Committee of Missions.** *PE*, 123-5. Composed of four ministers and three elders. It was immediately overwhelmed with requests for new ministers and the need grew so quickly that by 1811 the General Assembly had to appeal to the churches for more aid. In 1816 the name of the committee changed to the Board of Missions.
   b. **Samuel Mills later traveled in the Mississippi valley (1814, 5)** (*PE* 121, 2) and sent letters which attracted great interest in Western missions. He reported that while Methodists and Baptists abounded, Presbyterians were in short supply (some had previously been Presbyterians but converted to Meth and Bap denominations when they were neglected by their eastern brethren). “In all this territory there is not a single Presbyterian preacher.” He reports that due to absence of Presbyterians, vital piety and orthodoxy had already suffered loss.
c. **Serious deficiencies.** Mills also reported the lack of Bibles, Sabbath observance, education of children. The life of the frontier was marked by immorality, gambling and drunkenness (sounds like America in 20th!!). He reported that OH had only 49 ministers for a population of 330,000; IN with 25,000 had only 1 pastor and IL territory had no minister for its 13,000 inhabitants. Pastors that labored did so for very little remuneration: Loetscher reports $33 per month; later $40 allowed.

2. **1826: American Home Missionary Society formed.** At first it consisted mostly of Presbyterians, but Congregationalists added to its numbers. It contributed to formation of churches under the Plan of Union. It was enormously successful.

3. **Female Cent Society.** (1816) *(PE, p 128)* Marks the beginning of benevolent work among women. Formed in Chillicothe, OH; consisted of 20 females of “a religious and moral character.” Members were to pay $1 and then one cent a day throughout the year. Collected moneys to be disbursed: one fourth to both Princeton and Auburn Theological Seminaries, one-fourth to Presbyteries to support candidates and one fourth for the poor.

C. **Christian Literature.** Samuel Mills, as noted above, reported a dearth of Bibles during his tour of the West in the early 1800s. Not only did people lack Bibles, they also did not have access to Christian literature. This situation led to groups that desired to place Bibles in every home in America and distribute reading materials. The **American Bible Society** began in 1816 and the **American Tract Society** in 1825. Both sought to win the ungodly, put literature in their hands to help them become godly, and help them stay godly. They also distributed the Scriptures to those immigrating into the country.

D. **American Sunday School Union** Robert Raikes founded Sunday Schools in Manchester, England in 1780. The General Assembly did not officially sanction them until 1824. Earlier resolutions drafted to encourage education of children and while leaving the matter to individual sessions, yet they sought uniformity in promoting “knowledge of the Holy Scriptures” so that classes formed where youths could recite the Bible as often as once a week, 2 to 5 chapters for each recitation. Such activity was not to replace catechetical instruction but to supplement it.


Boylan gives a clear picture of Presbyterian participation in American Sunday School movement. Presbyterians were part of evangelical movement **growing out of the 2nd GA** (bubbling number of conversions presented opportunity to educate the unchurched); part of network of new institutions to promote evangelical faith. Board dominated by Presbyterians and Episcopalians (not Methodists and Baptists) – Presbyterians presence also supported use of term “Presbyterian” for the national benevolent societies.

a. **Formation of these institutions reflects three historical factors.** [i] **Strength of evangelical denominations in local contexts.** While Congregationalists dominated in Providence, RI, Presbyterians and low church Episcopalians dominated Phila. [ii] **Strong lay leadership from local churches.** Presbyterians’ passion for catechizing inclined them to assume leadership in Christian education. [iii] **Other denominations suspicious of new institutions.** Methodists, Catholics and others saw benevolent societies as competition. Therefore, they were not likely to participate.
b. “Evangelical Society” (1807) Another new lay institution who met at the home of Archibald Alexander while he pastored 3rd Presbyterian Ch. Controversy arose over the legitimacy of laymen engaged in evangelizing. Alexander, one of the few Old Schoolers who supported the revivals, sympathized with these efforts after Phila Presbytery reprimanded an enthusiastic layman for “irregular preaching.” The Presbyterians reached a compromise to permit “pious laymen” who might be “advantageously occupied in giving religious instruction to the ignorant, without touching on the peculiar duties of the Pastoral office.” (We will see this dispute over lay/pastoral leadership in Hodge Thornwell debate.) Laypeople canvassed the city, contacting adults and children to undergo religious instruction. Some eventually grew into mission churches (First African Presbyterian Ch) others became Sunday Schools, and still others remained informal religious gatherings. The main difference between these and catechism classes was focus of attention on learning Bible stories and verses instead of catechism.

c. By 1822, 80% of the Sunday Schools in Phila affiliated with Union. Union represented by young leadership from the churches – men in their 20s. They also took leadership in Bible and Tract Societies, Young Men’s Colonization Society, Phila House of Refuge and other philanthropic groups.

E. Temperance. Not always a favorite among Reformed Christians!! But it was a major component of moral reform movement. Many denounced drunkenness and its effects. Lyman Beecher once called drinking the major social evil of the 19th c. While he was still in New England he delivered a series of sermons on intemperance. Eventually American Temperance Society initiated in 1833. Presbyterians believed in temperance, but many pointed out that advocates of temperance actually sought total abstinence.

1. Cf., selection in PE, 134: “Nineteenth Century Puritanism”. The pastoral letter issued by the General Assembly in 1818 calls drunkenness a crime that has cursed the country and made inroads into the Presbyterian Ch. In light of its potential danger to families the letter calls upon officers and members “to abstain even from the common use of ardent spirits….” In fact the Scripture never requires abstinence; nor was abstinence necessary for piety nor the reformation of society. The issue festered among Presbyterians for some took a more radical stance – as in the case of the First Great Awakening when some Old Light pastors were disciplined by New Light revivalists over drinking.

2. Note also strong views of Sabbath observance (136).

F. Hardman, Issues in American Christianity on the largest benevolent societies in America and the combined budgets.

G. Old School opposition to voluntary societies. (Earl R. McCormack, “The Development of Presbyterian Missionary Organizations: 1790-1870,” JPH (1965). While the two parties of the Old – New Side schism came back together in 1758, we have noted that differences continued to divide Presbyterians. Sharp disagreement over revivalism – its theology and means of achieving it – constituted only one of the points separating what eventually became another schism. This one would be between Old and New Schoolers. One focus of difference was the legitimacy of interdenominational cooperation and involvement in voluntary societies.

1. Old School view of missions. Old Schoolers originally participated actively as we have seen. As the 19th c. wore on, Old School viewed voluntary agencies with
Joshua Peters, Old School pastor in Cincinnati attacked the AHMS. He made three points. [a] Missions belongs in the church, not voluntary agencies outside the direct control of the denomination. [b] the Presbyterian church gov't should be a missionary society (as matter of fact, when Synod of Pittsburgh formed in 1802, it declared itself a missionary society). [c] AHMS is not “an ecclesiastical, but a civil institution”; therefore the AHMS “disturbs the peace, and injures the prosperity of the Presbyterian Church.” Joshua Peters, Old School pastor in Cincinnati attacked the AHMS. He made three points: [a] Missions belongs in the church, not voluntary agencies outside the direct control of the denomination; [b] the Presbyterian church gov't should be a missionary society [when the Synod of Pittsburgh formed in 1802, it declared itself a missionary society]; [c] AHMS is not “an ecclesiastical, but a civil institution”; therefore the AHMS “disturbs the peace, and injures the prosperity of the Presbyterian Church.”

2. **New School response.** New Schoolers responded. They not only tended to be pro-revival, they also staunchly advocated participation in the voluntary societies since they so directly aided the revival movement. Absalom Peters said that Jesus’ missionary command was given not to the church as a whole but to individuals.

3. **1831** A decisive year in the controversy. Old Schoolers championed the use of ecclesiastical boards within the denomination. A series of lectures held to shore up their viewpoint. One of the main participants was John Breckinridge. He held that the “Church of God is essentially, in its organization, and in the purpose of God, a Missionary institution.” He strongly implied that Congregationalists church which totally depended on outside agencies, was not complying with the biblical mandate. Therefore, Presbyterians should dissociate with them. A convention of Old School delegates held prior to 1833 General Assembly to solidify their view. This began a series of struggles between New and Old School delegates involving control of the denomination on a yearly basis. Major debates in the General Assemblies and in print over the issue of voluntary missionary societies took place. It would culminate in another tumultuous division in 1837.


A. **Millennial theologies of progress through reform and struggle.** Protestants in the mainstream believed in the coming glory of the Lord. Therefore they tended to interpret American progress as one of the clear signs of the approach of the Second Coming of Christ. The social, moral and material progress of America portended the consummation of all history in the Kingdom reign of Jesus Christ.

1. **Post-millennialism in early American history.** The most prevalent view of history was post-millennialism – that Christ would come again after a millennium of progress on earth and a series of blessings associated with Christ’s earthly rule. Such a rule was not simply a new era or age but an extension of the earthly work of Christ begun in the 1st century. The millennium culminated the spread of the gospel to all nations so that the numbers of saved would outnumber the lost. Such a reign would bring to a
conclusion the vast reforms sought through movements against evil social practices –
the cessation of wars, the end of slavery, victory over various vices and vast extension
of learning and piety. The Second Coming of Christ would bring the millennium to
fruition.

2. Early American post-millennialists. Figures such as Jonathan Edwards, Samuel
Hopkins and Joseph Bellamy expressed the views that what was begun in the
Protestant Reformation in Europe would be capped off by the revivals and success of
the Gospel on these shores. Campaigns for various forms of social reforms were all
part of a program to prepare America for the Kingdom Age.

3. Reform grew out of revivals and social reforms. Apocalyptic images associated
with revival fervor.

a. Lyman Beecher. The time of the millennium is drawing near. “The angel [of
the Lord] is calling to the nations to look to unto Jesus and be saved.”

b. Absalom Peters (Secretary of the American Home Missionary Society): “The
1260 prophetic years are drawing to a close; and the day of vengeance is in his
heart, because the year of his redeemed is come…. The sun is darkened and
the moon is blood; and the stars of heaven fall… Pagan, Mahometan and
Papal governments are in their dotage; and it is remarkable that, just at this
time, Christianity, with the vigor of a renewed youth, and armed with all the
facilities of modern science, arts, wealth and enterprise, is organizing her
legions for the last onset and for certain victory.” (A Plea for Voluntary
Societies (New York, 1837).

c. Another minister argued that America must become a “nation of Christians so
that its people might hasten the millennial day through preaching the Gospel
to the rest of the world.”

d. Charles G. Finney: Never one to mince words, Finney allegedly said “If the
church will do her duty, the Millennium may come in three years.” Similar
beliefs fed evangelical social and religious reform. Finney believed that such
hope would be jeopardized if Christian succumbed to premillennialism.

e. General Assembly of 1840. Noted the general progress of morality in the
world as a whole “appears to be rising.” Immorality was waning as manifest in
reduced public drunkenness. And evidences of genuine righteousness such as
public respect for the Sabbath was on the increase.

4. Thus New School confidence in progress seemed almost unbounded. As we will
see in following lectures optimism increased among New Schoolers as momentum
built behind the abolition movement as well. But the emphasis will shift to another
millennial view.

IV. Conclusion. Social and moral reform characterized early 19th c evangelicalism as manifested in a
vast array of activities. Presbyterian participated in these events to a greater or lesser extent. The
eruption of the Civil War burst the postmillennial balloon for many people both in the North and
South. Over the succeeding decades complex movements of immigration, urbanization and
industrialization posed problems which alerted many Americans to the fact that the world was not
getting better. The last vestiges of postmillennialism merged with the social gospel movement in the
last decades of the 19th century.
I. **Introduction: From cooperation to schism.** The era of cooperation (sometimes called “the era of good feeling” in secular history texts referring to political events) which marked the opening decades of 19th c Presbyterian gave way to division and bitter rivalry in the 1830s which led to a schism in the denomination which lasted until after the Civil War (1837-69). The division, known as the Old School - New School had its roots in controversy of the previous century – the Old Light - New Light schism. From 1741-58 the church was divided over theological and practical differences associated with the First Great Awakening. But now additional matters divided the denomination into two antagonistic camps. **Major bibliographical source:** George Marsden’s *The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience* (1970) based on Yale PhD dissertation, 1966.

A. **Plan of Union.** People still disagreed over the Plan of Union (1801). Conservatives remained convinced that Congregationalists were not fully committed to Westminster theology. Old School believed that Presbyterian doctrine and polity required strict subscription which Congregationalism, as evidenced by the proliferation of Taylor’s New Haven Theology, did not hold. New School thinkers, who supported the Plan, were more lenient about matters of theological belief and downplayed differences between Congregationalists and Presbyterians.

B. **Revivalism.** We have already seen controversies surrounding Finney and Second Great Awakening. The errors of Finney’s message and method of revivalism clearly stuck in the craw of Old Schoolers. They believed that revivals were more the result of “revivalmakers” than a work of God. New Schoolers enthusiastically supported the revival pointing out the huge numbers of converts reported in urban centers. Revivalism clearly appealed to a country that had just achieved its independence and was bent on fulfilling American destiny with its democratic institutions. Older Calvinism with its beliefs in human depravity and divine election, viewed as incompatible with both revivalism and the new American destiny, gave way to free will and human initiative in salvation. A struggle occurred for the soul of the denomination similar to what raged in the 18th c and would reoccur in the opening decades of the 20th c.

C. **Voluntary societies.** Covered in last lecture.

D. Now additional items came to the fore as Old School - New School sentiments deepened.

II. **New School theology and resultant heresy trials:** Presbyterian with its connectional polity possessed the means to address problems within their ranks. Unlike Congregationalism which had no means of disciplining members outside their respective congregations, Presbyterians had a system of courts by which people could be held accountable by those outside their own parish, Presbytery or synod. On the larger American scene, Nathaniel W. Taylor of Yale had significantly modified Calvinism establishing a New Haven Theology. His *Concio ad Clerum* (1828) redefined several Calvinist doctrines to forestall Unitarian attacks on Calvinism and to provide a theology for revivalist preaching. Two individuals and their respective cases illustrate how New School ideas developed and how Old Schoolers viewed them as changing the very theological distinctives of historic Calvinism.

A. **Albert Barnes (1798-1870)** Next to Lyman Beecher, Barnes was the best known New Schooler. Like Beecher he championed many causes including abolition of slavery, opposition to liquor traffic and Sabbatarian legislation. Because Barnes graduated from the
hotbed of orthodoxy itself, Princeton Seminary, one would not expect him to be leader of New School faction.

1. **Barnes’ sermon: “The Way of Salvation.”** Cf., Earl Pope, “Albert Barnes and the Way of Salvation,” *JPH* (1979) In 1829, five years after graduating, he preached this famous sermon at Morristown, NJ. *Preaching on Tit 3:5-7* Barnes’ intention was to present an outline of the way of salvation in laymen’s terms. But it seemed critical of Westminster doctrine and leaned toward Taylorism, especially on original sin. For example, he illustrated the effect of the Fall using a metaphor of how a drunkard man may influence the rest of the family. This way of discussing original sin smacked of Pelagian imitation.

   a. Pope comments: “Probably no drunkard caused the Presbyterian Church more grief than this one.”

   b. Barnes sounded more like Yale than Princeton when he claimed that the “full benefit of this atonement is offered to all men.” All who will may be saved. He called this the cornerstone and gauge of truth of all his thinking – “the atonement was full and free.” [I stand as the messenger of God, with the assurance, that all that will may be saved, that the atonement was full and free: and that if any perish, it will be because they choose to die, and not because they are straitened in God.”]

2. **Opposition to Barnes.** Barnes was called to First Presbyterian Church in Phila in 1830. Old Schoolers used the circumstance to question his call. Ultra-conservatives such as Ashbel Green and Wm. Engles, editor of *The Presbyterian*, charged him with several errors: interpretations on original sin, the atonement, human ability and subscription to Westminster Confession.

   a. **Old School division over Barnes.** Princeton functioned as moderating faction. Samuel Miller, for example, had a close relationship with Barnes because while a student at Princeton Barnes tutored Miller’s children. He did not want to brand Barnes with Taylorism. In a letter Miller counseled caution Barnes in taking the Phila pulpit. Ashbel Green directly opposed the appointment. Engles joined Green in opposition to the appointment.

   b. **Barnes supported by New School.** His defense led by James P. Wilson who answered the harsh criticism of Engles by challenging Engles to give a better defense of Westminster.

   c. **Charles Hodge.** Years later, the venerable Princetonian pronounced his own evaluation: Barnes made significant theological errors, but not enough to undercut the Calvinist system. While Barnes denied imputation of Adam’s sin, he still confessed a hereditary depravity. Barnes also held to man’s moral inability although he held to a natural ability: man has freedom to follow his own inclinations but not “power to the contrary” which characterized Taylorism.

   d. **Barnes charged with heresy** of claiming that the unregenerate could use their will to contribute to their salvation. Opponents took the case to the General Assembly in 1831 where the Old - New division erupted in full force. The New School was clearly in control of the Assembly as Nathan Beman (major contributor to revivalism in upstate NY) was elected moderator on first ballot. Thus Barnes was acquitted with only slight admonition that his sermon contained unguarded passages.

3. **Notes on Romans (1835).** Barnes reactivated the controversy by publishing similar ideas in a commentary on Romans. He denied original sin and claimed that
unregenerate people could keep the commandments and even initiate their own conversions. This time, the Old School successfully brought charges through Presbytery and synod; the synod suspended Barnes from the ministry.

4. **New School control of General Assembly.** But a year later, with the New Schoolers in control of General Assembly, the decision was reversed. The way disputes arose and their resolution indicates the depth of feeling that lay beneath the surface within the denomination. They also reveal that control over the issues and within the denomination depended on who held the majority in any given year on the floor of General Assembly. Thus Barnes’ career including two trials for heresy opened up a period of fierce opposition between Old and New School factions within Presbyterian.

5. **James W. Alexander on Philadelphia.** Son of Archibald Alexander proposed calling Philadelphia “Misadelphia” for all of the theological controversies between New and Old Schoolers

C. **Barnes’ theology of Preaching.** Barnes wrote “The Relation of Theology to Preaching” in 1846 which presented key New School principles. The ultimate test for each theological system is not its relation to an objective theological standard but whether the doctrine can be preached. As one looks upon the needs of society the question emerges what must be preached so that men will be converted.

1. **Three kinds of theology that cannot be preached:** The first = theology drawn primarily from nature. The second = theology that made preaching secondary to worship (Rome). A third type = Old School Presbyterian; theology of tradition and the reformed confessions. Its dogmas are opposed to obvious teaching of the Bible and common sense of mankind.

2. **Theology that can be preached:** what arises from a proper understanding of the Bible (traditional approaches emphasized exegetical argument, prooftexting and mystical meaning [which Jonathan Edwards did not avoid]; Barnes said that the Bible is to be understood as any other book. His second criterion was common sense: ministers must be well acquainted with both the men and the world. Thirdly it must be thoroughly acquainted with the spirit of the age.

3. **How to identify a New School theology?** How could the New School theology appear a unity? Men like Barnes clearly avoided the traditional view of Calvinism. Yet they did not want to identify with other mainstream theologies: Roman Catholicism, Transcendentalism, Unitarians, and Baptists.

D. **Barnes on slavery (1840s-50s).** Marsden uses Barnes to indicate the New School emphasis on social issues, specifically slavery. Yet, Marsden’s primary purpose is to show the New School’s singular ineffectiveness in implementing social change. The evangelicals stood united on the principle of social reform in all its manifestations. But their commitment seemed stymied by the teaching of the Bible which allowed slavery.

1. **Barnes became a major spokesman.** Barnes believed that if the Bible spoke to a moral issue, its dictates were authoritative. He admitted that Jesus and the apostles did not proscribe slavery nor discipline slaveholders in the first century. However, they also did not explicitly propagate slavery either.

2. **Scripture advocates moral principles which are clearly incompatible with slavery.** Cited Francis Wayland [Baptist; served in Boston; 4th President of Brown University; primary moral philosopher of the era] as saying:

   a. **Christianity teaches “that all men are by nature equal” in regards to their rights.** Our equality before the law is denied by the institution of slavery.
b. The **NT espouses moral premises** that render slavery morally unacceptable in principle: “[Christianity enunciates] such truths concerning the nature and destiny of man … as should render the slavery of a human being a manifest moral absurdity; that is a notion diametrically opposed to our elementary moral suggestion.”

c. **Thus, Barnes forged an alliance between biblical morality and common sense ethics**: “If a professed revelation *did* countenance slavery as a desirable institution, it would be impossible to convince the mass of mankind that it is from God.”

d. This argument of harmony between the Bible and moral common sense proved convincing only to those committed to abolition. Those from the South could not accept that God revealed ideas that would destroy their peculiar institution. Also, not until the 1850s would the New School take an unwavering stand on the issue of slavery.

E. **Lyman Beecher (1775-1863)** a major figure first among Congregationalists (1799-1810) and then among Presbyterians. [Beecher family exercised enormous influence in 19th c American culture: sons Henry Ward Beecher and Edward Beecher and daughter Harriet Beecher Stowe. When Beecher died, he was survived by 10 of his 11 children.] We have already examined his significant participation in controversy over revivalism and his famous “Plea for the West.” After the formulation of the Bill of Rights, Beecher tenaciously fought against disestablishment of Congregationalism in MA. He called disestablishment an “irreparable injury.” He later changed his mind and confessed separation of church and state a gain for the church for it cut the church loose from dependence on the state. Beecher was also a tireless reformer in the temperance movement and other moral reforms as well as indefatigable in opposition to Unitarianism. One can learn much about evangelicalism in 19th c from his autobiography which was compiled with the help of his children who advocated more liberal causes in the later part of the century.

1. **Marsden on Beecher.** Beecher was the most notable of New School leaders; emphasized theme = **moral status of the nation.** His thinking revolved around key theme of Taylor, God as moral governor not only of Scripture but also of our republic which rested on God’s covenant with the nation. Beecher’s views consistent with sense of national destiny, the success of revivalism as evidence of God’s blessing.

2. **President of Lane Seminary.** Beecher returned to Presbyterian community as he accepted call to Lane Theological Seminary in 1832. Beecher’s move to Cincinnati provided another opportunity for Old Schoolers to highlight Beecher’s well-known tendency for imprecision on theological matters.

   a. **1835: Old Schoolers brought three charges against Beecher:** heresy (differed from the Westminster Confession); slander (he claimed to represent evangelical convictions); hypocrisy (he claimed to agree with both Scripture and the Confession).

   b. **Acquittal.** Even though conservatives controlled the Presbytery, Beecher was acquitted by a large majority at both Presbytery and synod. They faulted him, however, with the “disposition to philosophize” on important doctrines and looseness of language. His being accused indicates the tension felt within the denomination over theological matters.

3. **New School quest for unity.** New School clearly different from Old School, yet it professed loyalty to the Presbyterian tradition. As Marsden points out, this left New
Schoolers in ambiguous position. What was clear = the “united front” of evangelicalism was over. The New School became another sect. (Foster in Marsden p 117)

4. **Noll in Old Religion in the New World.** The social promise of revivalism was that converting individuals would lead to the transformation of society. In the opening decades of the 19th c social reform inspired by biblical holiness promised a changed cultural scene. This formula appeared to be successful. But in 1830s the quest of moral Christian society, transformed outwardly by voluntary efforts of the inwardly converted individual began to collapse. As we shall see, slavery was a major problem.
I. **Introduction.** In the last several lectures we examined the primary elements which divided New and Old Schoolers and the primary participants in on both sides. We noted that differences between the two sides extend back to the schism of 1741-58. Added to differences over revivalism we noted emerging theological disputes, the Plan of Union and the role of voluntary societies.

