SURVEY OF CHURCH HISTORY

by Robert C. Walton

Grades 9-12
Year 2
Quarter 2

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 1**
Year 2
Quarter 2

THE ROMAN PERSECUTIONS

64-313

Lesson Aim

To familiarize students with the first two post-apostolic centuries and to help them see how God uses persecution to strengthen His church.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:1 - "For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea."

Lesson Background

This lesson begins thirteen weeks of study on the history of the church. A thirteen-week study of church history can be no more than a broad survey, dealing mostly with general developments and very little with specific facts. Although this unit has no direct correlation with Scripture, the passage assigned for memory during the quarter makes it clear that history, since it is under the control of a sovereign God, can be the source of many important lessons. Of course, we lack the inspired interpretation of post-biblical history that is given so often for the history of the biblical years, but that necessitates caution, not despair. There is much to be learned from history. The old cliche cuts two ways. It is true that "he who does not learn from history is doomed to repeat it," but it is also true that there are many fine examples in the history of the church that our students should be encouraged to emulate, even as they were followers of Christ.

The following are some of the benefits that your students should hope to gain from the study of the history of the church in the coming quarter:

1. To see the total dependence of the church upon God. Man's efforts to "improve" the church have been uniformly disastrous. God brings revival through unimpressive, flawed men at unexpected times.

2. To see the value of persecution and the deadening effects of ease in the life of the church.

3. To see the many forms taken by the Body of Christ and learn to distinguish between enemies and brothers with whom we differ.

4. To learn that the roots of heresy in the church are found not in intentional deception, but in overemphasis on some narrow truth, or in overreaction against some false teaching in the church or in the world.

5. To learn that those used greatly by God have been sinners, flawed and weak, who committed themselves to Him.

6. To learn the danger involved in trying to do the work of God by means of the world's methods, or by adopting the world's standards of scholarship or philosophy.

In today's lesson we will examine the first two post-apostolic centuries by looking at the church in its doctrine, practice, structure, and environment. The lessons in this quarter are very general, and, like the unit on the Intertestamental Period, you can expect to do a significant amount of lecturing, since the students will probably know very little of what you're telling them. Each lesson will be fleshed out by the take-home paper, which will suggest people and events to be looked up to pursue areas of interest. Be on the alert, both today and throughout the quarter, for opportunities to bring home to the students the applications listed above.

Lesson Procedure

Most high school students don't like history. They don't like it because they see no practical value in learning a lot of names, places, and dates from the past. If you think it would help your class, begin by going over the six benefits to be gained from studying church history that are listed in the background section. If you don't think that's necessary, jump right in and ask them this: "What happened to the church after the New Testament was written?" Indicate then that you are going to look at a period of about 200 years following the death of John, the last of the apostles. This period will be examined with regard to the church's doctrine, practice, structure, and environment.

1. The Doctrine of the Church

The major doctrinal issue of the second and third centuries was similar to a key doctrinal issue today - the doctrine of Scripture. Today people know what the Bible is, but many question its authority and inerrancy. In the early church, all those who claimed to be Christians acknowledged the authority of Scripture - they just weren't sure which books belonged in the Bible and which ones didn't. In the generation following the death of the apostles, nobody talked about this too much. Everybody accepted the Old Testament, the Gospels, Acts, the letters of Paul, I Peter, and I John without question. Other books were used in some places but not in others. Then in the middle of the second century a heresy known as Gnosticism became popular. Some trace the origins of Gnosticism back to Simon Magus (Acts 8), or even further, to pre-Christian Jewish sects. Though there were many variations of Gnosticism, the basic problem was that they claimed an inner knowledge accessible only to a spiritual elite. This knowledge bypassed or

reinterpreted the Scriptures and undermined the authority of the church. One Gnostic teacher by the name of Marcion maintained that this new knowledge rendered the revelation to the Jews obsolete and that only the Gospel to the Gentiles, as found in the writings of Paul and parts of the Gospel of Luke, was valid for the present age. In response to this heresy, the church was forced to decide what really belonged in the Bible and what didn't. (By the way, this shows that God sometimes uses heresy - this false teaching forced the church to define the truth more thoroughly.) For a period of about eighty years, from about 140 to about 220, the debate in the church went on. Books like James, II Peter, and Hebrews were not accepted until people were convinced of their authenticity (church leaders placed great weight on the fact that books were written by apostles or their close associates). Interestingly enough, Hebrews was finally accepted because people were convinced Paul wrote it - a conclusion about which there is considerable doubt today. By 220, the debate was for all practical purposes over, though final agreement on our present New Testament did not occur until the end of the fourth century.

2. The Practice of the Church

The worship of the ancient church was based on and largely borrowed from that of the Jewish synagogue. It included the reading of Scripture (Old and New Testaments), prayer, singing (we know they sang psalms; there is some evidence in the New Testament that points to the use of hymns other than psalms - Philippians 2:6-11 may have been one; also see Ephesians 5:18-21), preaching (initially not restricted to one man or a group of men, but open to any adult male in the church), and the Lord's Supper (generally celebrated at every service, often accompanied by an *agape*, or love-feast). Baptism, which even effusionists will usually admit was done by immersion in the New Testament, began in this period to move in the direction of pouring or sprinkling as the preferred mode. Three main factors influenced this development - persecution (made it difficult to go down to the river for a public service), the spread of Christianity into colder climates, and the growth of paedobaptism (influenced both by analogy with Old Testament circumcision and by the concept of baptismal regeneration). Also, in the New Testament we see people being baptized as soon as they believe, but because of the constraints mentioned above, baptisms became less frequent (some churches baptized only once a year, on Easter Sunday), and were preceded by lengthy catechisms and fasts (the origin of Lent).

3. The Structure of the Church

During these years and the two centuries that followed, the church of the New Testament turned into the Roman Catholic Church. One of the most critical changes involved in bringing this about was that in church structure. In the New Testament, the apostles founded churches and appointed in those churches two groups of officers - elders (bishops, pastors) and deacons. The first shift in this pattern occurred at the end of the first century, when the offices of elder and bishop became distinct. In each church, the man with obvious preaching gifts came to be recognized as bishop and was seen as having authority over both elders and deacons. A later terminological shift saw these heads of congregations come to be called priests (from *presbuteros*, Greek for "elder"), while the term "bishop" was reserved for the leading churchman in a region, often the priest of the region's largest church. Later, bishops in the largest population centers came to be called metropolitans, or archbishops, and were seen as having authority over the rural bishops. Finally, the metropolitans of five chief cities came to be called patriarchs (Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople - though this step occurred after the period under consideration today), and the chief of the patriarchs - the Bishop of Rome - came to be called Pope. This final step, which occurred in the period to be considered next week, brought the Roman Catholic Church as we know it into being.

What brought about these changes? At least two factors can be cited. The first is the fight against Gnosticism and other heresies. The Gnostics maintained that the true teaching of Christ was obtained through secret knowledge to which they alone had access. The Church insisted that the teaching of Christ

had been passed down in an unbroken line from the apostles. This latter assertion became the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, which states that the leaders of the church, in unbroken succession, are the recipients both of the teaching and the authority of the apostles. The former may be true - the apostolic teaching has been passed down in written form in Scripture - but the latter is dangerous - apostolic authority was unique, and no longer exists today. Many of the abuses of the Catholic Church stem from this doctrine of Apostolic Succession.

The second factor that contributed to the change in church structure is the seductiveness of power. Many men and organizations have been destroyed through the misuse of power. It is only by the grace of God that men have not totally destroyed His church.