II. **Differences within Old School.** The growing division between Old and New School members, does not mean that each side was totally unified in all its beliefs. What emerged was in effect an Old School North perspective and an Old School South viewpoint as evidenced by sometimes sharp disagreement between two leading theologians, Charles Hodge of Princeton Theological Seminary and James Henley Thornwell of Columbia Theological Seminary. While both stood firmly for Reformed theology, differences emerged over matters of church polity and the spirituality of the church.

A. **Ruling elders.** Disagreement dated back to strong positions taken by Samuel Miller in his writings on position of elder in Presbyterian church. Miller argued that a unique element of Presbyterian is its strong view of the ruling elder.

1. **Samuel Miller on ruling elders.** Miller forged via media as laymen were gaining significant powers in 19th c. (We have already seen this in Sunday School movement.) He answered Congregationalists and New Schoolers on the left who favored increased involvement of the laity and clericalism on the right which elevated clergy to higher spiritual condition. Miller’s answer was to focus on the ruling elder. He said that representative govt through ruling elders was a distinctive of Reformed polity. (Some have called this “Presbyterian republicanism” which matched perfectly the spirit of 19th c politics.) The office of ruling elder is a matter of divine law in the Scripture [I Tim 5:7] Teaching elders differ from ruling elders only in function, not spiritual honor. He argued for the imposition of hands in the ordination of ruling elders.

   a. **Response to Episcopalians.** Miller also engaged Episcopalian John Cooke’s “An Essay on the Invalidity of Presbyterian Ordination” (1829) over which denominational polity best represented biblical teaching. He expanded a sermon into the essay “Warrant, Nature and Duties of the Office of Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church. He sought a fine line between intrusion of laymen into the functions of clergy in the idea of *jure divino* character of ruling eldership. Elders are entitled to “clergy” title; they fulfill spiritual ministry in assisting pastors.

   b. **1832 opposition to lay leadership in Voluntary Societies.** He cautioned against this practice. This authority ought to exist within the boards of the church.

   c. **Office of Ruling elder.** He saw the ruling elder as a buffer against lay leadership / clericalism

2. **Charles Hodge** took the view against his Princeton colleague. To Hodge, elders differed from pastors; as representatives of the people they were not to be ordained; elders were not essential to form a quota in church bodies.

3. **Debate with James Henley Thornwell.** (Cf., Luder Whitlock, “Elders and Ecclesiology in the Thought of James Henley Thornwell,” *Westminster Theological Journal* (1974) Thornwell emerged as the key Old School leader in the South. The issue emerged in the 1840s among Old Schoolers over ordination of ministers and
was one of many confrontations between Hodge, the acknowledged leader of the northern church and his southern counterpart. Did ruling elders have the right to lay on hands in ordination of pastors? In 1843 the General Assembly ruled against the practice 138-9. It also voted that any three ministers in a Presbytery could form a quorum to conduct business. Thus on two matters, the stature of ruling elders diminished.

a. **Thornwell disagreed.** He argued in a pamphlet that if these principles enacted, Presbyterian was finished and prelacy would result. He supported his case by stating that Presbytery retains the right of imposition of hands. Since it is composed of elders, all should be involved in laying on hands.

b. **1860.** The debate culminated in General Assembly as Thornwell (supported by other southern Presbyterians) defended a high view of church govt resting on explicit commands of Scripture. Hodge thought Thornwell’s position extreme. He called it “hyper-hyper-hyper-High Church Presbyterian.” Thornwell retorted that Hodge’s view was “no, no, NO Presbyterian, no, no, No, Churchism. The Assembly followed Hodge; but the position of elders continued to grow in importance. Thornwell’s last words in the dispute were that Hodge’s views disparaged the office of ruling elder and therefore he was not truly Presbyterian. Scholars have designated Thornwell’s position as “high church Presbyterian.” All elders have the authority to rule but not all elders have authority to preach or administer the sacraments.

B. **Mission boards.** What should be the place of boards and voluntary societies in the church? How should practical affairs of missions, for example, be carried out between meetings of the General Assembly? Hodge and John Holt Rice of Union Seminary of VA held that the whole church and everyone in it is responsible for missionary work. They opposed societies outside of the church. The denomination should organize groups, boards to carry out the church’s mission. Boards are not forbidden by the Bible.

1. **Thornwell disagreed with Hodge and Rice.** He argued that boards are unscriptural. They threatened the order of judicatories that the denomination had set up in following Scripture. To Thornwell, the burgeoning of boards in the church would constitute a bureaucratic nightmare for the church to control.

2. **General Assembly followed Hodge again.**

III. **Act and Testimony.** By 1835 the Old School forces expressed great concern over “the prevalence of unsound doctrine and laxity in discipline” in the denomination. At every General Assembly since 1831, New School party dominated. Thus Old Schoolers called a pre-Assembly meeting in 1835 to rally the troops for the upcoming Assembly. PE, pp. 151-152.

A. **“Act and Testimony” presupposes the presence of ministers and missionaries who do not hold to Presbyterian standards due to Plan of Union.** Diversity of opinion in the church due to cooperative missions. New School men claimed the right to interpret doctrines in sense different from church in ages past. From Old School perspective, New School thinkers were subverting the faith by holding doctrines “at complete variance” with the system taught by the church. The issue recalls Adopting Act of 1729: how does one draw the line between a too strict subscription and looseness in interpreting the Confession?

B. **Opposition to independent educating body.** How shall those in ministry be prepared – by the church itself, or by those outside the church? “No Church can be safe – safe in her doctrinal standards – safe in her ecclesiastical polity –safe in her financial operations – safe in
the independence of her ministry, if that ministry are dependent upon an independent foreign body….”

C. **Princeton Reaction**. Hodge disagreed with radical Old Schoolers. He saw the document as deliberately divisive. He spoke up against it in the *Princeton Review*. In so doing Hodge and his colleague Samuel Miller acted as a mediating party between New School and Old School partisans.

1. **Purpose of the document was setting up a false test.** It established a separate test of orthodoxy from the Westminster standards. No person / persons have a right to adopt their own statements and recommendations.

2. **Assumed an unrealistic state of the church.** Hodge rejected the belief of some that heresy was running rampant in the church. While some error existed, it was not as widespread as Act and Testimony claimed. Therefore, the intent of Act and Testimony was divisive.

3. **Act and Testimony introduced subversion.** Only an extreme emergency could possibly justify action as this proposed.

4. **Hodge’s proposal.** A committee! A group should convene that is not marked by suspicion but by good faith and integrity to cooperate. It should use the courts of the church judiciously to bring unity instead of division. As March’s article indicates, unfortunately Hodge’s proposal was not as definite and did not promise immediate action as Act and Testimony. Later, in looking back upon the schism, Hodge confessed great sympathy with Old School men: on doctrinal matters, missions and boards in the church, voluntary societies. But Hodge definitely saw himself in a mediating position, as the General Assembly action became imminent. [When the vote came in General Assembly, Hodge voted with his Old School brethren although he did not share their harsh assessment of the New School. Instead of exscinding Synods of Western Reserve, Utica, Geneva, Genesee, Hodge favored a plan in which offending churches would be given time to eliminate Congregational elements from their organization.]

IV. **Old School – New School Schism** (1837) Tensions mounted within the denomination on all the matters we have been tracing: Plan of Union, revivalism and the Second Great Awakening, moral reform and role of voluntary societies, and doctrinal subscription. Finally in 1837, the Old School mustered up enough strength to accomplish its purposes. It organized a “Committee of Correspondence” and issued a secret circular calling for radical action of separation. Would it secede or would it force the New School out?

A. **Pre-Assembly of 1837.** It listed its indictment of New School in “Testimony and Memorial” which summed up from the Old School perspective the errors of the New School. *PE*, 153-156

1. **Issues related to church order:** among the 10 items listed are the following: [1] formation of Presbyteries without defined boundaries. [2] Ministers not properly examined with regard to orthodoxy. [3] Licensing and ordaining men who were not qualified. [4] Proliferation of creeds, some contradictory to each other and the Westminster Conf. [5] frivolous ordination to the office of evangelist to the neglect of the pastoral office (resulted in heresy and fanaticism and multiplication of excitements). [6] Power concentrated in individuals and committees far removed from Presbytery level. [7] Unconstitutional decisions at recent General Assemblies that compromised the faith and genuine Presbyterian practice.

3. **Method of reform.** Because of the presence of disparate groups, the time has come to **deal with problems using genuine Presbyterian methods**; two conflicting systems of ecclesiastical governance (Presbyterian and Congregational) cannot effectively solve the problem.

4. **Result.** Testimony and Memorial prepared the way for the Old School to take action at the General Assembly.

B. **1837 General Assembly: Exscinding Acts.** Finally, the Old Schoolers in numerical control of General Assembly. They used their advantage at the General Assembly to deal with the root problem. *PE*, pp. 156-158.

1. **Abrogated Plan of Union.** While Presbyterians and Congregationalists should continue to exercise “mutual respect and esteem,” the Plan of Union should be abrogated.
   a. The two denominations should continue to maintain cordial relationship of “mutual respect and esteem.”
   b. The original Plan of Union was unconstitutional; it was never passed by vote of the Presbyteries. The vote in the Assembly was 143-110.

2. **The Disowning Acts.** GA then proceeded to declare that action retroactive. This effectively excised all those churches, Presbyteries and synods formed irregularly, that is, under the Plan of Union. Eliminating so many bodies severely weakened New School influence (Presbyteries eliminated included Western Reserve, Utica, Geneva and Genesee). The action excluded one-fifth of the voting membership of the denomination [over 500 churches and over 100,000 members]. A joint committee formed to reconcile differences failed and the damage was done. Those New Schoolers not excised could only withdraw and join their cohorts.
   a. This action not intended to have any effect on ministers of existing churches or Presbyteries or the individual lives of members of these groups.
   b. Genuine Presbyterian churches within these groups (i.e., those which are “strictly Presbyterian in doctrine and order”) are invited to apply for admission into nearest Presbyteries.

3. **Disowning the Voluntary Societies.** While no one should be hindered from doing good, certain “facts, too familiar to need repetition here” nevertheless warrant disowning the “American Home Missionary Society, the American Education Society and its branches of whatever name are injurious to the peace and purity of the Presbyterian Church. We recommend, accordingly, that they should cease to operate within any of our Churches.”

4. **PE** includes both a New School response to the excision and an Old School response. New School: the excision was unconstitutional: “they violate the plainest principles of Presbyterianism Govt.” Excision was nothing less than a grab for power by the Old School. Old School counter response: many departures from Presbyterian polity and
traditional Presbyterian doctrine are present in the Western Reserve. They cite Oberlin Seminary where Finney taught perfectionism and revivalism. “We do no man injustice by declaring that Congregationalists are not Presbyterians an have no right to participate in the govt of the Presbyterian church.”

C. **Auburn Convention.** Rather than capitulate, New School met at Auburn, NY in the summer to form their strategy. They decided to ignore what had occurred in 1837 General Assembly. They responded to Old School doctrinal concerns in the “Auburn Declaration.” The two forces would converge in Philadelphia at the next General Assembly. The Auburn Declaration claimed the major support of the denomination; it included a list of 16 “true doctrines” and “16 errors” alleged against them by the Old School.

1. **Auburn Dec became the unofficial New School statement of belief during the schism.** It opened with general statements: Errors and irregularities alleged by Old School were never sanctioned by Presbyterian synods in question. The signees “cordially adopt the Westminster Confession in keeping with the provisions of the Adopting Act. The Declaration represents their “true doctrines.”

2. **Auburn dealt with many key doctrines.** It denies conditional election (#2) and that infants are born innocent (#4). Auburn affirms the doctrine of original sin (#6) and the imputation of Adam’s sin (#7). It fully affirms Christ’s substitutionary atonement and denies example theory (#8). It also denies that regeneration resulted from the sinner’s choice (#12).

3. **Identifies teachers.** It closes by naming those whose orthodoxy should be widely recognized as identified with Auburn’s teachings: Jonathan Edwards, John Witherspoon and Timothy Dwight as teachers who expounded these teachings. Some Old Schoolers grudgingly admitted its conservative stance (But Robert Breckinridge said that it contrasted with some of their published writings!).

D. **Phila General Assembly** (1838) Major chaos erupted when Old Schoolers arrived early, locked access to the front of delegate seating and refused to recognize delegates from the excised Presbyteries. Confusion enveloped the proceedings. Marsden: “All semblance of decency and order was lost as the confusion became pandemonium and spread to the galleries.” Amid repeated calls to order by Old School, the New School members managed to elect officers of a “Constitutional Assembly” and then voted to adjourn. Thus two assemblies resulted, each claiming to be the legitimate General Assembly of the PCUSA. Shades of the “Great Schism” of the medieval period!!

E. **Schism effectively tore the denomination apart;** the New School slightly smaller than Old School counterpart. Included virtually all of four excluded synods of upstate NY and the Western Reserve, MI, eastern TN and majorities from NJ, IN, IL and OH. The schism went still further, however, as it rent many Presbyteries and even individual churches. In one extreme case, a congregation physically divided their place of worship and moved half of it to another location!!

F. Marsden: **Theology was the primary issue since the division masterminded by the Old School.** Related issues included confessionalism, polity, relation of church to voluntary societies, methods of revivalism (including perfectionism) and finally slavery. Marsden notes that the schism forced New School to confront its Presbyterian stance and took its responsibility as a Presbyterian denomination seriously. Thus they showed that doctrinal innovation was not its primary purpose. Its concern was throughout more practical.
1. By the Auburn Declaration, many scholars affirm that the New Schoolers demonstrated their essential orthodoxy and effectively made a large step to make the reunion possible in 1869.

2. For a major counter proposal, Elwyn A. Smith contends that the primary issue was one never mentioned as the cause of schism—slavery (“The Role of the South in the Presbyterian Schism of 1837-38,” Church History (1960). His point = New School members leaned overwhelmingly in antislavery direction; the Old School desperately needed the South to expel the New School; to do so, Old School leaders refused to make slavery or abolition a matter of concern at the General Assembly.


1. Subscription. For example, Hodge commenting on the issue of subscription adopted a moderate position by saying that strict subscriptionists held too rigid a view, since only Hodge himself and a few others alone could subscribe without reservation to all items in the Westminster Confession!
   a. Hodge opposed 2 extremes on matters of subscription. The “system of doctrine” view that was so lax that any evangelical denomination would affirm its tenets and the “system of doctrine” view that was so strict that no diversity was possible.
   b. He held that the “system of doctrine” for Presbyterians was nothing less than Calvinism in opposition to other systems [Socinian, Pelagian, Arminian]. Calvinism held to original sin, efficacious grace, personal election, God’s eternal decrees, and perseverance of the saints. If a person rejects one of the “constituent elements” of the Calvinistic system [e.g., original sin or election] “it would effectually destroy the very intent of a creed.” These principles are those which “the great mass of Presbyterians are ready to adopt.”
   c. Primary doctrines such as these are essential, but not every article.
   d. Hodge’s strict opponents: held an inseparable connection between primary and explanatory articles. These must be subscribed fully or the Confession is lost. [Cf., Protestant scholasticism debate over adiaphora.]

2. Voluntary societies. Hodge conceded that for certain activities such as Bible and tract distribution and support of Sunday Schools, interdenominational cooperation was advisable. But for other activities, like preparation for the ministry and missions, the church itself is the only proper institution to supervise and regulate activity. Only the church could appropriately keep itself from theological confusion and discipline its ministry. Hodge said that some people might cry “high churchism” but he said, “it is Presbyterian.” BRPR, 9 (1837)

3. But with the General Assembly action in 1837, Princeton joined its voices with Old Schoolers.

V. Conclusion. Thus the Presbyterian Church plunged into yet another tumultuous time of schism. Both sides claimed to be the legitimate expression of Presbyterian. It would last until after the chaotic period of the Civil War. In the meantime the two sides would divide yet again.
I. Introduction. Division of the Presbyterian Church over slavery. Loetscher: “One Church Becomes Four.” Today’s topic continues from our last lecture. While we might simply enumerate slavery as one of the several issues over which New and Old Schoolers disagreed, it became a major dividing point not only within the Presbyterian denomination but within America as a nation. Presbyterians, as other denominations, labored with great intensity over how to deal with slavery – its moral implications and what, if any position the church as an institution should take on its continuance in American life. England had set a powerful example in banning the slave trade and then slavery itself. Protestant evangelicals in that country were among the primary movers in accomplishing that peacefully.

A. Historical perspective. From the 1830s to the 1861 slavery posed the most important political, social, economic and religious topic for American public life.

1. In colonial period little focus centered on this institution. Note debates over the fact that founding fathers, like Thomas Jefferson, maintained slaves; therefore, freedom had more narrow definition to those who established American political institutions.

2. Our perspective in this course = to see slavery as part of the 19th c. reform crusade that dominated American church life in the aftermath of the Second Great Awakening.

3. But the matter gets exceedingly complex when one tries to get a handle on slavery as it relates to the American scene.
   a. Do you focus on its role within the Old-New School division? Was it the most important element, for example, precipitating the Old New School division? Marsden opposes such a view. He claims that Old Schoolers wanted the reason for division not to center on slavery, but matters of orthodoxy. But Smith makes a case for a primary yet unspoken role.
   b. Is it primarily an economic matter (necessary as an institution to maintain Southern prosperity)? Should it be treated on an individual basis (let the various sections of the country handle it as best suits their culture)?
   c. Was it part of a growing element within revivalism and thus a matter of the “perfection” that ought to result from God’s pouring out his Spirit upon the social order? Should the church even become involved in matters outside its “spiritual” mission? Are cultural institutions of any primary interest to believers?
   d. Many texts pay little attention to the role of the churches as if secular forces bore primary responsibility for mobilizing public opinion for abolition of slavery. (And if attention focuses on the church, major attention given to conservatives in the South who justified slavery using biblical defense; we’ll look at this view momentarily.)

II. Slavery: Emerges as a central issue of 1st half of 19th c. Prior to 19th c Christian interest in institution of slavery was primarily concerned with humane treatment of slaves. But that situation changed radically. In fact a veritable intellectual war of ideas waged within the churches preceding the War Between the States over the issue of slavery. But the truth is that like the issue of the American Revolution, Christians of all denominations took part on both sides of the dispute. But as
Keith Hardman has pointed out, “on balance the Christian faith did more than anything else to sensitize the nation to the plight of the black race.”

A. **North.** Colonial period: In New England slaveholding was not profitable because the soil and climate did not favor use of slaves. But, ironically, it was the center of slave trading. Participation in slave trade continued until after the Revolution. Slaveholding continued in some northern states (Loetscher cites NJ) complete with slave galleries in the churches. By 1830 significant shift had occurred. 18th c and 19th c humanitarian concern focused on freedom. Moderate antislavery societies began to appear; always foresaw emancipation at some future date. Indeed, the issue became when such liberation would occur.

B. **Presbyterian participation.** Marsden makes the slavery issue a major part of his case study on New School Presbyterian. He claims *Presbyterians became a showcase for the strengths and weaknesses of denominational participation* in the movement to end the peculiar institution of the South. As early as 1787, when the new country was awash in Revolutionary idealism the Synod of NY and Phila spoke out against it. But it viewed emancipation as future and called on owners only to educate their slaves in preparation for that eventuality. [In PE we see that Covenanters strongly opposed slavery: “no slaveholder should hold communion in church.”] Right up to the eve of the Civil War, the General Assembly affirmed its commitment to abolition, but deferred to its southern brothers by not voicing any stronger sentiments. Thus in practical terms it supported a gradualist approach to emancipation.

1. **Centrist statement in 1818:** While not explicitly calling slavery a sin, the General Assembly declared slavery a “gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of nature” and “utterly inconsistent with the law of God.” It went on the state: “[it is] manifestly the duty of all Christians to correct the errors of former times as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy nation, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible throughout the world.” This 1818 pronouncement frequently cited as evidence of the denomination’s support for abolition. Peter Wallace calls this “a masterpiece of centrist emancipationism.” *(Journal of Presbyterian History, 1997)*

2. **Differences over slavery evident in PE selections (199, 200).** Michigan represents an abolitionist view: buying, selling, owning a slave is a sin; the system of slavery in America is a “great moral, political, physical and social evil”; it called for removal “immediately and universally.” On the other hand we are not surprised to read that the synod of Charleston declares that holding a slave is “nowhere condemned” in the Bible; it is consistent with OT patriarchs and prophets and NT apostles. It does condemn abuses; evils ought to be addressed and eliminated. The printing of these notices in the *New York Evangelist* is consistent with its moderate New School approach; it condemned slavery as an evil but always avoided abolitionist extremism.

3. **Case of James Bourne.** Marsden: The above statement was actually a compromise. Lexington, VA Presbytery had deposed James Bourne because of his inflammatory demands that some slaveholding pastors be disciplined. The Assembly sustained Bourne’s deposition and therefore really went on record for a more conservative approach, i.e., more gradual emancipation. Since a good case could have been made that slaves were not ready for immediate freedom (problems of order, getting assimilated into society, etc.; also, the abolitionists pushed the envelope by insisting that slaves be released immediately without any recompense to slaveholders.) Thus
the Gen Assembly made a strong verbal statement but did not back it up by absolving Bourne.

C. **American Colonization Society.** A major issue was practical: what should be done with freed slaves? Colonization gained wide support from the North and the upper South; attempt to anticipate the problem of emancipation; and it did not seem to hurt any party. This approach represented the view of many in the denomination during the 1820s.

1. **Archibald Alexander:** as mentioned previously, was not overly involved in political matters. However, he contributed to political/social scene by supporting the American Colonization Society. Formed in 1816, its purpose was not to end slavery as an institution. Rather, its concern was for freed blacks. Goal of colonization was not to help free the blacks from slavery but to help find a site where blacks might colonize – one of the sites was Liberia. Advocates also viewed ACS as means of civilizing Africa.

2. **First public meeting of ACS was actually held in Princeton:** professors and students turned out in great force. Archibald Alexander authored *A History of Colonization on the Western Coast of Africa* (1846). Alexander’s account was the most detailed study of African colonization. He viewed ACS as tool for the evangelization of Africa.

3. **Calhoun’s assessment:** ACS was at best only a transitional organization. While it alerted many to the problem of slavery, it unfortunately diverted attention to what needed to be accomplished, i.e., enable Christians to confront and resolve slavery as an institution and the racial prejudice that lay deeply imbedded in American life.

4. **Samuel Miller** (Princeton’s second prof of Church History): his father had been a slaveholder’s son. While Miller was still in the pastorate in NYC, he attacked slavery in 1793. Miller said that slavery was inconsistent with justice. He believed that since America is a Christian country, it ought to rid itself of this social evil. Miller actually set the tone of the Princeton position when he spoke for its abolition in “a gradual manner; which will, at the same time, provide for the intellectual and moral cultivation of slaves, that they may be prepared to exercise the rights and discharge the duties of citizens.” (325) More harsh was Arthur Tappan’s remark, “colonization was a ‘device of Satan’ with ‘a single motive to perpetuate slavery.’”