4. The Environment of the Church

The environment in which the church existed from 64 to 313 was one of general hostility. In the New Testament period, the Jews persecuted Christians, but Romans thought they were Jews and left them alone. As the church became more and more Gentile, such an identification became tenuous, and the connection was severed with the first Roman persecution of Christians by Nero in 64 A.D. Though the Roman persecutions were noted for their cruelty, they were not continuous, but occurred sporadically between 64 and 313. Reasons for the persecution varied. Nero needed a scapegoat on which to blame the great fire in Rome. Domitian distrusted any members of non-registered groups. Marcus Aurelius saw Christianity as weakening the moral fiber of the Empire. Maximinus Thrax hated Christians because they had supported his predecessor. Decius killed all who would not offer incense to his image. Ten emperors in all persecuted the church, some half-heartedly, some severely.

This period of persecution proved to be a great boon to the church. In the first place, persecution strengthened the church because it kept the church pure. None but those totally committed to Christ would profess Christianity during an age when one who was baptized might by doing so be signing his death warrant. The church was also strongly unified, at least by comparison with what it is now. Believers realized they needed one another.

Secondly, persecution proved a great source of increase for the church. Many became Christians through the testimonies of the martyrs. The apologists of the second century used many complex philosophical and religious arguments to defend the church against its attackers, but none was more effective than the unvarnished testimony of those who died for their faith (in fact, many of their arguments to support Christianity paved the way for the syncretism that ultimately produced doctrinal disaster).

When the persecutions ended with the issuing of the Edict of Milan by Constantine in 313, the church breathed a collective sigh of relief. But, as we will see next week, there were some who soon yearned for the strength of a persecuted church.

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT ROMAN PERSECUTIONS (64-313)

1. How did God use false teaching to motivate the early church to compile the New Testament? Can awareness of false teaching be useful to Christians today? How?

2. How does the development of Apostolic Succession indicate that reactions against false teaching may sometimes cause us to depend upon ourselves rather than God?

3. Is it true that the lack of persecution of the church in the United States may contribute to its weakness? How?

4. Define the following key terms: apologist, Gnosticism, Apostolic Succession, Edict of Milan.

5. For further insight into the period you studied today, look up something about the lives of the following: Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Blandina, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Marcion, Nero, Marcus Aurelius, Diocletian, Constantine.

6. To prepare for next week's lesson, look up the following: Athanasius, Ambrose, John Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine of Hippo, Pelagius, Benedict of Nursia, Patrick.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 2**
Year 2
Quarter 2

THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT

313-476

Lesson Aim

To show how the basic doctrines of Christianity developed in the church and to demonstrate the dangers inherent in cultural Christianity, when the church loses its distinctness from the world.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:2 - "They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea."

Lesson Background

Today we cover the period of time from the Edict of Milan to the fall of Rome to the Western barbarians. These two centuries were prosperous ones for the church, but the same prosperity that allowed the church to expand and resolve great doctrinal issues also made it worldly, paving the road for the church-state conflicts of the Middle Ages.

The divisions of today's lesson will be similar to those used last week. We will be looking at the church in relation to its environment, practice, and doctrine (the order is changed intentionally; during this period, the practice of the church is strongly shaped by its environment). There are several applications to keep in mind while teaching today's lesson. In the section on the church and its environment, be sure to point out the negative effects of the church becoming too much like the world. Christianity must be distinctive if it is to have a powerful impact. In the area of practice, note that doing God's work in man's way will never be effective. Monasticism was not able to recapture the grace granted to the persecuted church and eventually became another source of corruption. In the section on doctrine, it should be pointed out that God does His work through weak, sinful men and women. The great ecumenical councils were notorious for

political infighting, but their conclusions rested firmly on the Word of God and have provided the doctrinal framework within which the church has lived ever since. If God can choose and use an immoral rake like Augustine, He can use us as well.

Lesson Procedure

Begin with a brief review of last week's lesson, refreshing the minds of the students about the first two centuries of post-New Testament history. Then note that today we will be covering the period from 313 to 476 - from the Edict of Milan to the fall of the Roman Empire in the West.

1. The Church and Its Environment

Few historical documents have had a greater impact on the church than the Edict of Milan (Luther's Ninety-Five Theses, perhaps?). Because of the Edict of Milan, the church, which ended last week's study hanging on for dear life under the vicious persecution of Diocletian, ends today's period as the virtual master of the Western world. How could one document have produced so great a change?

A. The Edict of Milan

After the deaths of Diocletian and his co-emperor Galerius, there was open fighting to determine who would be the next emperor. Constantine, commander of the Roman legion in Britain, was supported by his troops for the post. His chief rival, Maxentius, was supported by the Praetorian Guard in Rome. Constantine marched against Rome with his army and met his rival outside the city at the Battle of Milvian Bridge. The night before the battle, Constantine was looking over the battlefield and, according to tradition, saw a cross in the sky and under it the words, "In This Sign Conquer." Constantine then vowed to become a Christian if he won the battle the next day. He subsequently won and declared himself to be a Christian, though the reality of his profession is questionable at best (he continued to worship the sun for the rest of his life, among other things). Several years after becoming emperor, in 313, Constantine issued the Edict of Milan, which made Christianity a legal religion (it did not become the official religion of the empire until 381) and officially ended the era of state persecution of the church.

B. The Effects of the Edict of Milan

How could such a seemingly innocuous proclamation produce radical change in the church? Note the following four areas of impact:

i. Numerical Growth

With the terrors of the persecution removed, many Christians "came out of the closet," and the church experienced significant numerical growth. Many of those who had hesitated because of fear now readily professed faith in Christ. The numerical growth was such that, by the end of the fifth century, almost everyone in the Roman Empire (Jews excepted, of course) professed Christianity.

ii. Missionary Expansion

Instead of concentrating on survival, the church could now channel its energies into reaching the lost. Many missionaries were sent beyond the borders of the empire, most coming from the fledgling monastic

movement, about which we will talk later. The missionaries in the West had considerable success - so much so that many of the barbarian tribes that invaded the empire were already professing Christians when they did so. The missionaries in the East were much less successful in gaining converts among Persians and Arabs.

iii. Spiritual Dilution

The problem with having a "Christian" emperor was that it suddenly became popular to profess Christianity. People joined the church as a means to gain political favor, or simply because it was "the thing to do." The strength derived by the church from the years of persecution evaporated rapidly. This spiritual decline produced two major reactions, both of which we will look at later in this lesson - monasticism and the Donatist Controversy.

iv. State Control

The same emperor who could shower favors on the church could also exert control over that church. From the very beginning, Constantine insisted on involving himself in church affairs. It was he, for instance, who convened the Council of Nicea in 325 to deal with the Trinitarian Controversy. Throughout this period, bonds between church and state grew. The church received state funds in return for administering social service projects such as hospitals. Church leaders interfered in the political decisions of the emperors (the great conflict between Ambrose and Theodosius, which might be worth looking up, is an example of a situation where the church had a positive impact on state policy.)

Two notable developments grew from this church-state relationship. The first involved the recognition of the Bishop of Rome as head of the church. Because Rome was the capital city, the emperor often turned to the Bishop of Rome for advice in spiritual matters, and this, among other things, enhanced his prestige and power. The second critical development was that, because the church gained control of the social services of the empire, it became the focus of social stability following the fall of Rome. The identification of church and society that had been developing during this period becomes virtually complete during the Middle Ages.

2. The Church and Its Practice

It was during the period before us today that many of the unbiblical practices of the Catholic Church developed. Three key ones involved monks, relics, and saints.

A. Monks

Many in the church were genuinely appalled by the decline in spirituality following the Edict of Milan. Some, noting the special grace given by God to those who suffered for their faith, decided that the same grace might well be recaptured, and the church revived, through the imposition of rigorous spiritual and physical discipline. From this notion came the practice of monasticism. Originally, monks would go out to the desert or mountains alone to engage in spiritual exercises, meanwhile having their needs met by the church. Soon some took advantage of the system, and this led to the establishment of monasteries, where monks could carry out their disciplines under supervision. Finally there arose monastic orders, consisting of a group of monasteries following the same rule of discipline. (The first of these orders was the Benedictines, founded by Benedict of Nursia.)