5. **“John Holt Rice and the ACS,”** *JPH* (1968). Rice studied under Archibald Alexander; licensed by Hanover Presbytery; turned down Presidency of College of NJ to stay in his beloved VA. In 1824 he accepted Presidency of Hampden-Sydney (Union Theol Sem). Rice at first spoke out against slavery. Within a decade he switched his public position to pro-slavery view while still maintaining antislavery views in private correspondence. Weeks points out that Rice supported ACS because it seemed a viable means of opposing eventual elimination of slavery while not calling for emancipation.

6. By 1830, it was clear that money not coming in sufficiently and that Liberia was not exactly Promised Land!

III. **Abolition.** Just as the temperance movement made a sharp turn toward abstinence, so the antislavery movement moved to abolitionism. Abolition thus became one of the several issues that divided Old - New School. Generally speaking, Old Schoolers favored a gradualist approach; New School became major voice for immediate abolition of slavery.
A. **Actions in New School General Assemblies.** Over the opening decades of the 19th c, the G.A. took several actions that reflected the developing sectional crisis. Tensions grew within major Presbyterian parties that threatened to divide the church. The Old and New Schools took different positions on the South’s “peculiar institution.”

1. **New School Assembly (1850).** By this time many New Schoolers were clearly abolitionists. They believed slaveholding to be a sin deserving discipline. They articulated their views forthrightly: “We exceedingly deplore the working of the whole system of slavery … as fraught with many and great evils to the civil, political and moral interests of those regions where it exists.”

2. **Assembly of 1853:** The church directed its Presbyteries to examine and report what progress they had made to eradicate slavery within their bounds. Obviously Southerners objected to both the 1850 resolution and now this action. They responded that slavery was not prohibited by the Scriptures; they assumed that whatever problems existed within the current practice of slavery would be resolved by individuals and that eventually if the South were left alone, it would overcome the crisis. Northern New Schoolers were unconvinced.

3. **Assembly of 1855.** Finally drastic action was taken that cast a shadow on the future of the New School Church in the South. The Assembly appointed a committee!! Now we may joke that such action may spell death of a cause under normal circumstances, but in this instance serious consequences followed. The committee was to research the constitutional rules by which discipline would be carried out against slaveholders or Presbyteries that proved reluctant in enforcing the Assembly’s directives regarding slaveholding.

4. **Act of 1857, PE 203** New School comments that the southern churches have departed from the established doctrine of the church to call it “an ordinance of God.” “Against this new doctrine we feel constrained to bear our solemn testimony. It is at war with the whole spirit and tenor of the Gospel of love and good-will, as well as abhorrent to the conscience of the Christian world. We can have no sympathy for fellowship with it; and we exhort all our people to eschew it as serious and pernicious error.”

5. **Dred Scott Decision** (March, 1857) At just the time that the G.A. was pressing its members on the issue of slavery, the famous Supreme Court Dred Scott decision asserted that slaves were not citizens and could not seek to have their civil rights protected in the federal courts. Southern slaveholders were thus emboldened at just the time when the New School verged on disciplining their slaveholding members.

6. **Presbytery of Lexington KY.** Defended slaveholding by appealing to the Bible and defied the Church’s call for reform. This split the New School Church. By censuring Lexington, the Assembly precipitated other Southern synods adding their support to KY. This eventually led to schism of 1857. 21 Southern Presbyteries broke with New School Assembly and organized United Synod of Presbyterian church.

B. **Extreme position of the abolitionists:**

1. Insisted that slavery be designated a sin
2. Demand that slavery be abolished immediately.
3. No remuneration should be given to slaveholders
4. Holding of slaves should be a matter of church discipline.

C. **Role of theological journals.** As the arguments focused more on the moral issue, the debate became more theological; and religious journals devoted many pages to its discussion.
Wallace states that Presbyterians presented some of most articulate spokespersons on all sides of the issue: Charles Hodge and the Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review (centrist); Southern Presbyterian Review; American Theological Review (abolitionist but not Garrisonian); Robert Breckinridge in Danville Quarterly Review (opposed both abolitionism and slavery alike).

D. Wallace points out that by 1861 only four major denominations had not split over the issue of slavery: Protestant Episcopal Church, Cumberland Presbyterians, Disciples of Christ and Old School Presbyterians. Of course, as we will see, 1861 was the year that Old Schoolers split.

E. Main secular figure, at least in his own eyes (!) was Wm. Lloyd Garrison, editor of the Bostonian vitriolic paper, Liberator. (1831) The paper was funded by Christian philanthropists; advocated extreme position of immediate liberation of slaves without compensation to owners.

1. Garrison was a master of “quotable invective” (Hardman); he especially lashed out at pastors whom he considered timid and lacking in courage to lead in struggle; he called the Methodists, for example, “a cage of unclean birds and a synagogue of Satan.”

2. Because of his anti-clericalism and extremism he was frequently a liability to the abolition cause.

3. The view that Garrison bore the major responsibility for fueling the abolitionist cause was recently challenged by Gilbert Barnes who tracked references to Timothy Dwight Weld whose grandson uncovered a trunkful of letters in a farmhouse. They led Barnes to believe that abolitionism had revivalist roots; the heroes of reform were not high profile people but obscure folk moved by religious impulse. This thesis is hotly debated but worthy of consideration.

F. Main support for abolitionism grew out of western NY State. As was true of many of the “isms” associated with social reform, abolitionism arose from the followers of Charles G. Finney.

1. Timothy Dwight Weld (1803-95) a convert of Finney’s revivals [Finney mentioned Weld by name in a revival service; Weld responded in kind the next day. Following his conversion, Weld became Finney’s assistant and added to new measures allowing women to pray in mixed meetings. Weld later married a prominent feminist Angelina Grimke.] Weld became prominent antislavery figure in mid-19th c. by influencing many to join the abolitionist cause: especially Henry Ward Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe. In 1839 he published a picture of slave treatment in America, Slavery As It Is, which profoundly shaped Charles Dickens’ views and provided fodder for Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin. Stowe said she slept with Weld’s book under her pillow.

2. For our purposes, Weld took the “new measures” of Finney’s revivalism and adapted them to marshal support for the abolitionist cause. Weld became central figure in the revolt by group of Lane Seminary students. At the age of 30, Weld actually played major role in attracting funding from Arthur Tappan to get Lane Seminary off the ground. Tappan then convinced Beecher to head the school, thus lending his prestigious name to the new institution. At this time, people favored colonization.

3. Lane Seminary student revolt in Cincinnati. PE 143-5. In 1834, Weld devised two weeks of revival-like meetings using Finney’s new measures to ensure their success. Weld succeeded in not only converting majority of student body to his abolitionist
views, he mobilized an antislavery society to improve the conditions of free blacks in Cincinnati.

a. **Lane Seminary Board reaction.** A predictable reaction on the part of the seminary board followed. It banned the student group and attempted to stop students from meeting.

b. **Weld stated the students’ views eloquently:** “We believe free discussion to be the duty of every rational being. It is the acting out of the command ‘Prove all things.’” “Theological Institutions must of course recognize this immutable principle.” Sounding something like a 60s radical of this century, he likened their desire for free discussion to attain the truth to a storming of the French Bastille.

3. **Weld leads Lane exodus.** 92 students left Lane in protest and 51 transferred to Oberlin where Asa Mahan, an abolitionist, became president. Charles Finney, again at the behest of Arthur Tappan, became Professor of Theology.

a. **1834: Success as abolitionist organizer.** Weld further refined new measures in campaigns through Ohio. Protracted meetings used to move people to a decision about abolition. Frequently his methods produced riots. But in his wake we local chapters of anti-slavery society. By 1836 38 local chapters in Ohio out of 220 total.

b. **Weld became chief of the ‘he-goat men’** (term originated by a bitter Beecher – those who “think they do God service by butting every thing in the line of their march”). Weld traveled throughout the North to mobilize support for the abolitionist cause. Riots and converts followed wherever he went.

c. As many scholars now point out, although **Garrison often gets credit** for the abolitionists’ success, Weld was probably more responsible for getting grass roots acceptance of the abolitionist position. For example, at the 1835 General Assembly Weld claimed to have raised the number of men who favored immediate emancipation from 2 delegates (in 1834 G.A.) to a robust 47, a quarter of the delegates. Thus new measures proved enormously successful not only in revivalism proper but also in marshaling disciples in the social arena.

IV. **Centrist antislavery position: Old Princeton.** Presbyterians articulated various views from fiery abolitionist to staunch proslavery. Was there no middle ground? We come now to the centrist position filled ably by Charles Hodge of Princeton. Old Schoolers were quick to point out a connection between New School theology and abolitionism. Both stressed the rights of man and our moral obligation in the larger culture. They put too much emphasis on rationalistic defense of human rights and not enough on biblical principles.

A. **Hodge’s position frequently misrepresented** (Wallace cites instances including Timothy L. Smith’s *Revivalism and Social Reform* and Murchie’s PhD dissertation on Hodge’s social ethics). In his article “The Defense of the Forgotten Center: Charles Hodge and Enigma of Emancipationism in Antebellum America” (*Journal of Presbyterian History*, 1997) Wallace attempts to correct misperceptions. Wallace’s article is best overall synthesis. Also helpful is John Stewart’s “Hodge and American Slavery” in *Mediating the Center: Charles Hodge on American Science, Language, Literature and Politics* (1995) Hodge was clearly not a rabid advocate of slavery as some have claimed. While he clearly opposed abolitionism, and defended the *institution* of slavery, he wanted slavery eliminated and supported that by voting
for Abraham Lincoln. Unfortunately both sides took offense at his middle ground of opposing both abolitionism and the perpetuation of slavery.

B. In 1836 essay “Slavery,” Hodge defended slavery as a matter of social necessity and biblical permission. However, even at this early date, Hodge favored the extinction of slavery because he believed that civilization could improve only on that basis. He compared slavery to polygamy. While the latter was clearly discontinued, the NT writers did not condemn slavery.

C. Human status of the slave. Took issue with abolitionists’ definition of slave as an article of property. He argued that even the slave laws recognized the slaves as humans. Hodge asserted the full humanity of the slave. As to the question of the slave as property, Hodge argued that God’s law required responsibility in these matters. Ownership of slave differed from mere property; slave-owners only had the right to slave’s services, not his person. Owners could “use” the slave, but only as anyone could use another person. He could not treat the slave as he would an animal just as one could not treat an animal as a block of wood. It was a technicality of society like the ownership of a child or a wife. Thus Hodge referred matters of treatment of slaves to authority of Scripture: “Slaveholding is not necessarily sinful, but like all similar relations is right or wrong according to circumstances….” Transferring of slaves also did not denigrate the slave.

D. Distinguished between abolitionists and antislavery: issue of extremism separated the two positions of abolitionism and proslavery. Hodge believed that both positions did not represent the teaching of the Bible though both claimed to be biblically based.

1. Slaveholding not inherently sinful. Antislavery position does not take the extreme position of abolitionists. If slaveholding is sinful and should be acknowledged as a crime, then every slaveholder is a criminal. Hodge appeals to common sense (how strange!!) that there are obviously good and kind owners. The NT even admitted slaveholders into the church. Thus slaveholders should not necessarily be censured by the church as abolitionists claimed. Only if owners disobey the laws of God by mistreating their slaves should they be disciplined by the church.

2. Immediate elimination. Slavery should be gradually eliminated. Hodge claimed that immediacy would wreak havoc with the economy and social situation.

3. Abolitionists are extremists. As in the situation with extreme temperance movement which demanded abstinence, so abolitionists were forcing the issue. He argued that one of the reasons for the relative lack of success of abolitionists to win converts was their rhetoric forced proslavery advocates into a corner by demanding radical positions. (At one point Hodge appealed to common sense that abolitionists had not won any major denomination [article appeared in 1844] to abolitionist principles. As Wallace states, “Hodge’s naïveté is startling – especially for a Calvinist!”)

4. Abolitionists are unscriptural. Hodge traced the history of slavery in the Bible stressing Moses’ explicit regulation of the institution. He emphasized rules that protected slaves and provided for their inclusion in the religious life of Israel. In NT he argued that Jesus and the apostles did not urge elimination of slavery, instead they demanded submission to masters. Hodge even takes the argument to abolitionists that they try to make Scripture say what it does not; they are making themselves above the Bible and become disobedient to Christ. Thus slaveholding is an institution of society like any other, open to perversion by sin, yet subject to God’s word and to be regulated with charity. Eugene Genovese argues: “The abolitionists, displaying no
small amount of intellectual dishonesty, never succeeded in making the Word say what they said it did, and eventually they had to spurn the Word for the Spirit.”

(Southern Front)

E. **Hodge on southern slave laws.** While Hodge clearly opposes abolitionism, he also spoke out against the slavery laws in the south and earned the displeasure of proslavery men. He held that opponents of slavery were primarily against its sinful practices. Unlike the abolitionists who equated defending slavery with the southern slave laws, Hodge distinguished the two. What should be done to improve the situation so that gradually the slaves might win their emancipation? He realized that some in the South were becoming hardened to the kind of reforms that are clearly needed.

1. **Slaves must be treated according to their nature** as human beings. Married slaves, for example, ought to be treated as one treats any other married person. Husbands, wives and children should not be separated from one another.

2. Owners ought to **enable slaves to respond to the gospel.** Clothe, educate and prepare slaves for moral and spiritual betterment. Obey the laws of righteousness as one would treat others.

3. **The Bible versus the civil law.** The civil law is not the ultimate standard for moral good; only the Bible. Masters must not allow those laws which permit torture, for example, to supersede biblical norms. Laws which conflict with the Bible are wicked laws and Christian masters should not obey them. If Christians acted on biblical principles, the result would be “the speedy and peaceful abrogation of slavery” and “the gradual elevation of the slaves to the rights of free citizens.”

G. **Power versus responsibility.** Slavery like other institutions like the family and the state. Each institution entails duties as well as the exercise of power. Slavery could not be exempt from this principle as some situations in the South implied by their unjust laws.

H. **Compensation to slaveholders.** Hodge argued that corporate responsibility meant that the govt that allowed slavery should also help the slaveholder in the loss of his slaves. He preferred colonization on racial grounds that allowing whites and blacks to mingle and breed together was contrary to God’s will. This is a weakness to Hodge’ view.

I. **Emancipation.** Hodge moved from a more passive view (natural, gradual process leading to emancipation) to idea that it ought to occur as soon as possible. He endorsed the idea of slave’s emancipation at 25th birthday. Slaves ought to be offered the opportunity to purchase their freedom.

1. Hodge’s views **shaped by his belief that organic improvement of society** would result from application of biblical principles. The slaves would improve through several stages on the way to emancipation. Included in his optimistic view is the assumption that slave-owners would resist the pressures to continue owning slaves.

2. **The church and reform.** Hodge believed that the primary task of the church is spiritual, to proclaim the gospel and not to become involved in political matters. Therefore, it should not interfere by publicly advocating colonization, denounce the slave laws or otherwise intrude into political matters.

   a. **But he also did not espouse quietism.** Individual Christians, however, should labor in all of these matters. Since these and other issues directly influence the cultural life, believers should work in their individual states where political matters are decided. He advocated they work to repeal unjust slave laws; the church should proclaim the gospel message to masters and slaves alike.
b. **Consequences of ignoring the need for emancipation.** As early as his first essay, Hodge warned of the dangers of implementing emancipation: “If the south deliberately keep these millions in a state of degradation, they must prepare themselves for the natural consequences, whatever they may be.” He viewed the indefinite continuation of slavery as reprehensible. “[Attempts to perpetuate slavery] is a national sin, as it must be committed by the people in their capacity as a commonwealth, and therefore will inevitably lead to national calamity.”

K. **Debate:** is not gradualism a deliberate postponement of what most know ought to be accomplished, i.e., freeing of the slaves. The murder of a Princeton graduate abolitionist led many to change from a gradualist approach to an “immediatist” position. But many Princetonians feared the possibility of a radical disruption of society on the order of the French Revolution. **Hodge chose his metaphors carefully.** Rather than advocate change on the order of radical hacking down a forest on the frontier, it would be better to move slowly like a bricklayer constructing a huge cathedral.

L. **Hodge’s views took on more urgency in the late 1840’s** as it became clear that economic conditions in south depended on long term continuation of slavery. Both conscience and Scripture were cited as against perpetuating slavery. He even began to argue against using what resulted from slave labor: “Every use we make of the products of slave labor is an encouragement of slavery.” If we were to discontinue use of such products, slavery would end.

M. **Finally, (1864) Hodge argued that the continuation of slavery could no longer be justified:** the perpetuators “had taken away every motive for its further toleration.” The illegal rebellion of the southern states confirmed this. He favored Lincoln’s emancipation policy. The last barrier to be surmounted = “the unwillingness of the human heart to see and accept the truth against the prejudices of habit and of interest” and to show charity to those who were formerly slaves.

N. Calhoun criticizes Princeton: he states that its message was “timid, conventional, and unremarkable.” (328) In the footnote to this criticism, Calhoun does not cite abolitionists like Garrison but to one of Princeton’s own grads, **Albert Barnes.** Although he was a grad, Barnes was a member of the New Schoolers; he supported revivals, social reform, including the rising campaign against slavery; in fact Barnes castigated his former teachers for dragging their feet on slavery; he wrote **Inquiry into the Scriptural Views of Slavery** (1846).

O. **Hodge’s centrist position attacked.** Wallace: the fact that Hodge did not change his position led to his being viewed as an enemy from both sides: “During the Civil War, Hodge made enemies of virtually every party in the church or the country. Southerners accused him of turning traitor to their cause, northern abolitionists viewed him as a traitor to the Union because of his recognition of the institution of slavery, and even his own denomination reversed its position and took its stand with the forces of abolition starting with the Gardiner Spring Resolutions in 1861.” While probably no one would want to adopt Hodge’s views today, he does represent a clearly centrist position in his own time – that the institution could not continue, but that immediate cessation might be disastrous to the country.

1. **Mark Noll on Civil War in the History of Theology.** Hodge occupied another mediating position. He refused to take either the extreme stance of moralism or literalism in interpreting the Scripture. His own orthodox Reformed method of interpreting the Bible was incapable of winning the intellectual day in our country.
Therefore, he modified it by accepting common sense moral principles as a way of forging a centrist view.

2. **Reformed hermeneutic and historical context.** Thus Hodge involved in effort to hold a middle ground between traditional Reformed views of biblical authority and the emerging “preoccupation with freedom and democracy.” (Wallace) Hodge’s efforts reflect an attempt at holding to traditional Reformed hermeneutic (prooftexting from the Bible) while taking into consideration matters of historical context.


S. **Hodge and Emancipation Proclamation.** Eventually Hodge supported Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. Some have pointed out his inconsistency. They are undoubtedly correct. Whereas he formerly thought that immediate freedom would spark chaos, he came to see that the intransigence of the South (by their unwilling to change southern slave laws) meant that southern slavery was not a legitimate form of slavery; thus he was willing to accept the danger of immediate emancipation.

V. **Old School supporters of slavery.** Most texts point to James Henley Thornwell’s defense of slavery. Thornwell (1812-1862), the famous professor at Columbia Seminary, South Carolina. [Studied theology at Andover and a year at Harvard. Pastored, served at teacher at So Carolina College before teaching theology from 1852-62] Thornwell pointed out that New Schoolers were more interested in humanistic republican principles such as supported the Declaration of Independence rather than biblical principles. Thornwell eloquently spoke for the South. Thornwell argued that since the Bible did not condemn slavery, the church should not either. “The Scriptures not only fail to condemn slavery, they as distinctly sanction it as any other social condition of man. The Church was formally organized in the family of a slaveholder; the relation was divinely regulated among the chosen people of God; and the peculiar duties of the parties are inculcated under the Christian economy. These are facts which cannot be denied.” (Whitlock in *Reformed Theology in America*)

A. Thus for Thornwell, the **task of the Church is to bring the institution of slavery as much as possible under the authority of Biblical principles**, not to demolish the institution. Using arguments that Christians had used for decades, Christians are responsible for slaves entrusted into their care.

1. **Treatment of slaves.** The slave was to be treated as one made in the image of God. The slave should also be treated as one treats a brother. Masters do not have unlimited control of slaves, only to their labor.

2. **Abolitionism would destroy American system.** On the other hand, he argued that if abolitionists have their way and slaves are emancipated, a consistent application of their principles would mean that people of wealth should be compelled to share their riches with their poor neighbors. If such principles would be implemented, the structure of society would collapse.

3. **Two other ideas figured prominently** in Thornwell’s social views:
   a. **Natural law:** part of his CSP; society and nature were both governed by God’s providential activity. He viewed evolving institutions as part of a slow development, not subject to radical transformation. Institutions changed gradually under the direction of God’s ordination. One should not expect “sudden changes or violent revolutions.” (cited by Whitlock) While he
believed that believers can be agents in social change, he did not expect radical transformation such as was becoming expected in the slavery debate.

b. **The spirituality of the church.** Related to this but still separate was the matter of the church’s role in society. This was a distinctive of Southern Presbyterian in the 19th c. He distinguished sharply between the roles of the state and the church as to their function and authority. In fact he used the metaphor of them as “**planets moving in different orbits.**”
   i. **The church is “exclusively a spiritual organization”** ... she has nothing to do with the voluntary associations of men of various social and civic purposes.... Her mission is to bring men to the cross, to reconcile them to God ... imbue them with the spirit of the Divine Master and then send them forth to perform their social duties, to manage society, and perform the functions that pertain to their social and civic relations.”
   ii. **Thus the Church was severely limited in its scope of activity.** It should never interfere with the state and its decisions.

B. **Benjamin Morgan Palmer,** Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, New Orleans. *PE* 204-9

   Sermon preached in Nov 1860.
   1. The South has a providential trust to conserve / perpetuate domestic slavery as now existing [note how this violates southern insistence on spirituality of the church].
   2. This institution is interwoven with our entire social fabric; slaves are part of our households.
   3. Whites are constituted guardians of slaves; we survive or perish together.
   4. Emancipation will precipitate economic and social disaster.
   5. In this great struggle we defend the cause of God and religion as opposed to the atheistic spirit inherited from advocacy of human rights from the French Revolution’s liberty, equality and fraternity.

C. **Individual Christians,** on the other hand, have no such limitation. They are expected to be active. As more believers participate in govt, the greater influence they may have.

VI. **Presbyterian: a microcosm of the American disagreements over slavery.** Thus the conflict over slavery constituted a significant issue within Presbyterian and marked the line of demarcation between New and Old Schoolers. But the situation was even more complex than that as indicated by the centrist position of the Princetonians. Soon the differences would plunge the country into a disastrous civil war.
I. **New School North.** George Marsden’s study in New School Presbyterianism gives us a close look at the distinctives of New School theology. We have seen what led to the division. Now we need to investigate the development of New School while the two schools remained separated. How did New Schooler forge a distinctive view? What problems did they confront?

A. **Theology.** Did New School Presbyterian represent a clear theological position? Some have questioned this. A prevailing opinion held that theological precision should be avoided. Theological debates led only to disruption. Those who held such a position believed that what should characterize New School Presbyterian unity was its leadership in matters of social and religious activism. Those who opposed this view said that such an approach would submerge theology altogether.