Monasticism had both positive and negative qualities. Positively, the monks were generally the most spiritual men of their age, at least in the early years. They provided an example of dedication that inspired many. They also preserved the Scriptures through painstaking hours of copying in the scriptoria and were the leading missionaries of the Middle Ages.

Negatively, there is no question that the system invited abuse. The temptation to pride in one who chose a "higher level of spirituality" was enormous. In addition, the disciplines often gave way in later years to wealth and indulgence as many, seeking spiritual rewards, would leave their wealth to the monasteries. The pride inherent in any concept of super-spirituality also led some to ostentatious austerities - men such as Simon Stylites, who sat for decades on an open platform atop a high pillar. Yet all of this did not bring back the purity of the years of persecution. Synthetic martyrdom was man's way, not God's way.

B. Relics

Another practice growing out of the yearning for the spirituality of the persecuted church was the veneration of relics. Martyrs were fondly remembered in the places where they had died. Their last words were treasured, their bodies often interred under the church building, and possessions belonging to them were preserved. After several generations, however, superstitions began to arise concerning physical objects associated with martyrs. Some thought these objects, whether possessions or bones, were capable of miraculous cures. Many thought that merely viewing or touching such objects conveyed the grace of God. These superstitions led to great abuses, including traveling relic shows (How would you like to see a feather from the wing of the angel Gabriel? Some cynics suggested that there were enough pieces of the True Cross in Europe during the Middle Ages to rebuild Noah's Ark!) and the peddling of indulgences (Pay your money, see the relics, have your sins forgiven - or get your mother out of Purgatory!).

C. Saints

The term "saint," of course, is used in the New Testament to refer to all believers. It was during this period that it took on special significance. Some reasoned that, in times of trouble on earth, you go to someone more spiritually mature than yourself and ask him to pray for you. Would not it make even more sense to do this after he died, when he was in the very presence of God and had more direct access? Of course, this only would work if the person in question were in heaven rather than purgatory. Thus, prayers could be directed only to those who had lived exceptionally holy lives, and therefore were sure to be in heaven. Originally, this privilege was reserved only for martyrs. Later it was expanded to include the synthetic martyrs - the ascetics. It was by this means that the veneration of Mary developed, and the numerous superstitions and traditions concerning her earthly life and present powers began to come into being.

3. The Church and Its Doctrine

Free from the struggle for survival, the church in the fourth and fifth centuries turned to discussions of foundational doctrines of the Christian faith. In the period before us, we see four major doctrinal controversies and four great ecumenical church councils.

A. The Trinitarian Controversy

The major issue here was the deity of Christ. Arius, a preacher in Alexandria, was teaching that Christ was the first and greatest created being, but not God (a teaching carried on today by the Jehovah's Witnesses). The controversy resulting from this teaching stirred up so much trouble that Constantine, the

emperor, called a church council at Nicea in 325 to settle the issue. At the council the deity of Christ was upheld by a young Alexandrian named Athanasius, who later became bishop of Alexandria. The council decided against Arius, who was declared a heretic and died shortly thereafter. Many in the church were not satisfied with the council's decision, and Athanasius spent the rest of his life defending the doctrine of the Trinity, often being forced into exile by emperors who favored Arianism. Finally, at the Council of Constantinople in 381, the Trinitarian position was reaffirmed and a doctrinal statement known to us as the Nicene Creed was adopted by the church.

B. The Donatist Controversy

During the great persecutions of the third century, many died for their faith, but many others gave in under persecution and recanted or offered incense. It was when those who had given in repented and wished to return to the church that controversy started. Some were willing to receive these people back, while others, on the basis of passages like Hebrews 6:4-8, insisted that restoration was impossible. The dispute between the strict and lenient parties became so severe that it nearly split the church in North Africa (the leader of the strict party was Donatus, giving the controversy its name). By the time the persecution ended, the church in North Africa had two parallel groups of leaders, each refusing to recognize the validity (or even salvation) of the other group. Schism was imminent. Finally, through the influence of prominent North African bishop Augustine of Hippo and his statement "Outside the church there is no salvation" (a statement that has been greatly abused by Catholics over the years), the Donatists were condemned by the church. The last of the Donatists died out during the Muslim Conquest of North Africa during the seventh century.

C. The Pelagian Controversy

This began when a British monk named Pelagius began teaching that man was basically good, that sin only came from following bad examples, and that Christ had come to set a good example for us. In response to this heresy, Augustine proclaimed doctrines that later became the foundation of the Protestant Reformation - the depravity of man and the free electing grace of God in Christ as the only hope of salvation. Though Pelagius was condemned at the Council of Ephesus in 431, the Catholic Church later moved away from Augustine's teaching on salvation to teach salvation through the sacraments of the Church.

D. The Christological Controversy

Having decided that Christ was God, the church now turned to the question of how He could be both God and man at the same time. Of course, this is a paradox that defies logical analysis, but that didn't stop the church from trying. Many suggestions were offered concerning the relationship between the humanity and deity of Christ, but all were rejected as heresy because they either undermined Christ's full deity or His full humanity. Political wrangling got into the picture as well, producing the spectacle at the Council of Ephesus (431) of one group arriving a day early, convening the council, declaring their opponents to be heretics, and then adjourning the meeting - then having the pope reject the appeal of the late arrivals because the first decision of the council took precedence! Despite all these underhanded dealings, the Council of Chalcedon in 451 wisely decided that Christ was one Person in two natures, and that the natures were unmixed, unchanged, undivided, and inseparable (Translation: Christ is fully God and fully man, but we don't know how the two relate to each other!). There are few greater examples in history than this of God bringing truth out of so much human error.

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT — CHURCH TRIUMPHANT (313-476)

1. We live in a country where church and state are officially separated. Why is this an advantage to the church? In what ways was the early church harmed by association with the government of the Roman Empire?

2. Monasticism was an attempt to recapture the spiritual vitality of the "good old days." Many throughout history have tried to "get back to the book of Acts." Why is this dangerous? How can it lead to spiritual pride?

3. What examples did you see today of heresy having its roots in an overemphasis on a good thing? Why is it important that our Christianity be balanced, seeking to believe and live "the whole counsel of God?"

4. The ancient church doctrinal controversies were marred by personal jealousies and political rivalries. How can we trust the decisions made under such circumstances?

5. In preparation for next week, look up the following: Mohammed, Gregory the Great, Nicholas I, Gottschalk, Charlemagne, and Leo IX.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 3**
Year 2
Quarter 2

THE DARK AGES

476-1054

Lesson Aim

To familiarize students with the factors contributing to the decline of the church, as well as the forces for reform, at work in the early Middle Ages.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:3 - "They all ate the same spiritual food."

Lesson Background

Probably no period in the last 2000 years of history is less familiar to most people than the one under consideration today. They may have heard of Charlemagne, but beyond him, they only have some vague notions associated with King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. It is not without reason that the last half of the first millennium after Christ is known as the Dark Ages (the term is often more specifically applied to the ninth and tenth centuries). The collapse of the Roman Empire in the West brought about a decline in knowledge that was not remedied until the time of the Crusades, Charlemagne notwithstanding.

The period under consideration today covers the years between the fall of Rome and the Great Schism between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches. We will be examining four major forces at work during this period - Islam, the Papacy, Feudalism, and Reform. The study should be instructive to students in at least two areas. The first is that this period demonstrates the danger for the church of becoming too closely identified with society. The seeds sown in the fourth and fifth centuries bear bitter fruit in the Dark Ages. Secondly, the Dark Ages show convincingly that God will not leave Himself

without a witness in the world. Even in these barren times, He raised up men faithful to Him who sought to proclaim and live the truth.