1. **Mediating theology and social reform:** Attempt to maintain biblical and reformed emphases on the one hand (adherence to orthodox theology as manifest in the Westminster Conf) combined with activity and practical emphases on the other (social reform movement). Combining both together would enable the New Schoolers to compete not only with Old School but also Methodists and Congregationalists. Competition among America’s denominations was a common theme of ante-bellum churches.

2. **Marsden:** “Their denomination’s claim to constitutionality demanded that their theology be traditional in its content, while the spirit of the age demanded that it be relevant to contemporary, cultural, intellectual, and scientific achievements. Maintaining all these balances was a difficult assignment.” Who would be up to such a task?

B. **Henry Boynton Smith (1815-77)** Marsden focuses on his career and accomplishments. (cf., also Dr. Al Freundt’s account of Smith in Abingdon’s *Makers of American Theology*.) In 1850 Smith accepted call to Union Theol Sem of NY as Prof of Ch Hist (and we can all be suspicious of such animals!!) He left his post as Prof of Mental Moral Philosophy at Amherst.

1. **Union Theological Seminary,** established in 1836 as a New School seminary: founded as an intellectual center “around which all men of moderate views and feelings, who desire to live free from party strife, and to stand aloof from all extremes of doctrinal speculation, practical radicalism, and ecclesiastical domination may cordially and affectionately rally.” Marsden quotes those who rank Smith in importance and influence with Charles Hodge, Horace Bushnell [Congregational minister in Hartford, CT], Edwards Amasa Parks [Andover professor who engaged in spirited debate with Hodge], John Nevin and Philip Schaff [both taught church history and represented the Mercersburg Theology of the German Reformed Church] as “among the first half-dozen theologians of their generation.” Marsden rates him as first among the New Schoolers. At the time of his joining Union, the seminary did not enjoy a stellar reputation; it stood between Princeton and Andover in its theological perspective. [In addition to Smith, Union also had Edward Robinson (1794-1863) as a prominent faculty member. He originally taught at Andover; he published Gesenius’ Hebrew/English lexicon; became foremost geographer of the Holy Land; produced a Greek harmony of the gospels.]

2. **Smith’s early theological position.** Smith originally an anti-Trinitarian [he was born into a Unitarian family]. Schooled and converted in a revival at Bowdoin College;
experienced radical change in views under the influence of the American poet Longfellow. At the age of 20 he summarized his ideas: “I cannot find religious truth in the Old School or the New. I find it only in the doctrine of redemption. My object is to make and harmonize a system which shall make Christ the central point of all important religious truth and doctrine.”

3. **Traveled in Europe 1836-37.** He went abroad for rest because of a physical collapse. Took up studies in Germany [like Hodge and Robinson]. Despite general disdain for German thought because of its theological pitfalls, Smith studied Germans; influenced by Friedrich August Tholuck as Hodge had been a decade earlier when he studied in Europe 1826-28. Smith also associated with Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg, the conservative Lutheran biblical scholar, Johann August Neander, the church historian. His letters look like pages out of a history of 19th c German theology. He could name-drop with the best! At times he displays intense internal doubt resulting from German challenges to orthodox faith (confidence in Scriptures, for example). By his return home a year later, Smith was a decade ahead of his colleagues in acquaintance with German thought.

4. **Turning point in Smith’s career.** Lecture at Amherst in 1849 in which Smith took on the redoubtable Horace Bushnell’s speech “Dogma and Spirit” from a year before. While sharing with Bushnell a dislike for the scholastic approach of some New England theology, he challenged Bushnell for a one-sided view against dogma in favor of spirit. [For an extended treatment and implications of the Smith / Bushnell controversy, see D. G. Hart “Divided between Heart and Mind: The Critical Period for Protestant Thought in America,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol 38, no.2, Apr 1987.]

a. **Horace Bushnell** (1802-76) Congregationalist minister, Hartford, CT. Studied at Yale under Nathaniel W. Taylor; learned the New Divinity and rejected the notion of systematic theology. Instead he accepted Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s intuitive *Aids to Reflection* [Coleridge was known as the “English Schleiermacher.”]
   
i. In 1847 Bushnell published *Christian Nurture*, a non-revivalist approach to religious experience. He advocated nurture as opposed to revivalist conversion as the norm for Christian life. It became the key defense for the Sunday School movement and a seminal text for the Social Gospel movement.
   
ii. In 1848 he lectured at Andover to the Porter Rhetorical Society: “Dogma and Spirit.” He advocated a romantic epistemology and defined reason in such a way that knowledge received intuitively was superior to knowledge acquired by observation or reflection.
   
iii. Thus faith, for Bushnell, was not rational assent to propositions, but intuitive apprehension with an emphasis on experience.
   
iv. He expressed his view of language as metaphorical. Rather than focus on proposition and articles, focus on faith as living experience, life-giving. We tend to treat theology like grammar / archeology. Instead piety precedes theology. (Some argue that Bushnell was attempting to recover New England theology of Edwards – holy love, religious affections. But Edwards gave much more attention to objective basis of Christianity.)
v. These views led Bushnell to argue that no system could fully express the truths the Christian faith.

b. “The Relations of Faith and Philosophy.” Smith’s lecture was a response to Bushnell; it was published in Bibliotheca Sacra (1849) and established an immediate reputation for his scholarship. Choosing the old debate between Augustinian and Thomistic theology, Smith sided with faith preceding knowledge: “I must believe in order to know.” Faith rests upon authority, whereas philosophy is a product of human thought. Rather than draw a disjunction between faith and philosophy, Smith said that we must accept both. Faith and philosophy complement each other. In Scripture one finds both revelation and its interpretation. We need systematic theology contrary to Bushnell’s tendency to disparage it.

c. Mediating theology. Other contemporary approaches lacked what the modern age needed. Smith did not find any school (Old School Princeton, Hopkinsian, or Edwardsean [Old School in New England] or even Taylor’s restructured Calvinism of New Haven) to his liking. He believed that none of them spoke to the needs of the current age. Princeton’s ideas too regulated by 17th c Westminster Calvinism; New England ideas rested upon general notions of divine sovereignty; New Haven drank too deeply from ethical dictates of common sense.

d. New controlling principle needed. Centrality of revelation in Jesus Christ. But Smith commended his ideas as similar to christo-centrism of Schleiermacher. Smith repudiated the ideas of feeling of absolute dependence and some of Schleiermacher's low views of the person and work of Christ. But while he acknowledged Schleiermacher’s errors, he believed that much from his system could be accepted. His having studied in Germany and publicly defended Schleiermacher was enough to make him suspect to many. Muller’s article: “Henry Boynton Smith: Christocentric Theologian,” JPH 1983 supplements Marsden’s account of Smith as a mediating yet Christocentric theologian. Muller points out that while evangelical liberalism moved away from traditional views of original sin and Christ’s satisfying God’s righteous demands on the Cross, Smith retained traditional formulation; he recognized that N. W. Taylor’s theology was a primary reason for the Schism of 1837.

5. Smith’s sermon on inspiration. Asked to preach on this topic to sniff out his views of Scripture. Marsden charges conservatives such as Hodge with overlooking this important sermon and thus losing him as a colleague. He affirmed infallibility while denying dictation; Scripture is both the word of God received through human intellect, preserved from error. Again his mediating view evident: Bible is both human and divine book just as Christ mediates humanity and divinity.

a. Smith familiar with radical critics like David Strauss’ Life of Jesus. We can establish the legitimacy of the Bible because of the integrity of the apostolic witness.

b. “Inspiration itself not only allows but must often demand differences in details according to the observation and experience of the writers, guarding against error, but leading them to say what they had heard and seen.”

6. Inaugural lecture in church history. Treated history as a science [influence of common sense] whose task was to ascertain facts. Church history is important
because it confronts us with the central facts of redemption: it is a “record of the progress of the Kingdom of God, intermingled with and acting upon all the other interests of the human race and shaping its destiny.” One finds in church history the best means for man to make an impact on the social order. While emphasizing social reform, Smith did not detract from the central goal of the church = redeeming man from sin. He claimed his views on church history are similar to those of Jonathan Edwards’ in his projected “History of Redemption.” Smith, like Edwards, never fleshed out the outline to give a detailed view of redemption.

7. Smith’s mediation. Smith criticized what he considered to be the errors of Princeton and New Haven. Hodge appreciated Smith’s repudiation of the New Divinity. Smith hoped to reconcile the extremes that he believed separated Old School principles and radical views associated with German scholarship. But Hodge remained suspicious of his philosophical premises because of his support of Schleiermacher. Smith taught a realism consistent with Schleiermacher’s view of human nature (we are sinful because we were all present in Adam as father of the race). Hodge, on the other hand, held to immediate imputation of Adam’s sin (guilt imputed to Adam’s posterity prior to corruption of their hearts).

8. American Theological Review. In 1859 Smith accepted editorship new journal. He sought to reestablish relationship between Presbyterian and Congregationalism. Its intention was to advocate conservative Edwardean views. Served much the same purpose as Benjamin Wallace’s Presbyterian Quarterly Review published in Philadelphia. The two journals merged in 1863.

II. Division of the Denomination: Two churches become three. Before we took up the issue of slavery, we examined the schism of 1837. This division “rent the fabric of American Presbyterian” (Balmer and Fitzmier). Both claimed to be “The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.” They held their General Assemblies but in separate venues. As we recall, the majority of New School element came from upstate NY and the Western Reserve, but it also included the Presbyteries of MI and eastern TN; and divisions reached down into Presbyteries and even individual congregations. On the whole, the New Schoolers considered the schism a fearful splitting of the church and lamented its effects on the denomination. While the Old School believed schism an evil, they thought it necessary evil to protect denominational distinctives, both in doctrine and polity.

A. Two churches become three. Since the Old-New School schism in 1837, strong differences over slavery exacerbated differences between the two groups. The New School, as we have seen, as advocates of reform in its various manifestations in the 19th century, pushed for more immediate abolition of slavery. Just as New School tended to push positions of reform in matters of temperance, so they advocated an extreme view regarding slavery. Immediate abolition of slavery reflected the perfectionist tendencies of New School thinkers.

B. Division of New School. (1857) Advocacy by New Schoolers of immediate abolition resulted in a southern reaction. Fearing the implications of abolition southerners moved toward separation from radical New Schoolers; they decided to secede in 1857 to form “The United Synod of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.” Thus two New School bodies claimed to represent the New School perspective, one in the North and one in the South. The Presbyterian church now consisted of three groups: Old School with congregations in both the North and the South; a New School Church in the North; and a New School Church in the South.
III. Tension within Church. 1861: Abraham Lincoln had just been inaugurated President of the United States. The final division became a reality during the meeting of the Old School Assembly which met in Phila in May, 1861, just weeks after the firing on Fort Sumter, April 12. The southern states had also started to secede from the Union though not all that would eventually secede had done so.

A. The Gardiner Spring Resolutions. PE, 211ff. While slavery occupied a primary place of interest previously, now the issue of utmost concern was preserving the Union. Just a few delegates from the South attended the General Assembly meeting. On the third day of the Assembly Gardiner Spring proposed a means by which the denomination could express its loyalty to the Union.

1. Spring was pastor of Brick Presbyterian Church in New York City (Samuel Miller had previously pastored this church.) Spring helped organize several voluntary societies such as American Bible Society, American Tract Society and the American Home Missionary Society. His proposal was tabled at first as people feared the division of the church as had happened in other denominations. But Spring was not to be denied.

2. Several days later he offered resolutions by which the church would commit itself to the Federal Union. After five days of intense debate (newspapers carried stories to the entire country and delegates received telegrams advising them how to vote) the resolutions came up for a vote. In an atmosphere of great pressure, the Assembly voted on resolutions which attempted to maintain the church’s loyalty to the Union on biblical grounds:
   a. Day of prayer proposed. PE, 211. In light of the outbreak of conflict, July 1 should be set aside as a day prayer. Believers should offer prayers of repentance for our national sins; also thanks should be given to God for his manifold goodness to the country; and to seek his guidance upon our rulers: “and to implore him, in the name of Jesus Christ, the great High Priest of the Christian profession, to turn away his anger from us, and speedily restore to us the blessing of an honorable peace.” (Note the same tone of repentance and humility as presented in calls for prayer during the Revolution conflict.)
   b. Demand of Christian patriotism. The Scripture enjoins Christian patriotism. Therefore, the Presbyterian church states the obligation “to promote and perpetuate, so far as in us lies, the integrity of these United States, and to strengthen, uphold, and encourage, the Federal Government in the exercise of all its functions under our noble Constitution and to this Constitution in all its provisions, requirements, and principles, we profess our unabated loyalty.”
   c. “Federal Govt” not defined as any specific administration or represented by any particular political party, but the central administration which as the result of constitutional process “is the visible representative of our national existence.” It justified the claim of the Union by citing Paul’s warning in Romans 13 about resisting legitimate authority.

B. Spring resolutions passed overwhelmingly but far from unanimously 156-66.

C. Charles Hodge’s reaction. Although the Spring resolutions passed by a significant margin, not all Old Schoolers welcomed the General Assembly’s action. Among strong dissenters was Charles Hodge. Wallace Eugene March’s article “Charles Hodge on Schism and Civil Strife” JPH, Hodge articulated clear reasons for opposing the Spring resolutions.

1. Church and state to remain separate and not interfere with one another. How to maintain this position and not “spirituality of the church”? Hodge published several
articles in *BRTR* throughout the Civil War concerning political questions of the day. Hodge opposed slavery, secession and the responsibility to uphold the US Constitution and the nation’s unity. While opposing the spirituality of the church (1859 Assembly), Hodge believed that speaking publicly only about salvation sidestepped one of the church’s obligations. Whenever moral issues surface in political matters, the church must speak out. If the Word of God teaches on the matter in question, it dare not be silent. Hodge thus sought another in a growing list of *via medias* that Princeton theologians advocated. Neither extreme was correct – to speak out on *all* political matters and on the other hand *never* rendering judgment on the state. Why are the Spring resolutions inappropriate?

a. **Hodge argued that the church had no business involving itself in such a blatant political action.** Hodge believed the General Assembly had no right to decide “to what government the allegiance of Presbyterians is due,” not “to make that decision a condition of membership in our Church.” While the church can speak about the morality of a certain action, it cannot make governmental allegiance a test of membership in the church.

b. **Spring resolutions made something other than Scripture the arbiter.** For Hodge, the church must always judge the state and never “sell out” to a particular state just as it must never sell out to a particular individual. The church is spiritual, but it must speak on politics and not become an organ of the state. It must stay within limits but fearlessly speak to all activities. [Hodge’s view consistent with Calvin’s view of the state as a means of grace in *Institutes*, Book IV. Hodge wrote: “Nothing, therefore, which cannot be judged by the Scriptures as a standard, comes legitimately under the authority of the church….”]

c. **Summary of Hodge’s view of spirituality of church:**
   i. In broad sense, the church is spiritual in nature
   ii. Just because the church is spiritual does not cut off the church from the world and real life situations.
   iii. The message of revelation relates not only to salvation but also what life should be like. God gives his law that should be obeyed.
   iv. The church must urge obedience to God’s will by its members. Therefore the church must discuss political issues.
   v. The church must always stand in judgment of the state.

IV. **Presbyterian Church becomes Four:** Southern Church formed when the Old School divides.

Southern Presbyteries withdrew from the Old School assembly later that year. Commissioners met in Augusta, GA on Dec 4 at the First Presbyterian Church to constituted the “Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America.” Now four Presbyterian churches: Old School, North and South, and New School, North and South. Benjamin M. Palmer, pastor of New Orleans First Presbyterian Church became the first moderator and James Henley Thornwell exercised considerable influence over its initial deliberations.

A. **James Henley Thornwell’s response, PE 212ff** Thornwell’s response similar to Charles Hodge’s.

   i. **Spring resolutions moved the church outside its legitimate sphere.** In espousing one view of secession, the church stepped over the boundaries of its rightful responsibilities: “she transcended her sphere, and usurped the duties of the State.”
Thornwell likened the church’s action to Pilate’s – it responded to the waves of popular passion. Great rhetoric: “it kissed the scepter and bowed the knee to the mandates of Northern phrenzy.” Whereas the North broke the peace of the church, the South did not. (He speaks again for the “spirituality of the church.”)

a. He compares compliance with the North to compliance with the Church of Scotland. Not just geographical distance but differences in manners, habits and customs separate the two. The church should be as separate as the two governments are separate.

b. “The Church has as much right to preach to the monarchies of Europe, and the despotism of Asia, the doctrines of republican equality, as to preach to the Govts of the South the extirpation of slavery. This position is impregnable, unless it can be shown that slavery is a sin.” They viewed slavery as a providential means by which God had delivered many souls from barbarism and that the “general operation of the system is kindly and benevolent…”

2. Slavery the underlying issue. PCUS refuses to pronounce slavery a sin because the Bible does not do so. The North expresses a “deep and unsettled antipathy to slavery itself, while the South is equally zealous in its defense.” The consequences = the action of the northern church plays into the hands of the abolitionists.

3. Northern view equivocal. The North stands upon equivocal view that slavery is an evil to be abolished yet members of the church not to be disciplined. It plays into the hands of abolitionists and slaveholders alike.

a. The question belongs not to the church but to the state. The southern church “has no right, as a Church, to enjoin it as a duty, or to condemn it as a sin. Our business is with the duties which spring from the relation; the duties of the masters on the one hand, and of their slaves on the other. These duties we are to proclaim and enforce with spiritual sanctions.” (215)

b. Request for a “candid hearing” on the slavery issue.

i. Thornwell argues that slavery in the providence of God has worked for the general benefit of the slaves. He uses terms like “the wondrous chain of Providence.”

ii. He alleges that “the general operation of the system is kindly and benevolent.”

iii. On the issue of human rights he argues this is not an absolute matter but relative to different cultures; the rights of the English differ from the rights of the French.

iv. Each person has his place in society as a result of God’s general providence which determines that a person finds his place based on “his competency to fulfill its duties.” (216)

v. Slavery as barbaric. The delegates were unwilling to assign slavery as unmitigated evil. It does not stand with murder, malice and theft. Therefore they will not condemn it.

V. Old School North: Controversies. Theological controversies continued in the denomination. The Princeton theologians labored might and main to fend off the incursion of Arminian self-determinism that swept American culture and denominations. To questions of theological orthodoxy were added several others that posed quandaries to American denominations: biblical criticism, Enlightenment rationalism and growing emphasis on science and specifically Darwinism.
A. Darwinism. We will focus on this in more detail as we examine the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. For now, we need to see that Presbyterian responded initially to Darwinism in several ways. Charles Hodge waited over ten years to issue his broadside *What is Darwinism?* (Darwin’s *Origin of Species* appeared in 1859; Hodge published his work in 1874, though he wrote articles previously)

1. Hodge’s two-fold attack. He mounted a clear, forceful polemic against the system proposed by the British naturalist.
   a. Darwin’s theory merely a hypothesis. The primary points Hodge made focused on the theoretical as opposed to factual nature of the study. Where was the evidence that his theory had any validity? What of the fossil record (which Darwin admitted did not support his theory)?
   b. Secondly he pointed out the radically naturalistic caste of the treatise. While clearly Darwin’s proposal did not square with Genesis, Darwin’s view ran fundamentally counter to Scripture because it totally lacked a teleology; Darwin, by proposing that species change by naturalistic adaptation or selection rather than by God’s design or purpose. Darwin’s entire program is suspect due to its naturalistic assumption. It accounted for all organisms through naturalistic means or causes, not divine direction.
   c. Thus while Darwin himself was not an atheist, his theory clearly was “atheistical.” Hodge showed that opponents of Christianity quickly lines up to support Darwin. It gave secularists, to use a contemporary slogan, something that they never had until then – a creation story; another contemporary said that Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.

B. See the course on Princeton theology for Princeton’s contributions on other matters of scientific interest.

C. Princeton’s defense of biblical authority. Princeton scholars reviewed works emanating from radical biblical critics in Germany.

1. Liberal attacks on the Bible. Liberals pointed out internal inconsistencies and posed devastating critiques of biblical literature based on radically naturalistic presuppositions. They called into question factual and scientific assertions in the Scripture; they challenged traditional authorship of biblical books; and generally cast doubt upon the Bible’s veracity.
2. Princeton defense. Hodge and others used the Princeton Review to answer all comers. Again and again the Princeton answer to those who posed new ideas was lengthy, scholarly articles. More often than not they proved superior to liberals in sheer scholarly ability. Far from being anti-intellectual, they gave sound reasons for retaining traditional orthodox views. Throughout their defense, Princetonians and their cohorts maintained that if biblical foundations crumbled, so did their theology. The primary defense would come near the end of the century when AA Hodge and BB Warfield would write their famous 1881 article on “Inspiration.” As Balmer and Fitzmier point out, Princetonians and other conservatives did not devise bold innovations in support of inspiration and inerrancy. We will return to the Princetonian view of Scripture after we consider Presbyterian in the South in the 19th c.
VI. Conclusion. The northern church witnessed theological controversy and division in the decades preceding the Civil War. A new factor was the emergence of New School Union Seminary with its primary voice of Henry Boynton Smith. His controversy with Congregationalist Bushnell illustrates the proliferation of differing theological perspectives to the existing tensions between Princeton’s Calvinism and New England’s New Divinity. Differences over the spirituality of the church also resurfaced. And the emergence of Darwinism and its potential for affecting how people viewed the origin of the species portended further debates in the future.
I. Introduction. **The organization of the southern church** occurred at Augusta, GA as commissioners from 47 Presbyteries met to form “The Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America.” Thornwell’s open letter of the “General Assembly in the Confederate States of America, to all the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the earth.” PE 212-8. Three issues: [1] Spirituality of the church. The southern church renounced spiritual jurisdiction of PCUSA because of the political theory which it imposed, making secession a crime: “she transcended her sphere, and usurped the duties of the State. Churches are best organized along national lines.  [2] Issue of slavery. Slavery is an issue for the state; church’s task is not to enjoin it nor condemn it, but to pronounce on the duties of owners and slaves according to the teaching of the Bible with spiritual sanctions.

II. The church’s structure: an old issue rejuvenated. As previously covered, debate focused in the early 19\textsuperscript{th} c over missionary and other religious activities and how they should be governed. Old School Presbyterian, basically conservative in its theological perspective, frequently challenged the orthodoxy of the voluntary societies. Therefore, Old Schoolers favored church boards to perform new functions. But in the eyes of southerners, these boards tended to center too much power in the hands of individual persons and were located primarily in the Northeast. The southern delegates decided to organize their new church in a distinctive fashion. The church reacted against northern precedents in areas where considerable differences existed prior to the split.

A. Control of boards. The new church at the outset of its existence broke with precedent. It created four executive committees instead of boards. The intent of their action = to make the boards less autonomous and make them responsible to the General Assembly. This became a distinctive difference between the Northern and Southern churches.

1. Four committees created. World Missions, Domestic Missions, Publication and Education. But in point of fact, these committees gained increasingly in their power as the decades progressed, and they came to resemble boards.

B. Ruling elder. We have already seen the differences between Hodge and Thornwell over the office of ruling elder. With the expansion of lay activity, both North and South believed that elders should be ordained. But they disagreed over whether elders should participate in the ordination of ministers – Northerners opposed the practice, Southerners favored it. This also became a difference between the two churches.

C. Functioning of ascending judicatories. Northern church placed greater emphasis on the different courts of the church. Such a practice paralleled the growing economic and political centralization in the region. Meanwhile, the South was suspicious of centralization as was evident in its advocacy of states rights – they preferred a decentralized approach to the exercise of authority. In the church they stressed greater autonomy in the lower levels of congregation and Presbytery.

D. Financial responsibility. With increased activism, financial needs also burgeoned. Since the Southern church was new, meeting financial obligations became a matter of considerable concern. Since it was newly independent, it also fostered a spirit of systematic benevolence to ensure that the church thrived in its various activities. Large gifts were encouraged to support denominational activities. Tithing became a staple of Southern discipleship; per capita giving in the South outstripped giving in the North. This trend recently borne up in recent studies (Fall 1997) that despite being at the bottom of per capita earning in the USA, MS giving to charities leads the country.
III. **Spirituality of the Church.** This topic surfaces throughout our study of Presbyterian history. It has its roots in the age old question of the spiritual and temporal swords. Did Constantine overstep his bounds when he welded the sword to the cross in the 4th c? Who was supreme in Medieval society, the Emperor or the Pope? The Reformation brought new matters to the discussion. Lutheranism decided that the religion should be decided by the territorial princes. John Calvin reacted against this when he absolutely refused to budge on the spiritual responsibility of the church to discipline its members rather than the magistracy. He labored to maintain the freedom of the church from state control. Spiritual authority stood high among Old School priorities in the era preceding the schism. This issue figured prominently in the furor resulting from the Gardiner Spring resolutions in 1861. Should the church involve itself in matters that lie outside the church’s jurisdiction? What are the primary duties of the church; what line that separates the church’s spiritual powers from those of the political arena?

A. **Should the church involve itself in political and social matters?** In colonial times the church did not make social or political pronouncements. But it did endorse the patriot side during the Revolution. And it made a clear declaration against slavery in 1818 but did not wholeheartedly stand behind it as we have seen.

1. **Presbyterian and temperance** (1848) Thornwell introduced a resolution into the General Assembly on the basis of the spirituality of the church. The Assembly passed his recommendation that the church not support the American Temperance Union because the church is a spiritual body and should not unite with any worldly organization no matter how worthy the ideals of that group may be. Thornwell, argued that people, on the other hand, are fully to enter in to such activities on an individual basis.

2. **1859.** Thornwell took up the cause again before the schism: “the Church is exclusively a spiritual organization…. She has nothing to do with the voluntary associations of men for various civil and social purposes that are outside of her pale.”
   a. **Charles Hodge engaged Thornwell:** when the govt clearly violates basic moral principles clearly enunciated in the Bible, the church then has the duty of making pronouncements.
   b. **New Schoolers went even further.** They believed the church had responsibilities to speak on social matters.

3. This matter long remained a distinctive element separating Northern and Southern elements within Presbyterian.

4. **During Civil War.** The Southern General Assembly as well as lower judicatories strongly endorsed the Confederacy. But after the conflict ended, the South reassumed its former position; this shift important because it sheds light on the issue of Reconstruction. Loetscher states the matter as if younger members of the Southern Church showed more openness to re-appraising this doctrine.

B. **Robert Lewis Dabney (1829-98)** Next to Thornwell, the most prominent Old Schooler in the South.

1. Studied at Hampden-Sydney College (1837), University of VA (M.A. 1842) and Union Theological Seminary (1846). Began as rural missionary; continued as pastor of Tinkling Spring Church. Taught at Union as Professor of Church History. Served as Chaplain in Confederate army; on staff of Confederate General Stonewall Jackson. Left VA for health reasons and taught philosophy at University of Texas (1883-94); helped establish Austin Theological Seminary (1884-95)
2. **Supported spirituality of the church** to oppose parochial education (as did Thornwell). Church courts are not suitable bodies to govern schools. For churches to take on the responsibilities of education is an “illegitimate usurpation of parental rights and a violation of liberty of conscience.”

3. **Princeton attempted to hire Dabney in 1860 to replace Samuel Miller.** Dabney refused. According to Lucas, Dabney highly resented the fact that southern men went north to learn their theology (150 southerners went to Princeton). He wanted southern institutions to provide theological education. He trained 465 men for the ministry while Hodge taught 1,594 (more than any other American theologian in 19th c.) Dabney believed that if Old Schoolers stayed put in the south, they would convert New Schoolers.

4. **Southern patriot.** Dabney zealously advocated southern code of honor to replace the traditional Stoic notions. Stoic notions depended on a rigid social hierarchy and violence. He would replace such notions with a biblical piety and robust faith so that not just those who die in battle could be honored as heroes, but all those who fear God.

5. **Initially opposed secession.** But eventually debated Hodge on the issue of slavery and free soil. The south has the right to carry slaves into new territories. Slavery as an institution is a result of divine providence. Came to support secession and split between Old / New School. Whereas Thornwell supported secession because Old School North breached spirituality of the church (Gardiner Spring resolution), Dabney supported it politically. Citizens owed their loyalty to their states. Election of Lincoln provided impetus for secession. The Federal Govt waged war against the states without lawful authority.

6. **A Defense of Virginia.** Defended institution of slavery. Lucas subjects his views to rigorous critique (based on Genesis 9 – slavery of Ham and Canaan; arguments were laced with racism). Dabney blamed England and New England for the slave trade. Accused North of hypocrisy for supporting slave trade yet condemning slavery. The North did nothing to aid the emancipated slaves.

7. **Staunchly opposed reunion with Old School North.** The northern church would “Yankeeize the south.” In post Civil war era, Dabney proved a perceptive social critic of industrialized capitalism, secular materialism and centralized government.

IV. **Old School - New School Reunion in the South.** During the Civil War the division between the Old and New Schools in the South was healed. In 1864 the Southern branch of the New School (The United Synod of the South) joined with the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, an Old School body. The most significant impact of the reunion = that the New School church, which had never had a theological seminary in the South, virtually ceased to exist in the South while it continued to thrive in the North. Thus by 1864, the landscape had changed yet again. The church which had been four, now became three: a single reunited but overwhelmingly Old School Church in the South; an Old School Church in the North; and a New School Church in the North.

V. **The Church during the War Years.** We have already seen that some pastors returned “home” due to the outbreak of the war – some went to the North and some to the South. Still others remained where they served despite their original birthplace or area of upbringing.
A. **Ministry to the soldiers.** Both sides placed great emphasis on spiritual ministry to those who bore arms. Some pastors left their congregations to serve as chaplains. Others enlisted and fought with their respective armies.

1. **Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee.** It is well known that the two confederate military leaders greatly encouraged spiritual ministry to men serving under them. A great religious revival swept through the confederate forces.

2. **Religious dedication in South.** The southern cause received strong spiritual support from churches back home. The South has long been held to be a strong supporter of religion in the culture as a whole. Indeed, the religious motivation for the southern cause “did much to intensify and make permanent the self-consciousness of the South as a region.” (Loetscher) One scholar believes that only after the Civil War can the South be regarded as the more religious portion of the country.” (Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterianism in the South*)

B. **Religious revivals in Civil War Armies.** Several revivals broke out [a major flaw of Ken Burns’ otherwise excellent PBS documentary of the Civil War was the total absence of any reference to religion, denominations, etc.]

1. North: Lincoln ordered regimental commanders to appoint chaplains for their units. Chaplains must be ordained; they received officers’ salary of $1,700.

2. South: Jefferson Davis made no corresponding effort; chaplains, however, did serve. Their pay started at $1,020 and was later reduced to $600 then to $960; the reduction mirrored the finances of the Southern effort. Southern leaders tried to supply troops with Bibles and tracts.

3. Revivals among both North and South armies in the Fall of 1863 and Spring of 1864. The latter became known as the Great Revival. Best documented in Lee’s Army of Northern VA. It is estimated that 10% of Lee’s army made commitments; participated in prayer meetings, worshipped and even were baptized.

VI. **Post Civil War: Gap between Northern and Southern Presbyterians widened.** One month after Lincoln’s assassination, the Northern Old School General Assembly met in Pittsburgh in 1865. During the war, sympathy increased against slavery; and support for the federal govt also grew. Also the church retained the former synods and Presbyteries from the South on its roles. In light of those two facts, what would be the status of the church? Would the North reach out to the South, and if so, how? What would be the basis for reuniting the split denomination?

A. **General Assembly (1865).** Requirements formulated for readmission of southern Presbyteries and synods. But displaying a major lack of sensitivity and common sense, the Old School made two requirements for readmission into the Church: (1) each Southern minister had to confess secession to be a “sin”; (2) also pastors had to retract the error of considering slavery to be a legitimate institution, i.e., sanctioned by God.

1. In addition, individual churches were to apply the same tests to their parishioners for readmission to the Lord’s Table. A final blow to Southern pride: the church declared the South to be missionary territory. “Scalawag” [a term used during Reconstruction for churches under Northern control] churches formed. Loetscher calls this features “an example of Presbyterian legalism at its worst.”

2. While soldiers had long since stacked their weapons, secession had in fact lost and 10s of thousands lay buried, the Southerners were immediately expected to renounce ideals which they had prized, these actions severely hampered prospects of immediate reconciliation.
3. Note the article “Reconstruction” in *PE* 218-220. These measures deeply resented by south; note the paternalistic tone: [1] Civil rebellion labeled “a great crime; secession was unwarranted, schismatic, unconstitutional. [2] Northern churches will not abandon southern churches and will welcome those loyal to govt of US. [3] Treat ministers and churches with kindness when they renounce their errors. [4] Board of Domestic Missions will give special attention to the “Southern field” by providing missionaries and monies.

B. **Response.** As one might expect, the sharpness of the Northern church’s demands brought equally pointed rejoinders from the South. Eventually two separate national organizations developed.

1. **Separate cases of Kentucky and Missouri.** The tone of the Northern church had an additional effect on the border states of KY, MD and MO. These states had remained in the Union and the Northern Church during the turbulence of the war. In 1865 Presbytery of KY issued a “Declaration and Testimony” against the strong pronouncements issued by the Northern Church both during the war in its aftermath. It also staunchly refused to comply with the demands. Similarly, many the other synods supported the declaration.

2. **Assembly of 1866.** The General Assembly condemned the Declaration and Testimony and prohibited any signers from participating in any position above the level of session in the church. What resulted was the formation of withdrawing synods of KY (1867) and MO (1873) who then joined the Southern Presbyterian Church. Thus its actions not only cost the church the possibility of reunion with the Southern Church but also reunion with Border States and the Synod of Baltimore.

VII. **Southern General Assembly, December 1865.** Seven months after the disastrous Northern Assembly. The southern church chose its national name, “The Presbyterian Church in the United States.” The Assembly also stated that while during the War it owed its allegiance to the Confederacy, now it pledged its allegiance to the Govt of the US. Thus it affirmed its commitment unequivocally to national political unity. But it faced several difficulties.

A. **Disastrous effects of the war.** Reconstruction and its effects. Not only the social structure of the South was decimated, it suffered overwhelming losses physically. Southerners faced an enormous uphill struggle to regain its former order. The church shared in all these matters: loss of leadership, damaged buildings, pastors lost their lives, lack of ministerial candidates. The two seminaries, Union in VA and Columbia in SC suffered economically.

B. **By 1880 progress evident.** Although the plantations were lost permanently, smaller farms grew up in their place. Capital increased so that the South was able to move forward in industrialization.

C. **Progress of the church.** Methodists and Baptists grew faster than Presbyterians, especially in rural areas. Presbyterians prospered more in cities. In fact, as Loetscher points out, Southern Presbyterian Church “is one of the nation’s most urbanized denominations.”

D. **Theological and social change.** Southern Presbyterians possessed great internal unity and strength. It stood by its theological heritage and sense of mission to preserve Presbyterian tradition. While significant change began to infiltrate the Northern Church as we shall see, the Southern Church stubbornly resisted winds of change in the late 19th c: biblical criticism, biological evolution, efforts to amend the Westminster Confession. On social matters, the PCUS was quasi-aristocratic; class status evident as Presbyterians drew from primarily cultured, middle/upper class strata of southern society. The issue of race stood out as the most
controversial issue because belief in the inferiority of blacks continued. The decades in the middle third of the 20th c began to witness change on this matter. As matters moved closer to civil rights decade the church began to take stances on racial equality. In 1935, the General Assembly directly overturned the long held spirituality of the church by the following assertion: “We believe … that the Church in fulfillment of its spiritual function must interpret and present Christ’s ideal for the individual and for society…. It cannot discharge this part of its responsibility unless it deals with those actual evils in the individual life, and in the social order which threaten man’s moral and spiritual development.”
I. **Introduction. The Reunion of Old and New School Presbyterian in 1869.** After the devastation of the Civil War, elements which divided the Old and New Schools did not appear to many as significant as they did initially. In 1862 the Old School made an unexpected overture. The General Assembly ended its 25 year policy of non-recognition of the New School and proposed an exchange of delegates. This would lead to negotiations that would end the schism.

II. **Changes in the theological landscape.** Changes since the 1830s which made such a reunion even remotely possible. Marsden makes a case for New School’s essential orthodoxy. By the 1860s, all major contributing factors that originally led to schism in 1837 had been removed: slavery issue, Plan of Union, differences in form of govt, cooperation with voluntary societies. What of theological differences? Rian in *The Presbyterian Conflict*: “[the reunion] brought together two parties who disagreed fundamentally as to doctrine.” (Rian, according to Marsden, has an ax to grind here: conservative Presbyterians trace 20th c theological liberalism to New School influences.) Or, had New School theology altered significantly so that Old School members could trust that the reunited church would be free from heresy? Marsden identifies four groups; each was involved in the reunion question and yet held distinct views of the reunion. Each group had an opinion of the orthodoxy of the New School prior to the reunited church

A. **New Schoolers enthusiastic about reunion.** This group was led by Henry Boynton Smith of Union Theological Seminary; served as moderator of New School Assembly in 1863. Smith asserted that the original Auburn Declaration established the orthodoxy of the church. In fact Smith claimed that New School had become more orthodox in years immediately preceding reunion discussions. Smith’s group, because of its New School ties, could be considered most partisan in its views. He argued that the problems of religious infidelity in America coupled with the threat of Roman Catholicism made ecumenical reunion a necessity. He enumerated 3 conditions for reunion: a spirit of mutual concession, commitment to Presbyterian polity and acceptance of the Westminster Confession as set forth by the Adopting Act of 1729. Consistent with his Christological emphasis, Smith stated that the real center of ecumenical union was Christ: “When our theology, our preaching and our very lives say that Christ is our all in all, then we shall meet and flow together.”

B. **Old Schoolers who favored the reunion from the outset.** This group consisted of new generation Old School ministers who came on the scene after the schism. They had been extremely loyal to the Union during the War. They accepted New School claims of orthodoxy at face value and found evidence to support their claim. Their views also tend to be considered biased, but not so much as the first group.

C. **Large minority in Old School who opposed reunion in 1867, 68 yet changed to a positive view in 1869.** The very existence of this group, says Marsden speaks against the idea that the primary reason for reunion was a relaxation of theological orthodoxy as the primary factor in reunion.

D. **Small minority of Old Schoolers who consistently opposed reunion till the end.** This included those who favored reunion of the Old School with the Southern church. Among those in this group were those who led the cause for schism in 1837 (Robert Breckinridge); they were strongest advocates for doctrinal orthodoxy above all else.

III. **Progress of the discussions.** Hodge originally did not favor division in 1837. Now he led the opposition to reunion in 1869 in an article in *BRTR* which was so harsh as to draw Smith’s comment.
A. **Hodge argued that New School held to a latitudinarian view of subscription.** Hodge did not believe that New Schoolers were heretical. He also believed that some doctrinal liberty should exist. A person could be a good Calvinist while disagreeing with the Confession on nonessentials such as the doctrines of worship, Sabbath, civil magistrate, vows, marriage, the Church, communion of the saints, and eschatology. He rested his case primarily on evidence from the 1830s. But Hodge also believed that New School advocates had consistently been more lenient in doctrinal matters; they practiced “a principle and latitude of toleration” different from the Old School. He therefore believed that Old School principles would clearly be sacrificed if New School principles be accepted. He wrote in *BRTR* that New School would commit the church to a “latitudinarian principle of subscription” that required only the essential doctrines of Christianity.

B. **Smith responded as harshly as in any other article in *American Presbyterian and Theological Review*.** He claimed Hodge misrepresented the New School’s view. Smith argued that the New School actually held the same view of subscription as the Old School. He also charged Hodge with misrepresenting New School views as those of unreconstructed New Haven. He further asked if Hodge would substantiate his charges, for if they were true, New Schoolers would not be Reformed. Hodge admitted that he was one of about a dozen men who subscribed without exception to the WCF.

C. **Hodge replied in moderated terms.** Primarily by showing that New Schoolers had accepted New Haven men into their Presbyteries. But even this, he conceded, does not mean that the majority of New School men agreed with New Haven views. Marsden comments that evidently Smith had made his point. Hodge also conceded that Old School men could go no further on the matter of subscription.

D. **The Presbyterian National Union Convention in Phila in Nov 1867.** The purpose of such a convention was “to inaugurate measures to heal Zion’s breaches, and to bring into one the divided portions of the Presbyterian family.” The convention consisted of Old and New School Presbyterians and representatives from smaller Presbyterian churches: United, Reformed, Cumberland and Southern. Both Hodge and Smith were present.

   1. **Smith’s amendment.** Smith presented an amendment to the subscription formula: “It being understood that this Confession is received in its proper historical, that is, the Calvinistic or Reformed sense.” Calhoun gives remarkable testimony to the effect of this meeting on Hodge. He said that the issue had been “satisfactorily adjusted.”

   2. **Recall Hodge’s view of subscription:** two errors – the lax (“substance of doctrine view”) and the too strict (“every proposition view”).

   3. **Evidently Smith made his point.** Hodge also conceded that Old School men could go no further on the matter of subscription.

   4. **Calhoun.** Hodge was not a narrow denominationalist. In 1853 he wrote that any person “who professes to be a worshipper of Christ”; and a Christian church is “any company of such men.”

E. **At the spring meeting of 1868 another compromise attempted by New School.** The joint committee of Old and New School presented to their respective General Assemblies. Key wording regarding subscription formula to WCF.

   1. **A proposal submitted:** “It being understood that this Confession is received in its proper historical, that is, Calvinistic or Reformed sense. It is also understood that various methods of viewing, stating, explaining and illustrating the doctrines of the Confession, which do not impair the integrity of the Reformed or Calvinistic system,
are to be freely allowed in the United Church, as they have hitherto been allowed in the separate churches.”

2. **58 commissioners from the Old School protested vigorously** (including Hodge). They claimed that the latter words would allow former New Schoolers to assert that the Presbyterian church had permitted New Haven views.

3. **Another compromise.** Old Schoolers proposed dropping the qualifying statements altogether. Reunion should be based on the traditional formula: “the Confession of Faith shall continue to be sincerely received and adopted as containing the system of doctrine taught in Holy Scriptures.” Because of the debate over the issue, the final vote on the matter was delayed yet another year.

IV. **General Assemblies for both schools met in Pittsburgh in 1869.** Sentiment had clearly mounted for a reunited church. Even those who had originally opposed reunion, such as Lyman Atwater, junior editor at Princeton Review. Atwater mentioned the absence of factors that originally led to division. Then he admitted that he considered New School Presbyterian acceptable because of the soundness of the New School seminaries: Lane, Union and Auburn. A substantial change had occurred since the days of the New Divinity and New Measure revivals in upstate New York.

A. **Hodge remained opposed to the reunion.** He did not attend the reunion General Assembly; he continued to hold that his original objections to the reunion proposal had not been answered. He did not contend that the New School was unorthodox, only that under New School jurisdiction, some heterodoxy was tolerated. He assumed that after the reunion, such tolerance would continue. Marsden in making his case contends that Hodge’s position is important for what it does not say, i.e., that one could find instances of New School heterodoxy. The only examples of heterodoxy that could be cited were those of the past, i.e., Albert Barnes and George Duffield. Hodge feared that New School tradition of toleration that permitted such examples would lead to further cases in the future. But for now, the New School had become more orthodox.

B. **Presbyterian Reunion: A Memorial Volume 1837-1881** records the basis of reunion and an account of the reunion itself. It is generally understood to be a return to the principles of the Adopting Act of 1729 for its basis. PE, 220, 221.

1. **Basis of reunion.** The statement begins with the affirmation that divisions ought to be healed, especially since two separate bodies share the same constitution and each espouses orthodox doctrines of the Westminster Confession. The necessity of remaining separate and rival organizations seems “cannot be justified.”

   a. **The two churches should unite and form a single church** under the name “Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.” It shall possess all legal and corporate rights that governed the church before its division in 1838.

   b. **Doctrinal basis.** The reunion should be established on the doctrinal and ecclesiastical common ground: (1) the Scriptures as the “inspired Word of God, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice”; (2) the Westminster Confession “shall continue to be sincerely received and adopted as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; (3) govt and discipline of Presbyterian Ch in the US contains the principles and rules of polity.

2. **Reunion in Pittsburgh.** An outpouring of enthusiasm greeted the reunion in Pittsburgh. The following account describes the dramatic staging of reuniting forces: “Besides the crowds who thronged the sidewalks and filled the doors and windows, the broad avenue was a jam with eager spectators…. The Iron City was
electrified…. The hearts of the people were stirred, It was, indeed, a spectacle altogether novel…. The parallel ranks, Old School and New School, on opposite sides of the avenue two-and-two, arm-in-arm, moved along one block, when a halt was made.”

“The two moderators who headed their respective columns, then approached each other, and grasped hands with a will. This was the signal for the Clerks, who followed, and then the pairs all through the ranks parted over, crossed over, and paired anew – the Old and the New, grasping each other, and amidst welcomes, thanksgivings, and tears, they locked arms and stood together in their reformed relations.”

Sounds like a love feast, PCUSA style!!

V. **New School Presbyterian: Preparation for the Fundamentalist - Liberal controversy**? Some interpreters see a relatively straight line development from the schism of 1741 (Old Side - New Side schism) to 1837 (Old School - New School schism) to 1936 (Machen’s break with PCUSA).

A. **Marsden’s response.** While that might make neat categories, one should exercise caution in such an easy identification of the three positions. Despite some toleration evidenced among New Schoolers, Marsden points out that in many ways, New School emphases bear more similarities with fundamentalism than with 20th c liberalism. He cites New School revivalism, moralistic reform, biblicism, relatively low view of the church and millennialism as more closely aligned with later fundamentalism.

B. **Subsequent division of Presbyterians.** After Machen led the split from Princeton, another division occurred. The majority remained with Westminster Theological Seminary and continued the Old School Calvinism. A minority group followed Carl McIntire, a militant fundamentalist, to form the Bible Presbyterian Synod. McIntire went on to (1) fight major campaigns against Communism; (2) espouse doctrines, dispensational in nature, that were judged incompatible with the Westminster Confession; (3) stress abstinence as opposed to temperance in use of alcoholic beverages; (4) form independent missions boards as opposed to denominational boards (an example of fundamentalist legalism as an ethical approach).