Lesson Procedure

Throughout this quarter, it would be wise to begin each lesson with a brief review, both because of the unfamiliar nature of the material and for the sake of students who may have missed some lessons. If you ask the students what they know about the Dark Ages, you will probably get either eloquent silence or a few wisecracks. You're probably better off just plowing right into the lesson material.

1. Islam

The Christian church, particularly in the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa, had been tearing itself apart for several hundred years before Rome fell with various heresies and squabbles such as the Donatist Controversy. As a result, when a major challenge arose from the east, they were ill-equipped to meet that challenge.

The challenge came in the form of a new religion, Islam, started in Arabia by a mystic named Muhammad and claiming to be the final revelation of Allah, the completion of both Judaism and Christianity. Islam combined a simple creed and high ethical standards, and was readily accepted by the largely polytheistic Arabs. What allowed it to spread into territory previously dominated by Christianity needs to be examined in more detail, however.

A. Jihad

Muhammad taught that true religion could legitimately be spread by force. From the time of Mohammed's death in 633 until 732, the caliphs led Muslim armies into northern India, up into Palestine and Asia Minor, across North Africa, into Spain, and across the Pyrenees into France before being stopped by Charles Martel at the Battle of Tours. Animists or polytheists were forcibly converted or killed during this Conquest. Monotheists (i.e., Jews and Christians) were permitted to retain their religions if they chose, but were forced to pay tribute and forbidden to evangelize.

B. The Weakness of the Churches

Most of the heresies rejected by the church had perpetuated themselves in small enclaves in the East. In North Africa, the Donatists were more concerned with what they saw as purity than with evangelism. As a result, many of the Christians left in the territory conquered by Islam acquiesced to the Muslim demands and settled down under the rule of the caliphs. Many of these churches continue to exist today, but they are totally devoid of any spiritual vitality. Among other things, this should illustrate the necessity of the Great Commission for the ongoing spiritual health of the church.

2. The Papacy

We saw in our study of the ancient church that the Bishop of Rome gradually gained prominence through his location in the capital of the empire and the influence that resulted from that position. Several factors in the early Middle Ages first consolidated that position of prominence, then undermined its authority.

A. The Fall of Rome

The barbarian tribes that conquered the Western Roman Empire had in many cases already been converted to Christianity (though the legitimacy of many of these conversions may be questioned, since most were mass conversions). As a result, the invaders held great respect for the Pope, though they had none for the emperor. In addition, the barbarians had no well-developed social structure to supplant what they were destroying, and thus the church became the focal point of society, further enhancing the Pope's power.

B. The Muslim Conquest

We noted earlier that five church leaders were given the title of patriarch - the bishops of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Constantinople. By the end of the seventh century, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem were under Muslim control and Constantinople was under severe pressure. In other words, the Muslim Conquest eliminated or weakened all the Pope's competitors for authority in the church.

C. Gregory the Great (540-604)

The greatest churchman of the early Middle Ages, he is considered by many to be the first modern pope. While I would tend to give that title to Leo I (c.450), who was the first to be recognized as having authority passed down from Peter on the basis of Matthew 16, there is no doubt that Gregory was the first to exercise that authority effectively. He also contributed to the eventual split between Eastern and Western Churches by disputing the authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople.

D. Church-State Ties

After the Muslim Conquest was halted by Charles Martel, a dispute broke out among the Franks as to who would rule them. Charles Martel's son, Pepin the Short, seized control. Rome, meanwhile, was being threatened by the Lombards, one of the few barbarian tribes not yet converted to Christianity. Pepin proposed a deal. He agreed to drive off the Lombards and give the conquered land to the Pope if the Pope would recognize him as legitimate King of the Franks. The Pope agreed. As a result, the Pope became for the first time a political power (he remains one today, as chief of state of the Vatican, a recognized political entity), and again became entangled with a secular ruler. The ties between church and state were formalized with the accession to the throne of Pepin's son, Charlemagne, and the start of the Holy Roman Empire.

3. Feudalism

United Christian Europe lasted no longer than Charlemagne himself. Upon his death, the empire was divided among his three grandsons. Neither they nor their successors had the strength to maintain broad authority, and so the decentralized feudal system developed, in which the local lords and barons ruled their own fiefs with impunity, despite owing nominal allegiance to the king. The decentralization of power was disastrous for the church. The papacy soon fell under the control of whatever Italian baron happened to hold Rome at the time. Because of the political instability that existed, barons changed fast, and so did popes. During the ninth and tenth centuries, life expectancy for a pope was about three years, and many did not die natural deaths. Without getting into the gruesome horror stories (though your students would love to hear them, I'm sure), suffice it to say that the spiritual level of the men who served as Bishop of Rome during this time was exceedingly low. The church that lived by the state also died by the state.

4. Reform

Despite the worst that man could do, God would not let His church die. Even in these disastrous times, there were a few glimmers of hope.

A. Theology

We saw last week that the Catholic Church diluted the theology of Augustine to a form of salvation through the sacraments. Not everyone bought this drift toward salvation by works, however. A Benedictine monk by the name of Gottschalk resurrected the Augustinian teaching concerning predestination and salvation by grace and spent the rest of his life in prison for his pains. He rightly pointed out, as did the Reformers many centuries later, that there is little difference between the Pelagian teaching that man can save himself and the Catholic teaching that one can obtain the saving grace of God through partaking of the sacraments.

B. Monasteries

Though monks remained the islands of spirituality in a great sea of debauchery, they too suffered serious decline during this period. In the year 910, in Cluny, France, a monastery was established for the express purpose of returning to the spiritual disciplines of the early monks. This movement spread quickly, and was to provide much of the leadership that brought new life to the church as it began its second millennium.

C. State Control

God even used the state-church relationship to move the church back in the right direction. As long as the Italian barons dominated the papacy, unworthy men filled the position. Relief came in the form of the Holy Roman Emperor Otto I. He rescued the church from the control of the Italian barons, and, though he and his descendants continued to appoint the popes, they at least showed greater concern for the spiritual qualifications of their appointees. As a result, the products of the Cluny reform in the monasteries began to gain prominence in the church. Two notable results developed from this situation.

- The reformers restructured the College of Cardinals in 1050. The cardinals (actually Cardinal Bishops of Rome) were technically responsible for choosing the popes. The College consisted of the leading churchmen in the city of Rome, and the group had shown itself to be notoriously susceptible to political pressure. The restructuring involved broadening membership in the College to include prominent churchmen from throughout the Christian world, thus at least theoretically making them less susceptible to domination by one powerful ruler. This change laid the groundwork for the papal challenges to secular authority that we will see next week.

- The reformers reasserted their authority over the whole church. The Eastern and Western churches had been growing apart for many centuries, but the renaissance of papal power ended any pretense of church unity. When the Eastern Church refused to accept the authority claimed by the popes, Pope Leo IX and Patriarch Michael Cerularius of Constantinople excommunicated each other, and the formal unity of Christendom came to an end in 1054.

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT — THE DARK AGES (476-1054)

1. What factors stemming from the Edict of Milan led to the decline of the church during the Dark Ages?

2. What effects did the rise of Islam have on the Christian church? On the papacy?

3. What indications do we have that God was still at work in His church, even in this dismal period of ignorance and immorality?

4. From what we have seen so far, why is it dangerous for the church to establish ties with the state?

5. In preparation for next week, look up the following: Hildebrand (Gregory VII), Henry IV (Holy Roman Emperor), Innocent III, Richard I (the Lion-Hearted), Thomas Aquinas, Francis of Assisi, Boniface VIII, John Wycliffe, John Huss.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 4**
Year 2
Quarter 2

THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES

1054-1517

Lesson Aim

To show students that a church that dominates the world through human strength contributes nothing to the work of God, but that God requires faithfulness in doctrine, practice, and authority.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:4 - "And drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ."

Lesson Background

In some ways, this lesson could be subtitled "The Rise and Fall of the Roman (Catholic) Empire." We noted last week that reform movements within the church were beginning to revive it spiritually after the debacle of the Dark Ages. This week, we see the tables turned, as a succession of powerful popes gain ascendancy over the secular rulers of their day. Yet this dominance was relatively short-lived, as the corrupting influence of power worked its way into the church. The resulting decline produced open greed and debauchery almost as bad as that prevalent during the Dark Ages. Again, however, we find God at work to preserve His truth. The corruption of the church bred in many a dissatisfaction that drove them to the Word of God, resulting in a rolling back of over a thousand years of accrued traditions.

Today's lesson is divided into three sections. The first deals with the period of papal dominance and examines the corrupting influences of power. The second, which talks about monks and scholars, is intended to give insight into some of the beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church. The third section notes how God prepared the way for the Protestant Reformation, both through the overt corruption of the church and

by raising up men to stand up for the truth against terrible opposition. The major application of the lesson comes in the third part. Students should be able to see the need for faithfulness to God, not only in sound doctrine, but also in biblical practice and in the structure and exercise of the church's authority.

Lesson Procedure

As in other lessons, start with a review of last week's material, concentrating especially on the forces for reform that were gaining strength in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

1. Papal Dominance

By the middle of the eleventh century, the products of the Cluny Reform were beginning to rise to positions of power. In fact, Leo IX, the pope whose excommunication of the Patriarch of Constantinople brought on the Great Schism, was the first of the reform popes, and one of the men responsible for reorganizing the College of Cardinals. These reform popes wanted a strong church both in morals and authority. They cleaned up many long-standing moral abuses within the church, but caused much trouble by insisting on the submission of secular rulers to their authority in temporal matters. Three examples, two specific and one general, should serve to illustrate the situation in the two hundred years following the Great Schism.

A. Gregory VII and Henry IV

Hildebrand, a monk trained in a reform monastery, was the dominant force in the church in the latter half of the eleventh century. As a key papal advisor, he served as the power behind the throne from 1059-1073, at which time he became pope himself and reigned as Pope Gregory VII until his death in 1085. His major conflict came with Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV over the issue of lay investiture, which was the practice of kings choosing church office-holders within their domains (often by auctioning the offices off to the highest bidder). Gregory insisted that only the pope had the right to appoint bishops and abbots. Henry promptly appointed his own anyway, and Gregory threatened to excommunicate him if he didn't repent (no small matter - Catholics believe excommunication condemns a person to hell). Henry then gathered his army and attempted to depose Gregory. Gregory then excommunicated him, and Henry quickly found that his barons were unwilling to support a hell-bound sinner. Henry, in order to forestall rebellion at home, humbled himself in repentance before Gregory, who made the most of it by making him stand for three days barefoot in the snow outside Gregory's winter castle at Canossa before agreeing to see him. Gregory then lifted the excommunication, but Henry was not easily deterred. He finally did drive Gregory into exile, where the pope died in 1085.

B. Innocent III and King John

Innocent III, without doubt the most powerful pope in history, ruled (definitely the right word for it) from 1198 to 1216. He allowed no secular ruler to stand in the way of his exercise of his authority. Among his many conflicts with the kings of his day, perhaps the most notable was with King John of England. The rightful king of England, Richard the Lion-Hearted, was in Palestine fighting the Third Crusade, and his corrupt and cowardly brother John was ruling England in his place (yes, this was the time of Robin Hood). During this time, the Archbishop of Canterbury (highest church office in England) died. Innocent appointed a replacement, but John insisted on placing his own man in office instead. Innocent promptly placed all England under interdict, which meant no sacraments could be performed in the land (no masses, no confession, no marriages or ordinations, etc.). To the Catholic mind, this was like condemning

the whole population to hell, since the sacraments were seen as he only source of saving grace. Not only that, but Innocent declared the English throne vacant and invited the King of France to step in! Needless to say, John quickly had a revolt on his hands and was forced to give in to Innocent. In fact, this undermining of John's power was one of the factors leading up to the Magna Carta a few years later.

C. The Crusades

The Crusades were on their surface attempts to free the Holy Land from the Muslim Turks, but were really also a result of the use and abuse of papal power. It is no coincidence that the era of the Crusades was the same as that of papal domination of the states of Europe. In addition to seeking to regain control of Palestine, the popes also wanted to heal the Great Schism and bring the Eastern Church into the Roman fold. In order to encourage participation in the Crusades, the popes promised everything from forgiveness of debt to forgiveness of sin to immediate entrance into heaven to those who would undertake the holy warfare.

In terms of the intended results, the Crusades were a dismal failure. Though Crusader kingdoms were established in Palestine, none lasted for more than 200 years. No permanent territorial gains were achieved. Instead of drawing the Eastern Church back into the fold, the Crusades further alienated East from West (the Fourth Crusade even sacked Constantinople!). Even more ironically, the Crusades ultimately weakened the power of the popes. Not only did the failure of these holy wars show that God did not always second the pope's ideas about the church, but the Crusades also encouraged the growth of nationalism. Once the people were convinced that their loyalty lay with their country before their church, papal threats of excommunication were powerless to topple recalcitrant rulers. Lastly, the Crusades returned to the West the scholarship of the classical Greeks and Romans that had largely been lost during the Dark Ages. This classical learning spurred the Renaissance, provided much of the philosophical basis for Scholasticism, and encouraged the sort of individualism vital to the Protestant Reformation.

2. Monks and Scholars

Two major developments of the late Middle Ages were to have significant impact on the direction of the Catholic Church for centuries to follow. These new movements were the mendicant monastic orders and Scholasticism.

A. The Traveling Monks.

Until the thirteenth century, monks were largely restricted to monasteries. Their primary focus was devotional rather than ministerial. In the early thirteenth century, however, two new monastic orders were formed - the Franciscans and the Dominicans. These monks, rather than being restricted to monasteries, saw their major function as being out in the world. The Franciscans traveled around preaching and ministering to the poor and needy. The Dominicans concentrated on education, which included the stamping out of heresy by means of the Inquisition. Both groups became actively involved in missions, particularly when the Portuguese and Spanish began their voyages of exploration. It was these men who most actively fought the Protestant Reformation, who advanced the frontiers of the Church in the New World, and who provided most of the church's leading scholars of the period.

B. Scholasticism

Enamored of the rediscovered learning of the Greeks, the great scholars of the Middle Ages sought to use the philosophical insights of the great classical thinkers to advance the cause of Christianity. The most notable of these scholars was Thomas Aquinas, who sought to expound the teachings of the church by means

of the philosophical method devised by Aristotle. The result was a compromise from which the Catholic Church has never escaped - one where human reason is placed alongside Scripture with the expectation that both would be in full accord. The implied failure to recognize man's total depravity (the mind, too, is depraved) has done nothing to discourage the persistent tendency of the Catholic Church to teach salvation by works.

3. Approaching Reformation

For over a thousand years, the church had been moving further and further from the Word of God. Human power and wisdom were being magnified and human traditions exalted. It was only when the greed and debauchery to which this long-standing trend led had become evident to all that God raised up men to lead the church back to the truth. During the period in question, both positive and negative aspects of the preparation for reform became evident.