C. **One can make a credible case for later liberal tendencies in New School seminaries:** Union being the primary example. But the lines in the 20th c. are sometimes more blurred than the simplistic line of 1741, 1837 and 1936 might at first blush seem to indicate. Biggest difference between New School evangelicalism and 20th c. fundamentalism = the cultural success of the former and the cultural failure of the latter.

VI. **Post Civil War Ecumenism.** Hart/ Muether focus on attempts within Presbyterian and across evangelical lines to form unions: Evangelical Alliance (1867) – originated in English movement – and Presbyterian Alliance (1875). Spurred by several factors

A. Welfare of country and welfare of church were assumed compatible

B. Earlier attempts at cooperation through voluntary societies

C. Aided by perceived threat of immigration, spread of Catholicism (Syllabus of Errors (1864) which opposed religious freedom and democracy; also Vatican I – declaration of papal infallibility.

D. Conspicuous absence of discussions at heart of Old/New School differences – that is, theological issues. Theological issues faded into the background giving way to emphasis on activism.
E. Southern resistance: Dabney a key figure in raising these concerns. Protestants were in danger of created their own pope in the rush to form unions – a “pan-Protestant Confederation.

F. Two concerns: [1] doctrinal indifference would lead to liberal theology; [2] the corporate witness of the church would suffer; as more emphasis place on activism, the less emphasis would be placed on proclamation of the Gospel.
I. **Introduction**: How did Presbyterians relate to key developments in modern science? Scholars have debated the question of the relation between science and religion – frequently not to the advantage of the Church. Titles remain in print that cast the church in a negative light – Andrew Dickson White’s (first president of Cornell University) *The Warfare between Science and Theology* being a primary example. Immanuel Kant’s monumental *Critique of Pure Reason* published in 1781: its purpose was to save both science and religion. What was the scene in 19th c? Did Presbyterians consider science the enemy? How were people to read the Bible in light of advances in geological research? And perhaps above all, how would Presbyterians respond to Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species*?

A. **19th c Science and Religion.** Scottish Common Sense philosophy surfaces again as a primary cultural influence. Scientific method was all the rage in American studies. Hardly a discipline escaped its pervasive influence. Theodore Dwight Bozeman in his excellent work *Protestants in an Age of Science: The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought* correctly categorized the 19th c as one of the most scientifically oriented centuries in science. People were virtually preoccupied with scientific matters – above all scientific method with its promise of increasing our knowledge in all fields of knowledge.

B. **Old School Princeton.** Old School Princeton reacted to scientific advances. Charles Hodge adapted his teaching on creation from the literal 24-hour day to the day-age view in response to modern scientific theories regarding the age of the earth in his *Systematic Theology*. Still later in 1874 a full 15 years after its appearance, Hodge gave a definitive Old School reaction to the most important scientific publication (Ahlstrom calls it “the most important book of the century”) of the 19th c, Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species*. He found Darwin’s work deeply unsettling. In giving natural science (and naturalism as a philosophy) its “creation story” Darwin helped legitimize the naturalistic world view. As Richard Dawkins stated so ably, Darwin made it possible for one to be “an intellectually fulfilled atheist.”

1. **1825: Archibald Alexander’s first article in *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review*: “The Bible, A Key to the Phenomena of the Natural World” assumes a compatibility exists between what can be known through the powers of natural reason and what is taught in the Bible. AA traces a major theme of great interest to Princeton – science and how it relates to the Bible. From its outset Princeton was preoccupied with science. Princeton was committed to maintain the integrity of both theological orthodoxy and the scientific enterprise. Their goal was twofold: to be scientific in their theology (i.e., in the Medieval sense of the term – systematic inquiry), and in their dealing with other disciplines as they impinged on the study of theology (i.e., systematic in the study of nature).

2. **Charles Hodge on Creation.** ST, vol 1. “Creation” What governs his approach = Princeton affirmation of the unity of truth. Archibald Alexander, Samuel Miller (the second professor at PTS, church historian) and the elder Hodge all displayed intense interest in science and absolute confidence in a genuine harmony between the two. They drew upon the metaphor of two books, Nature and Scripture; they even use language of science and theology as “allies in establishing the truth.”

a. **Hodge drew upon the idea that science will never contradict Scripture as correctly interpreted.** Hodge quoted as saying [1] “The Church is willing to meet men of science on equal terms…. The church will stand by her convictions founded on something surer than consciousness, even the power of God, and let science prove what facts it can, assured that God in nature can
never contradict God in the Bible and in the hearts of his people.” Another favorite phrase was [2] “the truth has nothing to fear from the truth.” Calhoun, p 11. Hodge even went so far as to say “the church is willing that the Bible should be interpreted under the guidance of the facts of science.”

b. Hodge admits that both science and the church have its theories. That means that both must stand the test of evidence. And evidence from both fields can relate to the other field.

c. How to reconcile the two. A classical example of revising the church’s theory of creation. He cites work of reliable geologists (“first rank of scientific naturalists”) who confirm that the cosmogonical progression of Gen 1 corresponds to geological evidence as determined by scientists.

d. Distinguish between facts and theories. While theologians and scientists may differ in theory, there is no difference between the teaching of the Bible and the facts demonstrated by scientists. Hodge concedes that the church “has been forced more than once” to change its interpretation of the Bible. Such struggles may indeed be painful; but in the final analysis, the integrity and authority of the Bible has remained intact.

3. Variety of responses to Darwin at Princeton. We will obviously pick the subject up again with AA Hodge and Warfield. But we also ought to acknowledge the considerable support for theistic evolution from another Princetonian, James McCosh, president of Princeton College in 1868; he came to America from Scotland bringing with him the experience of being the major voice of the Scottish Enlightenment; scholars attribute to him the achievement of making Princeton a national institution.

a. McCosh noted reactions such as Hodge’s to Darwin. He believed that such responses were frankly an embarrassment to religion; Hodge’s attack looked too much like those who rejected Newton’s work on gravity as atheistic and Galileo’s defense of heliocentric universe.

b. McCosh took essentially the same position of Harvard biologist Asa Gray; even though Darwin denied design, McCosh agreed that Darwin’s Origin of Species was a prima facie case for the existence of design. Evolution was “the way God works.” He states: “As there is in the whole plant … so there are proofs of design, not merely in the individual plant and individual animal, but in the whole structure of the cosmos and in the manner in which it makes progress from age to age.” (Note Calhoun’s extensive footnote #31, p 453.)

4. AA Hodge (1823-86) on science and evolution. The younger Hodge was a missionary, pastor and professor at Western Theological Seminary before coming to PTS in 1877. While lesser known than his father, AAH after the Civil War forged a strong evangelical worldview against the rising tide of secularism in American life. His Popular Lectures on Theological Themes proposed that only a reformed perspective could enable Christians to meet the challenges of American cultural life.

a. AAH supported his father’s assertion: any theory of evolution in which the universe and its order is referred to chance is atheistic. But AAH believed there are two kinds of evolution: “When Christian people say ‘Evolution means Atheism,’ a distinction should be observed. If it is Darwinianism they mean, they are right to demonstration. But evolution in the Duke of Argyll’s “Reign of Law” sense may be admitted consistently with Christianity; so that when other Christian people are found saying, ‘Evolution does not mean
Atheism,’ they too may be right.” (Quoted in Princetoniana, C. A. Salmond) George Campbell, Duke of Argyll was a politician / scientist; a leader in scholarly opposition against Darwinism. He held that the laws at work in nature are merely God acting through those laws; natural laws are how God controls the world.

b. AAH reviewing Asa Gray’s Natural Science and Religion, said that one can see in that work a “more comprehensive and ultimate teleology.” Gray stressed a continuity of God’s activity as he providentially rules the universe. One can discern “an ideal evolution, a providential unfolding of a general plan, in which general designs and methods converge in all directions to the ultimate end of the whole.” Such a view is far more compatible with Christian teaching.

5. Calhoun’s treatment. Following up on the comment above: the most telling comment in Calhoun’s treatment of differences among the Princetonians on evolution appears in footnote # 3, vol 2, p. 462 in which he states that AAH’s biography on his father “almost entirely omits Charles Hodge’s anti-Darwinian statements. There is one sentence on the debate at the Evangelical Alliance and another single sentence on his father’s book on Darwinism – ‘In 1874 he published a small book entitled ‘Darwinism,’ in opposition to the prevailing doctrine of Atheistic Evolutionism.” Like the exclusion of Charles Hodge’s views of enthusiastic phenomena associated with revivals which Hodge witnessed while on his trip to Europe, the omissions speak loudly!!

6. AAH in Outlines of Theology (1860) continued the Princetonian claim of a compatibility between science and religion. (AAH like BBW never wrote a systematic theology; both did not want to detract from the elder Hodge’s accomplishment in the three-volume work.

   a. AAH holds to day-age theory of his father. (215) He presupposes the older view of the earth; he uses language of “indefinitely great number of ages ago,” “gradual progression” and “successive stages.”

   b. He also outlines principles (216) that evangelicals have since enunciated: the legitimacy of science. Note #4 “Science is only the human interpretation of God’s works; it is always imperfect and makes many mistakes. Biblical interpreters are also liable to mistakes [he refers to initial attacks upon the Copernican geocentric theory prior to Galileo’s demonstration] and should never assert the absolute identity of their interpretations of the Bible with the mind of God.”

   c. Two errors to be avoided: [a] Too readily attaching one’s views with the latest finding of science; [b] opposite extreme: suspecting every recent finding of science as “probable offenses against the dignity of revelation.” He concludes: “All things are ours, whether the natural or the supernatural, whether science or revelation.”

   d. Distinction between evolution as science and philosophy. Calhoun includes in his discussion that the younger Hodge made a careful distinction between evolution as a theory, a working hypothesis in science, and evolution as a full-blown philosophy. While the former cannot in any way harm biblical religion, the latter can do immense harm.
e. **[Insert material from Abraham Kuyper’s essay “Evolution (1899).]**

Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), pastor, journalist, founder of New University of Amsterdam, and eventually Prime Minister of the Netherlands stressed even more than AAH the role of evolution as a worldview. He astutely pointed out that Darwinism gave secularists what they lacked in their worldview—a creation story: “But thanks to the dogma of evolution they too now possess an all-encompassing, a world-and-life view derived from a single principle. They too now have a ground-dogma, and they cling to that dogma with unshakeable faith. The human spirit cannot get by for long without an answer to questions about the origin, the essence, and the future of things. Until now having such an answer was our strength over against the unproven claims of the intelligentsia. But precisely this advantage is now lost to us.” Kuyper went on to articulate how evolution in biology developed into an all-encompassing interpretive principle. It was used in psychology, sociology, religion and other academic fields: “To explain all that exists—in its origin, being, transformation, and functions—from a single principle was the richest and most absolute Monism, in which our thinking spirit could at last find the rest it so passionately desired.” Excellent reader of Kuyper’s essays was recently published, James D. Bratt, ed., *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader* (Eerdmans) on the hundredth anniversary of Kuyper’s Stone Lectures at Princeton.

f. **AA Hodge explained his view in a letter to the Memphis Appeal, 1886.** He believed little evidence existed to support human derivation from non-human ancestors. The immense probability is that “God’s own image was brought into existence by an immediate act of God himself.” Therefore, AAH took a more positive view of the possibilities of evolution than did his father. Descent of plants and animals from earlier more simple forms may be true.

g. **AA Hodge monitored reports of scientific findings,** and he warned against coming to nonchristian conclusions. He never espoused evolution as a fact. He granted that theism has no intrinsic objection to evolution as descent from lower forms—provided that one allow for divine interventions as explanation for the appearance of higher powers. (Calhoun, vol. 2, p. 82)

h. **He gives conditions under which one can accept evolution:** (middle 235) if one sees it as means by which God executes his plan, it “can never be irreligious.” What he is most concerned about is evolution as a total philosophy: “evolution as a philosophical speculation professing to account for the origin, causes, and ends of all things.”

i. **Pays particular attention to view of man as unique creation.** He places this idea in context of how anything can develop. He says, for example, that for anything to appear, each new thing must be explained: “No possible evolution of molecular mechanics can account for the origin of life, nor for properties of living beings” let alone higher qualities such as sensation, consciousness, instinct or intelligence.

j. **Positing the uniqueness of human nature,** Hodge states that what we find in man cannot arise out of non-rational, non-moral qualities. The new qualities cannot arise out of mere material. Therefore they must result from God’s immediate creation. “The soul of man stands in such marked contrast with all
that precedes it as to be evidently a new Creation, and its advent introduces a new era.” Therefore evolution must allow for a “moral government and a redemptive providence, including miracles and the Incarnation of God, and the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost.” Thus Hodge puts the teaching of evolution within limits or parameters. Calhoun quotes Hodge’s comments to an audience in Phila (1886): “that the body of man was made out of pre-existing materials; that the soul of man was created by the mighty power of God; and that Eve was made from Adam by the miraculous power of God.”

(vol. 2, p. 82)

II. **New School Presbyterianism and Science.** Marsden devotes a chapter to the influence of science and philosophy on New School thought. He opens with a quote from the *Presbyterian Quarterly Review* of 1835 – probably from Albert Barnes –: “Science, in this age, marches with a very confident and aggressive step. It has prescribed no limits on itself, except the universe.” Quotes such as this appear frequently in popularizations of science and its role in modern culture. One ought to cite such references carefully. They usually do not come from scientists themselves but from popularizers of science. People who actually do science tend to be much more restrained, even humble, about what science has already accomplished and the prospects for what it can deliver in the future. Such scientists remind us that there are other ways of knowing reality (some far more important than empirical studies); such scientists as opposed to popularizers more accurately portray how much more we have to learn. Inflated claims like Barnes’ above present an exaggerated view of science and its importance in modern life. With that said, how did New School thinkers approach science – its accomplishments, limitations, goals?

A. **Theologians and science.** Like colleagues in Old School studies, New Schoolers believed that theologians must take cognizance of scientific research and findings as it relates to teachings in the Bible. Like the two Hodges, they believed that one should not hastily alter one’s interpretation of the Bible. Neither should one deny the Bible’s claim of revelation and relegate the Bible’s teaching to that of “Myth.” Adopting the principle used by the Princetonians, Barnes said that both the scientist and theologian must go about their respective tasks: “If we are both right, we shall harmonize at last; if not, the sooner it is known the better.”

B. **Geology.** Geology speaks directly to a subject important to theologians for its subject relates to the Biblical account of creation and the doctrine of creation and providence. The main problem geology posed focused on the age of the earth as it relates to biblical creation. We have already seen that Hodge accommodated his teaching on creation to recent studies supporting the age of the earth far beyond the 6,000 year period previously believed.

1. *Presbyterian Quarterly Review* article “Is the Science of Geology True?” This article set the tone for discussions related to science and the Bible. The writer argued against turning to the Bible for scientific accounts of anything – from astronomy or geology to architecture, agriculture or making telescopes. Christians should not hold a prejudice against science. Thus for the decade of the 1850s into the 1860s the *PQR* focused on scientific issues and how they relate to the Bible.

   a. **Articles and books appeared that broached topics** the meaning of “day” and the possible development of the created order over long periods of time. Taylor Lewis, teacher at Union College, wrote *The Six Days of Creation* which examined the philological evidence and adopted the day age theory of creation over eras of time. Yet Taylor also wrote *The Bible and Science: Or,
the World Problem in which he argued that scientists must also attend to biblical teaching because what science teaches is fallible (by the very nature of inductive study) while the Bible’s teaching is infallible because it rests on God’s revelation.

b. A reviewer of Taylor’s book supported Taylor; he argued that Christians trained in science are those who are genuinely equipped to evaluate new research. He even went so far as to state: “those who hold forth the Word of Life [should] take heed how they bow down before the haughty nod of earthly science. They have a Divine treasure in their hands, Let them beware lest they dishonour it in their ‘liberality.’ A ‘Liberal Christianity’ is too often a Christianity brought down to the level of man’s corrupt natural taste.”

c. The editor cautioned in a preface to the review against an antiscientific bias against science. The conflict between the review and editor’s comments indicate the growing disagreement over the claims of science and theology. The reviewer could be understood to mean that Christians could unite behind an infallible Bible, while the editors expressed confidence that no genuine finding of science would contradict biblical teaching.

2. Albert Barnes. Articulated a pro-science perspective. He developed a full-blown apologetic in a book-length work in 1859 Inquiries and Suggestions in Regard to the Foundation of Faith in the Word of God. Christians have nothing to fear from the findings of genuine science. Not only has science never demonstrated something against the Bible, neither would it ever do so. Christians should be among those who encourage independent research.

III. Darwin’s The Origin of Species. The easy confidence evident in Barnes’ remarks underwent severe challenge with the appearance of Darwin’s famous book.

A. As in the case of Hodge’s delayed response, so the PQR did not immediately review the work. Barnes’ review “Readjustments of Christianity” appeared in 1862. In it he said that as science makes progress, theologians may have to make some adjustment in their biblical interpretations (cf., discussion by Galileo in his Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina in 17th c) But Barnes left no doubt where he stood on Darwin’s theory; he felt no need to change his ideas. In fact he labeled Darwin’s ideas as absurdities.

1. Strong opposition to evolution. Using very strong language, Barnes noted that Darwin’s theory demanded that all living creatures “elephants, and tadpoles, and men, Bacon, Newton, and Plato, the ape, orang-ou-tang, lizard [15 additional species mentioned] the malt that lay in the ‘House that Jack built,’ and the rat that ate the malt, etc., all are derived from the same origin…”

2. Interestingly, Barnes’ outraged response puts him closer to his theological opponent Charles Hodge than we might have first guessed. Marsden argues that Barnes’ case illustrates how New Schoolers became more orthodox especially on biblical authority as challenges rose against Christianity. Barnes’ remarks indicate how New School thinkers rejected key ideas of radical biblical criticism arriving from Germany. Barnes had learned German methods, yet he criticized their use when they attacked the integrity of Scripture.

IV. Darwinism in Southern Presbyterian. Most of the theological squabbles over Darwinian theory took place in northern seminaries – especially at Princeton and Union. The opposition to Darwin, as we have clearly demonstrated, does not indicate an anti-intellectual or anti-scientific cast to seminary
education or the religious journals. Hodge and Barnes were far from obscurantists in their approach. The example we are about to examine also reflects the same intellectual integrity.

A. **Columbia Seminary.** In 1860 the Perkins Professorship of Natural Science in Connection with Revelation was established at Columbia as the first of its kind in theological education to encourage faculty to examine the relation between scientific and theological education. Such a kindred relation rested upon the main principles of Scottish Common Sense philosophy. Its theory of knowledge presupposed a natural coalescence or unity of truth: natural, revealed and moral truth.

B. **James Woodrow: the first scholar to occupy the Perkins chair:** he drank deeply from Scottish philosophy. The controversy which erupted over Woodrow’s position differed from the North. Thornwell hailed the formation of the Perkins chair. He represented the opinion of many when he lauded the opportunity the chair would afford the church to harmonize the findings of science with biblical scholarship. Woodrow’s appointment seemed perfect for the purposes sought by the school.

C. **Southern resistance to modern science.** The Southern Church unlike the Northern Church expressed a strong resistance to modern science. Woodrow did not believe the speculation of Darwin, but he did believe that science had positive things to offer. Woodrow was attacked by those who believed that science represented an enemy to belief.

1. **Robert L. Dabney** feared that scientific studies would undermine Christianity with philosophic naturalism. Dabney published a series of essays that challenged the new science.

   2. **Woodrow responded:** “An Examination of Certain Recent Assaults on Physical Science (1873).” He believed that Dabney did not adequately understand the true goals of scientific research. He wrote a second essay in 1874; in it he identified the differences between his and Dabney’s views. Which presuppositions should a Christian bring to a study of the natural order.

3. **Woodrow embroiled in controversy.** Woodrow editor of *Southern Presbyterian Review.* As Woodrow and Dabney locked in debate, suspicions arose over the reliability of the journal theologically. In the 1880s the tide of opinion turned against him. Some called for his dismissal from the seminary. Woodrow gave a carefully crafted speech before Columbia’s Alumni Association in which he asserted that Scripture and science were not natural antagonists. Evolutionary theory also gave no indisputable view of human creation. But Woodrow allowed that although God created the human soul, God might have allowed organic life, and thus the human body, to develop naturally over time as discussed by evolutionary theory. People became convinced that Woodrow had uncritically accepted Darwinian views.

4. **Woodrow’s attempt to defend himself.** Seminary board retained Woodrow. The vote of the board was split; but some called for his expulsion from the faculty. As demands increased for dismissal, the board called for his resignation in December 1884. Woodrow dug in his heels and asked for his day in ecclesiastical court. Not until the General Assembly of 1886 did the case come to trial. The committee examining the cases denied evolutionary theory permissible in any form because it contradicted the Bible. Woodrow unsuccessfully defended his views and his appeals failed.

5. **Woodrow’s later career.** Despite his ouster from the seminary, he later became member of South Carolina Presbytery and was elected moderator of the synod in 1901. At Carolina College he served as professor, dean and later as president which
would eventually become the University of South Carolina. The controversy supported the reputation of Dabney and indicated to moderates that the perspective of Southern Presbyterian would stay united in the conservative tradition.

V. **Conclusion.** Presbyterians showed themselves well equipped to report and evaluate the controversies that swirled within the academic community. Not only did they express an interest in major cultural developments, they did not fear entering into debate over scientific matters. Just as theological diversity expressed itself in previous schisms, so in the field of science Presbyterian opinions differed. Just as diversity manifested itself at Princeton so southern Presbyterians showed different perspectives on the explosive issue of evolution. These differences would carry over into the 20th c. Although the tide of scholarly opinion would eventually side against the Princetonians, Presbyterians as a whole showed their competency to engage the issues raised by the latest scientific theories.
I. **Introduction. Religion 1870-1920s: religious turmoil.** George Marsden and Gary Smith have been trying to interpret these crucial years (Smith’s PhD thesis *The Seeds of Secularization*).

A. A tremendous **transformation occurs in the interval** between the Civil War and WWI. **American culture undergoes a severe change** as the vibrant evangelicalism that characterized 1st half of 19th c gives way to growth of liberal theology (America a generation behind similar movement in Europe). While conservatives successful in suppressing radical results of biblical criticism, the second half of the century would see heresy trials, suspension of ministers and others leaving to join other denominations not so conservatively inclined. Interpreting the American churches in this turbulent period has taxed historians. Presbyterian is no exception. We must confront the rising tide of liberalism; conservative response before 1900; the appearance of the Social Gospel and its affects on denominations; the holiness movements; the fundamentalist-modernist controversy which culminates in the infamous Scopes Monkey Trial of 1925.

B. **Events after the Old School - New School Reunion: Joy gives way to foreboding.** Events in the Midwest, Chicago and Cincinnati, in the decades immediately following the reunion of 1869, 70 begin the next theological chapter in the history of American Presbyterian. Lefferts Loetscher narrates, with favorable appreciation, an account of *The Broadening Church*, Presbyterian’s shift from a carefully defined theological perspective to a broadening of its theological horizons. He opens his history with “The Wedding Day,” a description of the optimism which greeted the reunion of Old and New School Presbyterians. But the metaphor of “married bliss” gave way to “Shadows of Coming Events” in chapter two as Loetscher sets the stage that portended significant theological change within the PCUSA.