A. Ecclesiastical Corruption

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, Pope Boniface VIII tried to assert the same authority over secular powers claimed earlier by men such as Gregory VII and Innocent III. He even went so far as to say that, apart from submission to the pope, a person could not be saved. But when he threatened to excommunicate independent-minded Philip IV of France, he was ignored by both the king and his barons. In fact, Philip had the temerity to send men into Rome to kidnap Boniface, who died a few days later. The College of Cardinals was so intimidated by this that they elected a French pope, who shortly thereafter moved papal headquarters to Avignon, France, where it remained for the next 70 years (the Babylonian Captivity of the Papacy). The Avignon popes, known for their avarice and love of luxury, did much to damage the reputation of the church. In 1378, an Italian pope was elected, and he moved the papacy back to Rome. His poor treatment of the French cardinals caused them to return to Avignon, however, where they elected their own pope. The two rivals promptly excommunicated one another, and most of Europe chose up sides. A council met at Pisa to depose both popes in 1409, but both refused to yield, and the one elected by the council made a total of three popes. The reputation of the church could hardly get any worse. Finally, the Council of Constance cleared up the mess in 1417 when it deposed all three rival popes and appointed one recognized by everyone.

This was by no means the end of the corruption, however. The Renaissance popes of the fifteenth century were noted for their patronage of the arts, but not for their spirituality. Many were openly immoral, keeping mistresses and appointing their illegitimate sons to choice church offices. This blasphemous abuse of the name of Christ had to be stopped, and more and more people in Europe were becoming convinced of that very fact.

B. The Pre-Reformers

The Protestant Reformation challenged the church of its day in three fundamental areas - doctrine, practice, and authority. Prior to the Reformation, challenges were leveled in all three areas - but never by the same person or at the same time.

i. Doctrine

There were men in the Middle Ages who taught salvation by grace alone. Men such as Thomas Bradwardine and Gregory of Rimini kept alive the teaching of Augustine that later played such a major role

in the Reformation. But because these men challenged neither the authority nor the practice of the church, they were not persecuted, and because they were not persecuted, they are not widely known.

ii. Practice

The open immorality and corruption of the medieval church was its most obvious flaw, and was therefore attacked by many. Men like Girolamo Savonarola, who never would have dreamed of questioning Catholic doctrine, were hounded to their deaths for exposing the debaucheries of popes.

iii. Authority

There was no faster way to find yourself at the stake than to challenge papal authority. Men like John Wycliffe and John Huss exalted the Scriptures over the traditions of men and were severely persecuted. Though both challenged the unbiblical practices of the church as well (particularly the selling of indulgences), neither taught the Gospel. Both taught a morality higher than that of the church, but still salvation by works.

Conclusion

As the Reformers ultimately realized, the church must be biblical in its doctrine, practice, and authority. Anything less is compromise with the world, and leads to disaster. Are those goals ones that we are careful to pursue today?

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT

THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES (1054-1517)

1. In a Christian society, does the church have the right to tell the government what to do? Is there such a thing as a Christian society?

2. What temptations can lure the church away from its basic task if it seeks political involvement?

3. What is Scholasticism? How did it shape Roman Catholic theology?

4. How did God work in the Middle Ages to prepare the way for the Protestant Reformation?

5. In preparation for next week, look up the following: Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin, John Knox, Jacob Arminius, Menno Simons, Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 5**
Year 2
Quarter 2

THE REFORMATION IN CONTINENTAL EUROPE

1517-1648

Lesson Aim

To familiarize students with the major figures and major ideas of the Protestant Reformation in Europe, and in doing so to give them a new appreciation for the Scriptures and the Doctrines of Grace.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:5 - "Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert."

Lesson Background

We saw last week how God prepared the way for the great revival known as the Protestant Reformation. The corruption in the Catholic Church prepared people for change, and when God raised up courageous men to proclaim His truth, many were ready to follow them. There can be no question that there were political and economic factors that contributed to the Reformation. In continental Europe, the growth of German nationalism certainly meant that Luther's break with Rome received wide support. In England, Henry VIII's desire for a divorce was a celebrated factor in the onset of reform. But the Reformation was neither a political nor an economic movement. It was a religious movement, led by godly men who sought above all else to follow, honor, and obey Jesus Christ and His Word.

We obviously don't have time to do any sort of thorough study of the Reformation. What we will attempt to do in the two weeks allotted to the period will be to bring out in cursory fashion some of the major figures and major concepts of the Reformation. In this week's lesson, we will focus on continental Europe, from the posting of the Ninety-Five Theses to the Peace of Westphalia, and do so by looking briefly at the

progress (or lack of progress) of the Reformation in five countries - Germany, France, Switzerland, Spain, and the Netherlands. Applications should be brought out in terms of the importance of sound doctrine, faithfulness to God in times of persecution, and the examples set for us by the Reformers.

Lesson Procedure

Begin by reviewing last week's lesson, particularly the section on the pre-Reformers. Then attempt to ascertain how much, if anything, your students know about the Protestant Reformation. Indicate that today's study will involve a brief survey of five European countries.

1. Germany

Germany was the birthplace of the Reformation, and its founder was an Augustinian monk named Martin Luther. Luther, a spiritually sensitive and sincere man, was appalled by the corruption he saw around him in the church, especially the cynical peddling of indulgences and the callous disregard of the hierarchy in Rome for spiritual things. When Luther became professor of theology at the University of Wittenberg, his studies in the Scriptures led him to the conclusion on which the Reformation was to be founded - that a man became right with God through faith alone and not through human works of any kind. Coupled with this was an insistence on the exclusive authority of Scripture (not the hierarchy or traditions of the church) as being binding on a man's conscience, as well as an emphasis on the fact that salvation was by grace alone, and not a cooperative effort between God and man (it was no coincidence that Luther was an *Augustinian* monk).

Luther's teachings were challenged by both church and state. His seemingly innocent invitation to a debate on the subject of indulgences (the Ninety-Five Theses, posted in Wittenberg in 1517, were proposed debate topics) eventually led to his excommunication by Pope Leo X, and he found himself on trial for his life before Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, a zealous young Catholic, at the Diet of Worms. Luther escaped from Charles with the help of his protector Frederick the Wise, the Elector of Saxony, but spent the remainder of his life embroiled in controversy, mostly with other Protestants. His own followers tended to be overenthusiastic, and in their desire to remove from the church all vestiges of Catholic tradition, alienated many people. Luther, on the other hand, insisted only that those things specifically forbidden in Scripture should be removed from the church. This cautious, less-than-radical break with Catholicism separated Luther from the other two major branches of Protestantism, the Reformed and the Anabaptists. By the time of Luther's death, however, Protestantism had spread throughout Germany.

The century following Luther's death in 1546 was one of religious warfare in Germany. Though the main battles were between Protestants and Catholics (where state churches exist, theological disputes tend to escalate into open warfare rather quickly), divisions among the Lutherans, as well as disagreements between Lutheran and Reformed Protestants, did not help matters any. By 1648, when the Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years' War (the greatest of the Reformation's wars of religion), Germany was a religious checkerboard, in which the religion of each province was determined by its ruler, and theological hair-splitting had become a fine art, though few practiced the doctrines they knew so well and disputed so knowledgeably.

2. France

Unlike Germany, where the political situation provided some measure of protection from his would-be persecutors for Luther, the French Reformers faced strong Catholic monarchs who identified

Protestantism with the democratic ideas of the French middle class, and thus saw it as a threat. Early French Reformers such as Guillaume Farel and John Calvin were forced to leave the country and, as we will see, became leaders in the church in Switzerland.

By the middle of the sixteenth century, despite the best efforts of the monarchy, Protestantism had made major inroads, particularly among the members of the middle class. French Protestants, known as Huguenots, were becoming a force to be reckoned with. At this point, Catherine de Medici, the Queen Mother, decided to reckon with them. She secretly passed word that when the church bells rang on St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572, all known Huguenots were to be massacred. Tens of thousands died in the ensuing slaughter, including the great Huguenot leader Gaspard de Coligny. The next two decades brought periodic skirmishes between Protestants and Catholics. The fighting finally ended when Henry of Bourbon, the political and military leader of the Huguenots, converted to Catholicism and ascended the throne as Henry IV. Despite his conversion, where he asserted that "Paris is worth a mass," his sympathies remained with the Protestant cause, and in 1598 he issued the Edict of Nantes, officially ending the persecution of Protestants. Through the middle of the seventeenth century, the Huguenots grew and thrived, though renewed persecution at the end of the century would eventually drive most of them out of the country.

3. Switzerland

In Switzerland, a young Catholic priest by the name of Ulrich Zwingli was beginning to study the Word of God at about the same time that Luther's eyes were being opened in Wittenberg. Originally an influential social reformer in the pulpit, Zwingli's studies of Scripture and the writings of Augustine turned him more and more toward the consideration of doctrinal issues. The Reformation in Switzerland, which was begun by Zwingli independent of Luther's work in Germany, was much more radical than the German Reformation. Zwingli and the other Swiss Reformers believed that only those things commanded in Scripture should be retained by the church, and thus they made an almost total break with Catholicism.

It was in Switzerland also that the most radical branch of the Protestant Reformation arose. The Anabaptists, so-called because they were the only Reformers to practice believer's baptism, advocated total separation, both from Catholicism and from the state. They emphasized radical obedience to the Word of God. Many were pacifists and lived communally. Their distrust of state churches, however, led to their questioning, and in many cases rejecting, many of the basic doctrines of Christianity (including the doctrine of the Trinity - after all, it was formulated at a council called by a Roman emperor of dubious spirituality). Their radical separation brought them considerable persecution, from Zwingli as well as others. The extreme behavior of some Anabaptist groups (such as the radicals of Münster) brought the whole movement into disrepute. It later gained some measure of respectability under the gentle leadership of Dutch Anabaptist Menno Simons, for whom the Mennonites are named.

Zwingli persecuted the Anabaptists (they were often executed by drowning, in what was thought to be poetic justice), but he couldn't get along with the Lutherans, either. When he and Luther met at the Marburg Colloquy in 1529 to try to reconcile their differences, they were unable to do so (the major stumblingblock was differing views of the Lord's Supper), and Zwingli died in battle against the Catholics two years later when the Lutherans refused to send troops to help him.

After the death of Zwingli, the leadership of the Swiss Reformation fell to refugees from France, most notably John Calvin. Trained in the law, Calvin was a careful scholar who never sought the public eye, yet his services were in constant demand. His two areas of major influence on the Reformation were his work in Geneva and his writings. In Geneva, he was summoned by the town council to revamp the legal system, set up an educational system, and redesign the worship of the church, all along biblical lines. Geneva soon became the model city of Protestantism, drawing visitors from all over Europe and becoming a haven

for persecuted Protestants. The visitors and refugees later took the ideas of Calvin with them when they returned to places like France, England, Scotland, and the Netherlands.

Calvin's writing has continued his influence through the centuries. His voluminous correspondence encouraged and enlightened church leaders all over Europe. His *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, originally a letter to Francis I of France showing that Protestants were not heretics, was later expanded through many revisions into an influential systematic theology. Calvin also wrote commentaries on most of the books of Scripture. His careful exegesis of the text made him the first of the modern Bible commentators. After Calvin's death, Switzerland continued for many years to be a bastion of the Reformed faith, noted for opposing faulty theologies such as French Amyraldianism (3-point Calvinism) and Dutch Arminianism.

4. Spain

Churchmen in Spain were as aware as those elsewhere of the rotten condition of the Catholic Church. But their idea of reform was purely moral, not doctrinal - an enforced return to the traditions of the church, not a biblically-based reevaluation of them. Led by Ferdinand and Isabella, their grandson Charles V, and church leaders such as Francisco Jimenes and Grand Inquisitor Tomas de Torquemada, the Spanish instituted such a strict form of Catholicism that the Protestant Reformation never had a chance to get started. Later in the sixteenth century, Spain produced the founders of the Jesuits, Ignatius Loyola and Francis Xavier. The Jesuits not only prevented the birth of Protestantism in Spain, but fought against it all over Europe.

5. The Netherlands

Throughout most of the sixteenth century, the Netherlands was under Spanish control, and thus subject to the Spanish Inquisition and its terrors. But its distance from Spain allowed Protestantism to grow nonetheless, led by men like William the Silent, and with theological influence from Calvin in Geneva and political support from Elizabeth I in England. The destruction of the Spanish Armada in 1588 led to eventual independence for the Netherlands.

Independence brought freedom of religion, and the Netherlands of the seventeenth century became the new haven for persecuted Protestants (such as the Pilgrims who eventually sailed to Plymouth). Freedom of religion brought with it varieties of religious thought, as well as a moral openness that finally drove the Pilgrims to America. The most notable theological development in the Netherlands of the seventeenth century was Arminianism, a reaction against Calvinism and the theology of the Reformation by Jacob Arminius and his followers, the Remonstrants. It was Arminius' insistence on the freedom of the human will and man's cooperation in both gaining and keeping salvation that forced the Synod of Dordt (1618-1619) to formulate the famous Five Points of Calvinism. The teachings of Arminius have continued to exercise wide influence in Protestant circles, not in their pure form, but through efforts to achieve a theological compromise that would allow for man a role in his own salvation.

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT REFORMATION IN CONTINENTAL EUROPE (1517-1648)

1. How did the Reformation in Germany differ from that in Switzerland? Who do you think was right in the dispute over what practices to retain from the Catholic Church? Why?

2. Give some examples from today's lesson of how God controls the political affairs of this world in order to advance His Kingdom.

3. Why do we evaluate the reform in Switzerland as good and the reform in Spain as bad? What must be true of change in the church if it is to honor God?

4. What does the Netherlands teach us about one of the drawbacks of religious freedom?

5. In preparation for next week, look up the following: Henry VIII, Thomas Cranmer, Hugh Latimer, William Tyndale, Bloody Mary, William Laud, Oliver Cromwell, John Bunyan.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 6**
Year 2
Quarter 2

THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND

1529-1688

Lesson Aim

To acquaint students with the basic framework of the English Reformation, which forms such a significant part of our heritage.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:6 - "Now these things occurred as examples, to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did."

Lesson Background

This week's lesson covers the period in English history from the formal separation from the Roman Catholic Church under Henry VIII to the Glorious Revolution and the accession of William and Mary to the throne of England. We have seen examples before of God overcoming questionable human motives to accomplish His purposes, but rarely in the history of the church do we see God doing so much with such a flawed and unpromising set of circumstances.

Nowhere can the danger of church-state ties be seen more clearly than in the England of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The progress of the church was tied inextricably to that of the state, and during the years when Protestant and Catholic monarchs succeeded one another alternately, the church was bounced back and forth like a ping-pong ball. Eventually, though, the religious revival stemming from the Reformation toppled that same state, though the ensuing Commonwealth was relatively short-lived. It is from this turmoil that our most recognizable forbears arose - the Puritans, and more specifically, the Particular Baptists. As students understand the struggles that produced the Particular Baptists (and Puritans in general), they should gain a better idea of the importance of certain emphases within the Reformed Baptist churches.

Today's lesson is divided along historical lines, following the monarchs who ruled England during the Reformation.

Lesson Procedure

Review the material on the Continental Reformation from last week. Note that among those influenced by the Geneva experiment were men from England, who eventually took the Reformation back to England with them. It was these men and their successors who were able to stand firm through the incredible political changes that wracked England and the English church in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

1. Henry VIII (reigned 1509-1547)

England had just finished going through the bloody Wars of the Roses, which finally ended when Henry's parents (one a Yorkist, one a Lancastrian) married. Henry's overriding concern as king was to ensure an orderly succession so civil war would not break out again after his death. For this reason he sought to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, who had produced a daughter, but no sons, and was beyond the age of child-bearing. When the Pope refused to grant a special dispensation for a divorce Henry severed ties with Rome in 1529. The result could hardly be called Protestant, however. Though Henry did for financial reasons confiscate the lands of the monasteries, this was no overthrow of idolatry like what had occurred in Wittenberg, Zurich, or Geneva. Throughout his life, Henry remained more Catholic than Protestant and more humanist than Catholic. During his reign, the English church remained Catholic in all but name, and those who sought genuine reform were suppressed or imprisoned. (William Tyndale was forced to flee to the Continent, where he was eventually burned at the stake.) The most important contribution of Henry VIII to the Reformation was his appointment of Thomas Cranmer as Archbishop of Canterbury - and even that appointment was made only because Cranmer would grant the divorce that the Pope had rejected.