C. **Concurrent ecclesiastical / civil trials** within other Protestant denominations. Presbyterians were not alone in experiencing doctrinal strife as conservatives attempted to limit the incursion of liberalism into their churches and seminaries.

1. **Congregationalists** already noted for spread of Unitarianism within their ranks in the late 18th and early 19th c. Andover founded in 1808 to counter Harvard’s Unitarianism. Andover’s board dismissed a professor in 1892 but the case was voided by the Massachusetts Supreme Court.

2. **Baptists** shared Congregationalism’s loose form of polity with the result that few barriers existed to stop liberalism from invading churches. Baptist conservatives, however, were able to oust a professor at Newton Theological Seminary in 1882 [Andover and Newton united in 1965] and another from Colgate in 1896. But by World War I all Baptist seminaries in the North were in the liberal camp.

3. **Methodists** functioned with an Episcopal polity; but tests for ministers focused more on morality – the influence of Wesleyan piety / perfectionism – than on doctrinal purity.

   a. Charges were brought against professor at Boston University School of Theology in 1904 over inerrancy.
   b. Also against philosopher at Boston University in 1908.
   c. General Conference of 1908 halted any further proceedings; bishops no longer responsible for investigating false teaching at Methodist schools.

II. **Chicago: Heresy Trials and McCormick Theological Seminary.** A number of heresy trials threatened to disrupt the harmony that marked the reunion of Old and New Schools. A minority of
Old Schoolers and still smaller number of New Schoolers opposed the reunion, fearing the loss of Calvinist orthodoxy (Old School) or the loss of theological freedom (New School).

A. David Swing Trial. Dr. Francis L. Patton, a gifted, young theologian at the Presbyterian Seminary of the Northwest (later McCormick Theological Seminary), criticized David Swing, former New Schooler and pastor of 4th Presbyterian Church in Chicago, of theological diversity that went beyond inessential matters allowed by the traditional Presbyterian standards. He brought formal charges before Chicago Presbytery in April, 1874: violating 6th ordination vow (faithful maintaining the truths of the gospel) and the 2nd vow (did not receive the standards of the Confession).

1. Swing’s defense. Swing claimed that all creeds lack absolute status; they are merely relative and subject to historical circumstances: “A creed is only the highest wisdom of a particular time and place. Hence, as in States, there is always a quiet slipping away from old laws without any waiting of a formal appeal.” Swing’s irenic spirit and the fact that he never overtly disputed the Confession made the charges difficult to sustain. For example, though Patton charged that Swing’s views could receive a Unitarian interpretation, he could not demonstrate that Swing actually taught Unitarianism.

2. Swing acquitted. The Presbytery was more inclined to Swing than to Patton’s views (Loetscher points out that Midwest settled primarily by New Schoolers from New York and New England). Thus Swing was acquitted of both charges. Patton claimed he would appeal the decision, but in order that he not be subject to future accusation, Swing withdrew from the Presbytery.

3. Future development of theology. The Swing trial set the stage for theological controversy in Midwest.

D. Founding of McCormick Theological Seminary. Cyrus McCormick, wealthy Old Schooler and developer of the famous McCormick reaper, wanted to establish an Old School seminary to stem the development of more radical ideas. In 1857 he sought to keep the control of the school out of local synods and offered $100,000 to endow four chairs if the General Assembly would assume power of the seminary and locate it in Chicago. Thus the seminary was “refounded” in 1859 (former Hanover Academy from New Albany, IN). McCormick favored

1. McCormick’s Old School concerns. He favored the Old School uniting not with New School, but with Southern Presbyterian. He believed only such an alliance would preserve traditional Calvinist theology in the Church. He also labored to oppose radical Reconstructionism in the South. After the Chicago fire of 1871, his deep pockets were needed to keep the seminary afloat. He brought Patton to the faculty of the seminary to stem the tide of liberal thinking that he believed might take over the seminary. New School adherents prevailed in the calling of Robert W. Patterson to the faculty.

2. Results of the Swing trial. Patton had recently arrived at the seminary. The incident might have thrown the Presbytery and the seminary into turmoil, but outright controversy and struggle did not occur at this early date.

III. William McCune case in Cincinnati. Lane Seminary had been founded in 1829; remember it suffered from two famous controversies: (1) the intense debate sparked by Weld and his abolitionist advocates as they exited in 1834; and (2) the 1835 heresy trial of Lyman Beecher. Lane was viewed as New School competitor to Old School seminaries in Allegheny, PA and Chicago. Lane represents
the opposite situation from Seminary of the Northwest in Chicago: Lane was a New School seminary in Old School area of influence; the reverse was true in Chicago.

A. **McCune proposes undenominational church.** William C. McCune argued that denominational differences should be set aside; he argued that denominations are sinful (argument similar to “Disciples” movement) and he repudiated infant baptism. As a result of his efforts an undenominational church established in a suburb of Cincinnati in 1875.

B. **Thomas Skinner charges McCune.** McCune opposed by Thomas Skinner, an Old School pastor who stated that Presbyterian distinctives should not be ignored by such actions (Skinner called McCune’s efforts “liberalism and broad-churchism”).

C. **General Assembly action.** The matter went before the 1877 General Assembly (Patton was the Moderator which indicates its conservative nature) It censured the Presbytery of Cincinnati for not reprimanding McCune.

D. **Summary.** Thus a number of events indicate theological differences which were emerging. Both sides found reasons to question whether the unity achieved in 1869 could be continued. Conservatives suspected New School influencing the church to the right and New School believed that Old School strictures would limit the church’s development.

IV. **New perspectives in Biblical studies and in theology.** The rationalism of the Enlightenment exercised a profound influence on both biblical studies and Christian theology. Both fields came under the influence of Enlightenment thinking – that is radical rationalism supported by naturalistic presuppositions.

A. **19th c Biblical studies.** Continental philosophers in the 18th c such as Spinoza urged that the Bible be subjected to same critical methods used on other literature. Thinkers began to apply naturalistic presuppositions and came to radical conclusions about dating of the biblical books and the unreliability of their contents. In the OT Julius Wellhausen’s Documentary Hypothesis (JEDP) led to denial of Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. In the New Testament, higher criticism led to a new discipline of Biblical Theology. In its radical form, critics claimed that the Bible does not contain a unified or harmonious perspective, “Christian theology.” Instead critics posited a vast disharmony, a number of different and disparate theologies, one for Paul, another for Peter and still others for John and the rest of the NT authors. Thus higher criticism challenged the very content of the Bible.

B. **Theological development.** Reformation theology was followed by what are called the Protestant scholastics. The 19th c continental thinkers began to disparage traditional formulations in favor of new approaches: Cf., Friedrich Schleiermacher who adapted Christian thinking to the romantic temper.

C. **Princeton theology.** Princeton as we have seen, maintained the reformed tradition not only of continental Protestants but were staunch supporters of the Westminster Confession, strictly interpreted. They maintained full biblical confessionalism which meant they stood fully opposed to all who would subject the Bible to new higher criticism or attempt to revise subscription to the Westminster standards. **Loetscher summarizes Princeton** by quoting Hodge’s famous “new idea” statement: “They [Princetonians] taught Calvinism of the Westminster type, modified by the Calvinistic scholasticism of the 17th c and by 18th c antideistical controversies.”

D. **New School divergences.** Loetscher narrates a separate, New School approach. In biblical studies, he points to Dr. Edward Robinson, prof at Andover then Union. He leaned toward a documentary approach to OT studies. He also mentions Henry Boynton Smith as representing the mediating point of view characterizing the New School. Yet he notes that
Smith toed the line on matters of biblical authority. Smith was succeeded by William G. T. Shedd, another staunch opponent of radical views. Shedd was even more clearly in the Old School tradition. Nevertheless, affirms Loetscher, a discernible New School approach evident. Marsden seems opposed to such a radical distinction as he argued for essential orthodoxy of Smith.

E. **Charles A. Briggs, radical proponent of biblical criticism and new theology.** The scene changes sharply with the appearance of Briggs. In 1880 he became co-editor with AA Hodge of newly formed *Presbyterian Review*. Tension soon mounted as Briggs views contrasted sharply with Princeton’s traditional stand of orthodoxy. AA Hodge and BB Warfield published their classic essay “Inspiration” in 1881 which made the strongest case for inerrancy in the autographs. Briggs’ 1876 inaugural address as professor of Hebrew at Union set an entirely different attitude toward the Bible. Briggs contended that critical studies of the Bible should not be limited by dogmatic considerations. What difference did it make whether the Pentateuch came from the Jewish people’s experience from Moses to Josiah?

1. **Briggs’ later thought:** But Briggs’ thought turned even more radical. The publication of *Whither?* in 1889 revealed even more liberal ideas; it was an ill-tempered diatribe and elicited fierce conservative criticism. Briggs sharply attacked Princetonians by name, Alexander and the two Hodges and other leading conservatives: his charge = the conservatives had actually been the ones who had diverged from the Westminster, in the direction of a wooden scholasticism.

2. **Another inaugural address.** Jan 20, 1891. Delivering an hour and three quarters address “The Authority of Holy Scripture” as he was installed as professor of Biblical theology. He cited three authorities, the Church, Reason and the Bible. All three have been means by which people have encountered God. Neither way is more important than the other. He enumerated six barriers to divine authority.
   a. “Bibliolatry” a superstitious elevation of the Bible as authoritative.
   b. **Verbal inspiration** [“No such claim is found in the Bible itself, or in any of the creeds of Christendom.”]
   c. **Authenticity.** Too great an emphasis exists on the authenticity of biblical books [a direct attack on the main Princeton approach to canonicity]. He explicitly denied Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch; Isaiah 40-66 was not written by the prophet.
   d. **Inerrancy.** He believed errors existed that no one could explain away. This was a direct attack on Hodge-Warfield article on “Inspiration” that appeared in 1881 in the *Princeton Review*.
   e. **Miracles as a violation of the laws of nature.** This is a barrier for scientifically-minded people.
   f. **Prophecy as minute prediction of history.** Prophecy is not prewritten history.
   g. Briggs made additional remarks disparaging other conservative doctrines: **original sin** [Protestants exaggerated original righteousness to “magnify the guilt of our first parents.”]; **sanctification after death** continues as opposed to our being made perfect at death; attacked morality of OT figures of Abraham, Noah, David [“we would not receive such men into our families”].
   h. **Appeal to end old, dead orthodoxies.** The future of the Church lay in new theology, not continuation of the old.
i. **Loetscher makes enormous apologies for the tone of the address** – “peculiarly offensive” – and argues that Briggs made much better case for new theology in previously published work. Loetscher argues that Briggs saw conservatives winning the day, and perhaps he took his own revenge for attacks on his own efforts to revise the Westminster Confession or wanted to spur a response from New School seminaries like Lane who at this point were merely fence-sitting.

j. **Reaction.** Some stood by the radical address; predictably others stormed against it. Would the seminary stand by Briggs?

V. **Responses to Briggs’ address**. Various factions emerged in response to the lecture. Eventually one of the most famous 19th c heresy trials resulted.

A. **Union Seminary.** The seminary had to close ranks behind Briggs in light of the upcoming General Assembly. Loetscher gives details about the machinations of the board as the date for the Assembly drew near. Briggs’ strongest supporters decried Briggs’ revision clarifying points.

B. **General Assembly 1891.** Reaction led to action to veto Briggs’ professorship. Then the issue of Union’s relation to the Church came up. The vote of 449-60 indicates the strong conservative reaction. Union Seminary ended its relation with the General Assembly in 1892.

C. **Presbytery action to try Briggs.** Two charges of heresy were lodged in Presbytery of NY because of his speech: [1] rejection of inerrancy and [2] belief in continuing sanctification after death as a biblical and church doctrine. Briggs’ response was so influential that vote to acquit Briggs was 94-39. Wording of the resolution indicates NY was moving toward more inclusive church. It did not endorse Briggs’ views but allowed that one holding such ideas should be permitted within the Church.

   1. Prosecutor appealed Presbytery’s decision to General Assembly. W.G.T. Shedd, professor of systematics at Union and a staunch Calvinist, argued that such an appeal was absolutely necessary. Briggs’ ideas were so antithetical to traditional theology that if they were not condemned that would actually be an endorsement of them.

D. **Portland General Assembly 1892.** The General Assembly reversed the decision of NY Presbytery dismissing the case and declared that a trial should proceed.

   1. **Portland Deliverance.** The General Assembly also dealt authoritatively with the key issue underlying the Briggs case – biblical authority. The Assembly issued the famous “Portland Deliverance” which upheld conservative views of Old School akin to what was known as the Five Points of fundamentalism. First of those points took the position of the Hodge - Warfield view: “Our Church holds that the inspired Word, as it came from God, is without error…. All who enter office in our Church solemnly profess to receive them [the books of Scripture] as the only infallible rule of faith and practice. If they change their belief on this point, Christian honor demands that they should withdraw from our ministry.” Thus inerrancy and infallibility form the foundation of biblical authority.

   2. **Loetscher laments that such a stern view taken:** He quotes Henry VanDyke [mediating theologian; strong supporter of Briggs; moderator of General Assembly in 1902] that such a pronouncement constitutes nothing less than a new strategy, “a new test of orthodoxy in the Presbyterian Church, and thus to make a radical revolution it its constitution and practically abrogate its essential law.”
a. VanDyke’s view – repeated by countless other historians who should have known better – became the new liberal dogma; the Princeton biblical apologetic represents the final tightening of scholastic screws in views of the Bible. It was not the historic tradition of the Church but represents the last gasp of orthodoxy fighting against wave of progressive theology spurred by biblical criticism. Such a view totally overlooks many instances in church history from Augustine, through Luther and Calvin and also in non-reformed circles such as John Wesley. Randall Balmer has contributed mightily to overthrowing this erroneous view [“The Princetonians and Scripture: A Reconsideration” *Westminster Theological Journal* Fall, 1982 (362-5).]

b. Loetscher goes on to attribute the passage of the Portland Deliverance to the fact that it was adopted in the rush of last day of meetings when the docket was filled. He also quibbles that the deliverance does not say what is inerrant and in what sense it is inerrant. This statement seems disingenuous at best since he already quoted the Hodge-Warfield view as the basis of the statement. And Hodge and Warfield, as well as the entire Princetonian tradition had long before detailed the conservative viewpoint.

VI. Briggs’s Trial before NY Presbytery (1892) All eyes now focused on proceedings in NY; now eight charges brought against Briggs which relate to points Briggs made in his teaching (role of reason and the Church, errors in the text; authorship of various books, predictive prophecy, etc.)

A. Briggs’ defense. Rather than answer the charges specifically, Briggs focused on the fact that many church fathers up to Luther and Calvin taught that errors exist in the text. He cited German critics and other more modern scholars, concluding: “The number of Professors in the Old Testament department who hold to the traditional theory may be counted one’s fingers.” Loetscher’s comment: “Instead of attempting to deny the views attributed to him in the charges, he sought to show that they are innocuous.”

B. Briggs’ acquitted. The strategy worked as none of the specifications were sustained. The Presbytery closed the matter with an exhortation to peace and harmony in the Church in light of the larger issue at stake – “the great and urgent work of the Church which is the proclamation of the Gospel and the edifying of the Body of Christ.” Loetscher: “the spirit of tolerance and inclusiveness for the sake of the Church’s more efficient functioning is apparent in this closing exhortation.” Following the decision, the Presbytery issued a “Plea for Peace and Work” which was distributed throughout the Church to minimize the strife which might result from the case. While not expressing a view on the subject of inerrancy, it strongly objected to any statement as a test for ministry in the Church.

C. Pragmatism and Presbyterian. Loetscher continues his analysis by noting that this decision marks a definite shift in American Calvinism. Making the effective working of the Church more primary than the truth of what it proclaims fundamentally changes the task of the Church. Subordinating questions of theological truth to efficient performing of mission smacks of pragmatism. Loetscher notes that although no overt reference mentioned the pragmatic philosophies of Charles Peirce and William James, this decision reflects the spirit of pragmatism. It was not the first nor would it be the last time the world set the agenda for the church.

VII. Appeal of Briggs Case (1893). Tumultuous political intrigue followed as friends and opponents jockeyed over how to resolve the case.
A. The decision to appeal was overwhelmingly accepted at 1893 General Assembly in
Washington, DC by a vote of 410-145. NY Synod was the only synod to vote against hearing
the appeal. PA was the most conservative (vote was 79-5).

B. All available seats were taken during the Briggs proceedings. When the roll-call vote was
taken, each person given three minutes — rigidly upheld as some interrupted mid-sentence.
Vote: 295 voted to sustain appeal as a whole; 84 to sustain in part and 116 not to sustain.

C. **Suspension of Briggs.** The General Assembly officially suspended Briggs from the ministry.
An explanatory statement relieved some of the charges against Dr. Briggs; and some
expressed strong views about the constitutionality of the proceedings and severity of
strictures regarding freedom of thought.

D. **Clarification of Portland Deliverance.** The General Assembly clarified what has been left
unsaid: inerrancy pertains to autographa (the Hodge - Warfield position): “the original
Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, being immediately inspired of God were without
error. [This view] has always been the belief of the Church.” The following year, the General
Assembly denied that this view constitutes a new dogma.

E. **In 1898 Briggs entered the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church.**

VIII. **Trial of Henry Preserved Smith.** Lane Theological Seminary, a New School seminary in a
predominantly Old School environment (Danville, Allegheny and Chicago). Thus teachers had to
weigh their words carefully.

A. **Support of Briggs.** Smith supported positions taken by Briggs in his inaugural address, and
he joined in attacking the position of verbal inspiration.

B. **Smith and the Portland Deliverance.** The Portland Deliverance, without actually naming
Smith, took positions which responded to Smith’s views. Specifically whether a person was
accountable to ordination vows — such as biblical inerrancy — only at the time of ordination or
through the duration of one’s ministry. Smith argued that a person’s views could well
change; and one was not necessarily required to report such a fact to his Presbytery.

C. **Presbytery of Cincinnati tried Smith (1892).** Found guilty by 31-26. Smith appealed to
Synod of Ohio which refused to sustain any of his grounds of appeal. In 1894, he appealed to
General Assembly — focused primarily on whether minister could be suspended for failing to
believe in inerrancy. Smith argued that no such requirement existed that made inerrancy an
essential doctrine. The strength of conservative views is illustrated by the fact that a much
less argumentative position than Brigg’s drew the same response from the General Assembly
(actually more voted against Smith than did against Briggs).

IX. **Aftermath.** Polarization of the denomination. Progressives formed a group (Presbyterian League of
NY) to foster a more liberal approach to doctrinal subscription, a shorter creed and an end to recent
suspensions. Conservatives, emboldened by their success, also rallied to consolidate their gains.
While on the surface, the church seemed harmonious, that was only because the conservative
majority remained in control while the liberals, who definitely disliked recent events, waited their
day. They believed firmly in the rightness of their cause.

A. **McGiffert case.** Arthur Cushman McGiffert, educated at Union, was professor at Lane,
supporter of Smith’s ideas. Assumed chair of Church History at Union Theol Sem and in A
History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age (1896) he took positions that seemed opposed to
the Westminster Confession. McGiffert became president at Union in 1917. Even though the
General Assembly tried to pour oil over troubled water (it did not want another heresy trial
and counseled McGiffert to tone down his views). McGiffert stoutly refused to desist.
General Assembly of 1899 received many overtures against McGiffert’s ideas in a subsequent book. McGiffert affirmed “infallible” not “inerrant” as pertaining to Scripture. He affirmed the deity of Christ but held out the possibility of Jesus’ having erred in his lifetime.

B. **McGiffert withdraws from the Presbyterian Church.** As situation got more volatile and another major confrontation threatened the Church, McGiffert requested that his name be withdrawn in 1900, and he joined the Congregationalists. Loetscher bemoans yet another victory on the part of those seeking to broaden the vision of the Presbyterian Church.

X. **Conclusion.** Shifts occurred in the crucial period following the Civil War that demonstrated a denomination in substantial turmoil. Theological controversies became more intense and radical. They moved beyond the differences between Calvinism and Arminianism. Three prominent professors had been drummed out of the church for their views. And pressure continued to build for changes in the Westminster Confession. Still, by the close of the century, conservatives successfully held the line and contended that they would continue to oppose efforts to change the theological stance of their denomination. Yet liberal also persisted in maintaining that they also would not cease in their efforts to introduce a more moderate theological position. The stage was thus set for major confrontation of the modernist – fundamentalist struggles.
I. **Introduction.** Today we continue our discussion of the rise of liberalism in Presbyterian. We will follow up on the heresy trials of Briggs, Smith and McGiffert by briefly considering the aftermath in the Presbyterian seminaries and then examining the Social Gospel movement and its impact on Presbyterian.

II. **Presbyterian Seminaries in 19th c.** So far in our course we have mentioned when Presbyterian seminaries were founded in the 19th c. Our attention has focused primarily on Princeton because it remained the flagship school for the Church in the first half of the century. This approach has been valid because evangelism reigned as the primary religious expression of American church life; terms such as “evangelical empire” accurately describe 19th c. Not that all views unanimously agreed with Princetonians. But evangelism functioned *de facto* as the consensus faith of public life. With the rise of liberalism a major shift occurs in the religious landscape. Harvard (1805) The first major shift occurred in Boston when Henry Ware, a Unitarian was named to Hollis Chair of Divinity. (Cf., R. L. Kelly, *Theological Education in America* [1924].) But Presbyterian represented a major conservative force in field of theological education. As some innovative schools dropped Hebrew and introduced more electives, very few changes intro into theological curriculum. Eventually, however, changes developed. **Key developments in major schools:**

A. **Withdrawal of Union.** After the Assembly’s veto of Briggs’ appointment in biblical theology in 1891, Union Seminary began the process which culminated in 1915 of separation from the Presbyterian Church.

B. **Lane Seminary.** Smith case affected direction of the school. Should the school remain within the denomination? Though some counseled withdrawal, the school remained within the church. Great upheaval present from 1893-7. Eventually Lane merged with McCormick in 1933.

C. **Auburn Seminary.** With the above situations at Union and Lane, Auburn remained the only New School seminary in the denomination. Those who taught there represented “mildly conservative views” (Loetscher). Critical views received a hearing; toleration marked the biblical studies. Loetscher lists the various professors and presidents that played a significant role in establishing Auburn’s moderate views. It eventually merged with Union in 1939.

D. **McCormick Seminary in Chicago.** McCormick stayed within a conservative, Old School position in the 1890s although some moderates were appointed. Cyrus McCormick was willing to shoulder financial responsibility for keeping the seminary within Old School parameters rather than to let others influence the school in a liberal direction. A change in direction became evident by the coming in 1891 of church historian, Dr. Constantine Zenos. At first AA Hodge acknowledged Zenos as supporter of conservative views, but a decade later he began sanctioning moderate critical views. Loetscher attributes developments toward broad churchism in 1920s and 1930s as a direct result of quiet leadership in the Midwest toward more liberal views that characterized McCormick Seminary.

E. **Western Seminary, Pittsburgh.** Located in heart of Scotch Irish country in western PA, it could be depended upon to support conservative views. In fact, it was originally called “the Princeton of the West.” AA Hodge and BB Warfield served at Western before their calls to Princeton. But those who replaced Hodge and Warfield reflect the growing trend toward moderate progressivism in early 20th c. Dr. James Kelso replaced Robert Dick Wilson and introduced OT criticism. Warfield’s replacement though remaining conservative in his views
stressed open-mindedness in his students that prepared the way of modifying conservative views in much the same way as McCormick did in the Midwest.

F. **Other seminaries.** Other seminaries also played a role in Presbyterian Church.

1. **San Francisco (1871).** The only school on Pacific coast. Stayed relatively conservative until well into the 20th c.
2. **Louisville (1901).** Run jointly by northern and southern Presbyterians.
3. **Dubuque (1852).** In early years specialized in training pastors for German-speaking Presbyterians.

III. **Presbyterian and the Social Gospel.** We have traced alterations to the theological landscape in the last decades of the 19th c. We now turn to another turbulent alteration to religion in America, the Social Gospel. The origin of the social gospel is not simply a theological position. Usually it is linked primarily to vast social and economic changes arising out of post-Civil War America. Historians commonly speak of urbanization and industrialization that arose in the North that significantly altered not only demographics of American culture but also the religious denominations as well. For example, New York, Phila, and Baltimore witnessed a doubling of its population base. Further west, Kansas City and Detroit grew fourfold, Chicago tenfold and Los Angeles twentyfold. Add to these vast changes the influx of immigration (primarily Catholic and Jewish) and we see Protestants confronting a challenge to their long held hegemony on the religious scene. No longer were the population centers to be vast Protestant strongholds. Ethnic ghettos meant the increase of religious diversity and decrease in Protestant influence. Balmer and Fitzmeier relate the following account from Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*:

> Where God builds a church the devil builds next door a saloon, is an old saying that has lost its point in New York. Either the devil was on the ground first, or he has been doing a good deal more in the way of building. I tried once to find out how the account stood, and counted 111 Protestant churches, chapels and places of worship of every kind below 14th St., 4,065 saloons. The worst half of the tenement population lives down there, and it has to this day the worst half of the saloon. Uptown the account stands a little better, but here are easily ten saloons to every church today. I am afraid, too, that the congregations are larger by a good deal; certainly the attendance is steadier and the contributions more liberal the week round, Sunday included. (84)

A. **Protestant response.** Some cast the blame on influx of ethnic elements and the rise of Catholicism. Nativist movements reacted strongly fearing the takeover of American public life; the Know-Nothing party the American Protective Association formed to protect Protestant interests. Others saw the opportunity for social improvement and assessed the problem as stemming from an unrestrained capitalism that massed wealth in the hands of a few and used their economic power to oppress the working class. You have undoubtedly heard figures amassed to justify the response of the Social Gospel.

B. **“The Great Reversal.”** Marsden narrates what some have called Protestants’ dramatic loss of social concern by the 1920s. They point out that a definite shift occurred in evangelical thought from a previous well balanced interest in both the salvation of the souls and social concern for human temporal needs. “Privatism” replaced social reform through voluntary societies. Prior to 1900, evangelicals promoted meeting social problems whether social need was to be met through private charity or political programs.
1. **Shift from basically Calvinist to Pietist tradition.** Transition from advancing the kingdom through political means to more pietistic view of merely restraining the spread of evil.
   a. **Calvinist tradition.** Marsden: Reformed view of Christian culture entailed that Christians viewed cultural mandate still in force. Christians viewed their tasks in society as advancing the Kingdom of God through their vocation. Civil laws used not only to restrain evil but also to bring about much positive good in society. Christians were to bring about the New Israel as they worked in their various jobs. (Cf., Calvinist Geneva as model.) One can read AA Hodge’s famous *Popular Lectures on Theological Themes* and discern the combination of Calvinist world view (transformation of culture), post-millennialism, and “Christian America.”
   b. **Holiness movement and changing millennial views.** Marsden also points out the influence of the personal holiness movement along with a shift in eschatological world view: from post-millennial to pre-millennial views. Both of these helped shift the emphasis from a reformed world and life view to a more privatized Christianity in which little if anything can or should be done to improve the political, economic, social orders.

2. **Submergence of social concerns among evangelicals.** Evangelicals tended to identify the mission of the church in purely spiritual terms and ignore social action; while the emerging Social Gospel tended to focus almost exclusively on social activity at the expense of spiritual regeneration.
   a. **Evangelical emphasis on regeneration** complemented with social “good works.” Evangelicals thought that the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit indispensable starting place for mission of the church. Good works would either take form of individual or public activity. Interesting that even among those most individualistic thinkers controlling alcoholic consumption through prohibition was considered a high priority.
   b. **Social Gospel.** Primary leaders came from other denominations: Congregationalists (Washington Gladden) and Baptists (Walter Rauschenbusch). On the other hand, Social Gospelers impose an almost totally different understanding of mission on Christianity. They followed the lead in American culture provided by pragmatism – the only test of truth was action. Walter Rauschenbusch: “Religious morality is the only thing God cares about.” Implication: doctrine and theological affirmation take a clear back seat.
   c. **Evangelical assessment of Social Gospel.** Social Gospelers stressed social concern at the expense of spiritual concern for the atoning work of Christ as providing a way of salvation. Now the social gospel had replaced the NT gospel. Social gospelers responded that the old way of looking at people individualistically could no longer meet the crying needs of the masses. Only a gospel socially applied could meet the contingencies mentioned in the beginning of our lecture. Thus people considered a dichotomy existed: the revivalist gospel vs. the social gospel. No longer could one advocate a synthesis between soul-saving individualism and seeking the progress of an immanent kingdom of God which was advancing western civilization.
3. Smylie in *A Brief History of the Presbyterians* mentions Charles Stelzle, Presbyterian clergyman came from Bowery in NY. He is now acknowledged as a prominent PCUSA leader in concern for social matters. In 1903 he helped form a Working Men’s Department which later became the denomination’s Department of Church and Labor. He organized Labor Temple in NYC for ministry especially among immigrants. He also wrote *The Gospel of Labor* (1912) to emphasize the dignity and value of work.

IV. **Four Views of Christianity and Culture in America c. 1910** (George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*). Each of these views reflects an anti-modernist evangelical movement in the opening part of the 20th c. All four claimed biblical basis and some elements shared in common, but in fact there was no single, evangelical social interpretation of Christianity and culture.

A. **This age condemned: premillennial extreme** (Niebuhr’s “Christ against culture”)
   Consisting of premillennial dispensationalists, this group was the most pessimistic about cultural change. Dispensationalists focused on dismal evidence of culture’s decay as inescapable signs of the imminent coming of Christ. Writers stressed overt sin and worldliness, worldwide commercial alliances, armament agreements and blatant luxuries as signs of the end of the age. Attempts to reform these ills were labeled socialism. Dispensationalists decried evolutionary theory, advances in science and knowledge as further harbingers of Christ’s coming.

B. **The Central Tension.** Optimistic premillennialists. Advocates of this view were less extreme than their dispensationalist colleagues. They did not rail against democracy and socialism; their message was more optimistic. Christians should labor to help those in need. Culturally optimistic and zealous in not only evangelism but also social reform, this group identified with the emerging Bible Institute movement. While some of their remarks smack of anti-intellectual and anti-cultural bias, this group did not repudiate both.

C. **Christian Civilization preserved: William Jennings Bryan.** Prominent figure in Democratic party and candidate for presidency of US in 1908; Woodrow Wilson’s Secy of State until 1915. This position represented the amalgamation of pietism (American “old time religion”) and emerging American political ideals (hope for peace, role of natural law and American leadership to guide world peacefully). This group saw itself aligned against emerging philosophies of naturalism and materialism; broad consensus of American evangelicalism. Pragmatic when it came to implementing Christianity – although he was a Presbyterian, he did not appeal to traditional reformed distinctives. Representative quote: “Christian civilization is the greatest that the world has ever known because it rests on a conception of life that makes life one unending progress toward higher things, with no limit to human advancement or development.” (vague form of post-mill)

D. **Transforming Culture by the Word.** Denominational conservatives – here Marsden focuses on the Presbyterian form. He notes the two streams of Old and New School Presbyterian. Both, however, shared a common view of a mission to civilization.
   1. **Old School.** three points: (1) **pessimistic about cultural achievements** due to the Fall and the prevalence of sin throughout all human culture; (2) **separation of church and state** that grew out of Scottish controversies; as individuals, Christians could accomplish much, but the church ought to stay out of involvement in culture (spirituality of church); (3) **Church’s primary contribution is to foster truth as found in creeds:** while moral action important, protecting confessional belief was primary. Marsden pays special attention to postmillennialism of BB Warfield who
expected to see signs of kingdom in the transformation of American culture. This view complemented his view that Christianity was to reason its way to dominion; so he interpreted the apocalyptic passage of Rev 19: the sword of victory proceeds out of the mouth of the Conqueror; “the conquest is wrought by the spoken word – in short, by the preaching of the Gospel.” By this the moral evil of the world will be subdued (“The Millennium and the Apocalypse” in Biblical Doctrines. Warfield argued for reform in 1887 “to raise and educate the blacks to take their proper place in our Christian civilization” (“A Calm View of the Freedmen’s Case” also “Drawing the Color Line” Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield)).

2. J. Gresham Machen. After Warfield, some Presbyterians in Princeton tradition became less optimistic about the success of Christianity in achieving victory, especially among intellectual elite. In 1912, opening address at Princeton’s academic year, Machen spoke on “culture and Christianity.” He saw victories in other cultural matters as minor compared with winning the universities. He eschewed both liberal subjugation of Christianity to culture and conservative ignorance of culture. His solution was “consecration of culture”; do not give up arts and sciences to liberals. Instead, “let us cultivate them with all the enthusiasm of the veriest humanist, but at the same time consecrate them to the service of our God.” Christianity must permeate all human thought: ”let us go forth joyfully, enthusiastically to make the world subject to God.” The problem facing Presbyterian was to maintain a broad vision; instead of breadth, Machen found himself called to narrow-gauged vision of Winona Bible Conference; looked more sectarian than culture transforming. Machen also found himself supporting, against virulent opposition, the appearance of Billy Sunday, the flamboyant evangelist, at Princeton University.
Lecture #18 Presbyterian and Fundamentalism

Hoffecker

I. **Introduction. Growing conflict within Presbyterian.** We now enter a critical time for our understanding of Presbyterian in the 20th c. Conservatives within the Church held their own during the closing decades of the 19th c. Consistently they were able to muster up sufficient action to repel persistent attempts to advance a progressive agenda for the Church. But advocates of a more liberal approach to belief and discipline never gave up their cause. Despite setbacks, they kept coming back and saw their ideas gaining ground within a denomination that successfully stemmed the tide of a burgeoning liberal perspective in the Church.

A. **Polarization of forces.** Thus one could see plainly a polarization that was developing between liberals and conservatives. It manifested itself in our recent lectures as we have highlighted differences over *key issues*: the role of science; what constitutes orthodox and heterodox beliefs (heresy); conflict within seminaries; the social gospel and the relation between Christianity and culture; revision of the Confession.

B. **Liberal vs. conservative.** We now face the final element that brought the conflict to a head in the years following World War I – the struggle between liberals and conservatives for control of the denomination. For conservatives would the Church broaden to become more and more inclusive theologically or would it retain its distinctive allegiance to its reformed heritage? Liberals saw things differently – for them the issue was not primarily theological, but ecclesiastical even sociological. They focused attention on the push and pull of freedom and power.

C. **Period of calm (1904-1922) preceded protracted struggle (1922-1936) for the soul of the denomination.** The result was a decisive change of direction for the Church. Turning away from its conservative stance in the past, the Church adopted a broader, more moderate stance theologically. During the period, both sides of the conflict developed a clear sense of their respective visions.

II. **Reunion with Cumberland Presbyterian Church.** The schism of 1810 that resulted in the formation of Cumberland Presbyterian arose out of sharp differences over the Second Awakening and specifically reformed view of predestination that the Cumberland Ch believed too close to “fatalism.” Efforts after New - Old School reunion to bring together the parties of 1810 came to naught because of this issue.

A. **Cumberland overtures for reunion.** Revisions to the Confession convinced leaders in the Cumberland Ch that Presbyterian were no longer so tied to God’s sovereignty that the two parties could not join together. Thus in 1904 the two General Assemblies proposed a plan of union.

B. **Conservatives suspected problems here:** were the Cumberland folks embarking on this enterprise because they believed PCUSA had given up its Calvinist beliefs? To prevent such an interpretation, the Presbyterian included a statement that the revision implied no change in the integrity of the system of belief in the Confession.

C. **Reunion in 1905.** Despite strong objection by people such as Francis Patton, newly appointed president of Princeton, reunion approved overwhelmingly (194 of 241 Presbyterian approved). Loetscher correct: approval had enormous implications; it approved inclusion of a body that had previously separated specifically because it did not hold to Calvinist beliefs. Their action constituted nothing less than a broadening of the church.
III. Five-Point Deliverance (1910). Another dispute arose over licensing candidates in New York Presbyterian. Cases arose in context of candidates being educated at Union, which even though it no longer was officially related with the denomination, still produced graduates. The future of the theological stance of the Church at stake here. Would the liberal minority be able to grow? Interest focused on belief in the virgin birth. To resolve issues arising from this problem, the General Assembly of 1910 issued the Five-Point Deliverance.

A. Clarifying Adopting Act of 1729. Spoke to issue that underlay differences extending back to 18th c. struggle between New and Old Lights. Each of the five points begins with the statement “It is an essential and necessary doctrine of the Word of God.” And each cites a passage from the Westminster Standards or the Bible.

1. Inerrancy. The Holy Spirit’s inspiration of the Scriptures meant that they were kept from error. Cites Confession, Chapter I, Section 10.

2. Virgin Birth. Jesus born of the virgin Mary; it quotes the shorter Catechism, question 22: “Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to Himself a true body and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.”

3. Jesus’ atonement. When Christ died on the cross he offered himself as “a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and to reconcile us to God.” Strong affirmation not just of expiation but of propitiation. (Cites Shorter Catechism, Question 25.)

4. Physical resurrection. When Jesus rose from the dead he did so “in the same body in which he suffered; with which also he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of his ‘father, making intercession.” (See Confession, Ch VIII, Section 4.)

5. Miracles. Jesus’ works in his earthly ministry consisted of showing “his power and love by working mighty miracles. This working was not contrary to nature, but superior to it.” Cites Matt 9:35. (NB: this point differs from Portland which made Christ’s imminent return the fifth point.)

B. Precedence in Portland Deliverance (1892). Also other pronouncements in the 1880s and 90s. What strikes us again = the similarity between these five points and the famous statements of fundamentalists associated with the Niagara Bible Conference of 1895. How to assess these statements?

1. Weakness of fundamental “points”. Both friends and foes of the five points stress that fundamentalism differs from traditional reformed orthodoxy. Calvin, for example, stressed the wholeness of Christian faith. Why limit oneself to five succinct points? Doesn’t this minimize theology – a kind of “McDoctrine”? This similar to complaints of Puritans to succinctness of 39 Articles of Anglicanism and conservative critiques of Adolf Harnack’s attempt to discover the “essence of Christianity” or deists’ rationalistic reductionism of five points common to all religions.

2. Results of “Five Points.” Denomination struggled over the next decade in the implementation of the Five Points. While they had been passed, some openly attempted to circumvent their implementation. But the primary result = conservatives developed, Loetscher’s words, an “esprit de corps.” They became self-consciously aggressive in their activities.

IV. J. Gresham Machen (1881-1937) The heir apparent to BBW. He became the chief spokesman for conservative Presbyterians in waging a war against growing liberalism within the denomination. Machen and others saw the modernist controversy as serious a threat to the church as Arianism and Pelagianism in earlier eras. He addressed himself to the crisis in American culture. Studied at Johns
Hopkins, Marburg, and Gottingen in addition to Princeton Seminary. (For Machen’s career, see
Stonehouse’s biography and Daryl G. Hart’s  Defending the Faith.)

A. In the tradition of Abraham Kuyper’s Stone Lectures, Machen opened the 1912 academic
year speaking on Christianity and culture. Sounding somewhat like BBW, he argued that
a crisis exists in contemporary culture. Christianity was to make its claim in the intellectual
arena. He challenged both modernists and evangelicals for the ineffectiveness of their
approach.

1. The modernist way was the more dangerous – liberals threatened to relinquish the
faith altogether as they subordinated the faith to cultural ideals (i.e., science and false
philosophy). This would be to remake Christianity into the image of contemporary
culture and the gospel loses its distinctives (supernaturalism, key doctrines
compromised as they are altered to fit the modern mind).

2. But evangelicals also made a mistake: the dominant premillennialists were going to
relinquish the culture to the modernists and withdraw from culture in order to save
Christianity. While this may be better than the liberal option, it constituted going on
strike against the cultural mandate. The basic need of the hour is not to bypass culture
and intellect, the arts and sciences; that would make matters worse. “The Church is
perishing today through the lack of thinking, not through an excess of it.” The
answer was to consecrate the arts and sciences to the lordship of Christ and use them
in serving God. “Christianity must pervade not only all nations, but also all human
thought.” This was the heart of his reformed theology, to consecrate all culture to the
service of God. Calhoun notes that although he disagreed with Machen’s
conclusions, the famous liberal theologian Adolf Harnack that this address was an
“admirable study … deserving of every attention.” (2, 282)

V. Debate over foreign missions (1921). A charge arose about the orthodoxy not of pastors or
theologians in the American scene but on the part of missionaries on the foreign field. It arose from
an address in Phila made by an Episcopal clergy, Wm Henry Griffith Thomas. He made general
charges (later refused to be specific by naming names; instead he raised the issue as a matter of
general concern in the church) that missionaries were much affected by higher critical theories and
unorthodox beliefs. This sparked debate in which liberals acting defensively asked for specifics;
they assumed that divergences from five points were minor or not serious like their own.
Conservatives on the other hand, tended to speak in generalities; they believed that man in the pew
understood exactly what they were saying and stood with them. Liberals accused them of slander.
Issue not resolved in early 1920s; missions would surface again as a problem over a decade later.

VI. Liberal counteroffensive: Harry Emerson Fosdick’s famous sermon “Shall the Fundamentalists
Win?” preached in May 1921. Fosdick attacked the major points of fundamentalism by saying that
each of the tenets is but one interpretation of the faith, one specific theory among others; insisting in
a literal virgin birth, for example, is but one way of emphasizing the incarnation. Other views must
also be recognized as legitimate alternatives. Fosdick also misrepresented some of the points; he
contended that verbal inspiration was nothing less than stenographic dictation, a position which very
few fundamentalists held.

A. Fosdick charged the fundamentalists with the 20th c. sin, intolerance. He insisted that
liberals called for tolerance within the churches.

B. Clarence McCartney, pastor of Arch Street Presbyterian Church, Phila., responded with a
conservative attack, “Shall Unbelief Win?” McCartney claimed that Fosdick’s sermon was
nothing less than a full-fledged assault upon orthodoxy; and he called for Presbyterian to contend for the faith within the denomination. He led a General Assembly initiative to admonish the New York Presbytery for laxity in dealing with Fosdick. The General Assembly repeated its action extending back into the 1890’s of affirming the five-point declaration that began with the Portland Deliverance in 1893.

C. Christianity and Liberalism (1923) In 1923 the fundamentalist controversy within Presbyterian reached its most intense point. Machen had delivered in 1921 an address on liberals’ attack of the fundamentals. The Princeton Theol Review published it as “Liberalism or Christianity?” and friends encouraged Machen to expand it into book form. The opening sentence set the tone for the book as it challenged the reader to choose between two radically different, incompatible positions.

1. He **charged the modernists as being intellectually dishonest**. They paraded their views under the guise or name of Christianity while in practice denying its central tenets. Liberalism is destructive of faith because it uses traditional terminology while emptying the words of their meaning.

2. **His main criticism according to Marsden = liberalism was unchristian**. It amounted to nothing more than modern paganism. Modern Christianity cannot save sinners. One by one, Machen analyzed key liberal beliefs: in appealing to man’s will, it trusted in man’s ability to save himself; it denied the transcendence of God, it taught the wrong views of Christ as merely an example. If liberalism prevails in the churches, the gospel will be eradicated. Machen went so far as to offer the solution: the liberals must be excluded from the church. This was decisive in the Presbyterian controversy.

D. Reception of Christianity and Liberalism.

1. **Machen’s colleagues.** Specifically Dr. Ross Stevenson, president of Princeton Seminary an opponent on many internal matters leading up to the reorganization of the seminary a few years later. He praised the book but cautioned against pressing his conclusion to oust liberals from the church.

2. **Secular press.** Calhoun (2, 341, 2) notes that major papers, New York Herald Tribune and the Toronto Globe; both praised the work for putting before the public the primary issues separating liberals and evangelicals. Two prominent writers, H. L. Mencken, journalist from Baltimore who lampooned Wm Jennings Bryan’s role in the Scopes Monkey Trial, and Walter Lippman in Preface to Morals recognized the force of its argument.

3. **Loetscher, The Broadening Church:** while acknowledging Machen’s “inexorable logic” Loetscher criticized Christianity and Liberalism for fallacy of the “undistributed middle.” That is, this book and Machen’s public addresses on the subject cast liberalism in such stark terms that all those who were not explicitly fundamentalist in their doctrines were placed in that category where they do not really belong. He mentions specifically inerrancy. What of moderate evangelicals? Are they to be accounted as Christians or not? Loetscher goes on to say, however, that although Machen became more extreme than his predecessors, “he still retained – more inconsistently than they – vestiges of a much broader theological foundation and a more inclusive ecclesiastical policy than he avowed.” (117) Loetscher also points out that **Machen’s doctrine of the church** differed significantly from Presbyterian by its voluntarism – it consists of those who chose to belong. It had more in common
with Anabaptists than Presbyterian fore bearers who held an organic view that Presbyterians are born into the church.
Hoffecker’s Red Ribbon Lecture

Dr. Hoffecker

I. Ending our course if in previous eras
   A. 18\textsuperscript{th} c. optimism
   B. 19\textsuperscript{th} c optimism
   C. 20\textsuperscript{th} c pessimism

II. Crises of Presbyterian identity
   A. Presbyterian imported from Europe
   B. Scots Irish / New England Puritan
   C. Identity tested in First Great Awakening
   D. Influence of American Independence
   E. Founding of Princeton (1812)
   F. Identity tested by Second Great Awakening
   G. Identity tested by Fundamentalist – Modernist Controversy

III. Decline of Presbyterian
   A. 1983 merger
   B. Present stand-off in PCUSA battle over sexual standards: PUP Report
C. Confessing Church Movement

D. Changes in PCA

IV. Conclusion
   A. Balmer and Fitzmeier: postmodern challenge: “one voice among many”

   B. Hart and Muether: “sober times for American Presbyterian”

   C. Hart and Muether: “Conclusion without Illusion”
      1. 3 Eras of American Presbyterian: each era marked by struggle/controversy
         a. 1707-1789: organizational consolidation
         b. 1789-1869: expansion and Presbyterian “self-awareness”
         c. 1869-present: ecumenism, social reform, liberal / conservative division
      2. Goal: neither nostalgic remembrance, nor desire for return; rather hopeful anticipation of “heavenly city.”