2. Edward VI (1547-1553)

The sickly only son of Henry VIII became king at the age of 13 and died at the age of 19. Though the government was largely run by advisors during this young king's reign, his attitude toward Protestantism was far more open than that of his father, and the Reformation flourished, led by men such as Thomas Cranmer, Hugh Latimer, and Nicholas Ridley. These men and others were instrumental in producing England's first Protestant creed (the Forty-two Articles) and first Protestant liturgy (the Book of Common Prayer).

3. Mary Tudor (1553-1558)

The daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon was a bitter woman, and most of her bitterness was directed against Protestantism. She blamed the Protestants for the indignities both she and her mother had experienced. As a result her monarchy saw the reintroduction of Catholicism as the state church of England. Her vicious persecution of Protestants (hundreds, including Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley were burned at the stake) gave her the nickname Bloody Mary.

4. Elizabeth I (1558-1603)

The third of Henry VIII's children to rule England was Elizabeth, the daughter of Anne Boleyn. She was a pragmatist to the core and realized that the sentiments of the English people favored Protestantism. She thus declared herself a Protestant, but pursued a course of compromise, watering down the language of the creed and prayer book so that only the most adamant Catholic could not live with it. She demanded political loyalty, but allowed religious flexibility. This penchant for compromise gave rise to a reaction among those who desired to see the Reformation carried out to its full biblical conclusion. These men, who abhorred anything less than total fidelity to Scripture, came to be called Puritans. The Puritans differed considerably among themselves about what made a church biblical. Some were episcopalian, some presbyterian, some congregational in their views of church government. Most were paedobaptists, though some later espoused the practice of believers' baptism through contact with Anabaptists in the Netherlands. But despite their differences, they all sought conformity to God's Word in all of life. Despite Elizabeth's personal dislike for Puritan theology, she recognized that the Puritans could be counted on as loyal supporters. As a result, they grew stronger during her reign, though they became increasingly frustrated with her lack of interest in biblical reform.

5. James I (1603-1625)

Elizabeth died childless, and so the son of her cousin Mary Queen of Scots (who had already been king of Scotland since the age of one) succeeded to the English throne after her death. The Puritans now had high hopes, since James had been raised in part by the presbyterian Scottish Reformers. But James had gleaned from his royal relatives the concept of the Divine Right of Kings, and he was fanatical about it. He saw immediately that a church governed by a group of equals (presbyterian) would not harmonize with a state ruled by an absolute monarch, and so became a staunch supporter of episcopacy. The Puritans were in for a shock. Whey they presented a list of reforms for his consideration at the Hampton Court Conference (1604), he flatly rejected every one of them but one - the preparation of a new translation of the Bible into English (the Authorized Version of 1611, better known as the King James Version). Thereafter James opposed the Puritans, deliberately antagonizing them by encouraging public athletic contests on Sundays.

6. Charles I (1625-1649)

James' son Charles took his father's vices to extremes. He harried the Puritans to such an extent that many left the country for the New World, settling in Massachusetts in an effort to complete the Reformation that England would not permit. Charles foolishly attempted to impose episcopacy on the presbyterian Church of Scotland, and the ensuing revolt drained the treasury and made Charles extremely unpopular. His Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, did not help matters any by instituting the Star Chamber, a religious court in which civil rights were suspended, to persecute the Puritans. Charles despised the Parliament and summoned it only when he needed money. When the Parliament of 1640 refused to supply funding for the war in Scotland, Charles disbanded it and sent everyone home (the Short Parliament). But he soon ran out of money, and reconvened Parliament in 1641 (the Long Parliament). This new parliament had a Puritan majority, and when Charles tried to impose his will upon them, civil war broke out. Ultimately, the parliamentary forces under Oliver Cromwell were victorious, and both Charles I and William Laud were beheaded for high treason.

7. The Commonwealth and Protectorate (1649-1660)

The Puritan-led Parliament was determined to reform both church and country on the basis of Scripture. For the church, the Westminster Assembly met from 1643-1649 to prepare a new set of doctrinal

standards (the Westminster Confession of Faith, with minor alterations, is the basis for the Confession of 1689 used by Reformed Baptists). For the state, a Commonwealth was established, doing away with the wasteful, dictatorial monarchy. The Commonwealth did not last long, however. When Parliament refused to enact measures he proposed, Oliver Cromwell, head of the army, disbanded Parliament and instituted the Protectorate, with himself as Lord Protector. Cromwell was an tolerant man, but the Puritans could not agree with one another and had no inclination to tolerate differences among themselves. It was during the Protectorate that the negative connotations often associated with Puritanism were established in people's minds. When Cromwell died in 1658, Parliament reconvened, and not long thereafter restored the monarchy to England.

8. Charles II (1660-1685)

When the son of Charles I was invited back from exile in France to take the throne, he ushered in a period of reaction against all things Puritan. In the church, episcopacy was again on the ascendency (Congregationalist John Owen lost his teaching post, Baptist John Bunyan spent years in jail, etc.). Along with episcopacy came an increasingly overt courting of Catholicism, through the granting of privileges to Catholics, warfare against the Covenanters (presbyterians who were willing to fight to prevent the imposition of episcopacy by the crown) in Scotland, and alliances with Catholic monarchs in Europe. In society, morality hit what must have seemed like an all-time low. The raunchiest plays in the history of English literature (until the twentieth century, of course) dominated the stage, and were symbolic of the throwing off of restraints going on throughout England. Worldliness accomplished what persecution could not. During the reign of Charles II, Puritanism began a decline that would prove to be remarkably swift. As we will see, both Anglican and Presbyterian churches came to be dominated by Unitarianism rather early in the eighteenth century.

9. James II (1685-1688)

Charles II was succeeded by his brother, who did in public what Charles had done in private - he declared himself to be Catholic. The English people were not ready for another change in church allegiance, so the Parliament politely but firmly suggested that James abdicate in favor of his daughter Mary and her husband, William of Orange. James saw that the situation was hopeless, so he left without a shot being fired - the Glorious Revolution of 1688. William and Mary were moderate Calvinists and brought to an end the religious upheavals of the English Reformation.

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT — THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND (1529-1688)

1. How does the English Reformation demonstrate the problems inherent in any state-church ties?

2. Who were the Puritans? What did they want to accomplish? Was their goal a realistic one?

3. Why has the term "puritan" come to be identified with narrow-mindedness and negativism in its common usage?

4. Draw a chart showing the "ups and downs" of the church during the reign of these English rulers: Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary Tudor, Elizabeth I, James I, Charles I, Oliver Cromwell, Charles II, James II. What characterized the church during each of these reigns?

5. In preparation for next week, look up the following: Philipp Spener, Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, John Wesley, George Whitefield, John Newton, William Wilberforce.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 7**
Year 2
Quarter 2

THE PIETIST REVIVALS

1680-1833

Lesson Aim

To show students the strengths and weaknesses of Pietism, and thus demonstrate the necessity of combining holy living and sound doctrine.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:7 - "Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: 'The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry.'"

Lesson Background

The years following the Protestant Reformation were largely years of theological stagnation. On the Continent, people were tired after a century of religious wars, and Protestants were proud of their hard-won freedoms. The result was a settling in to a "status quo" mentality. Among Catholics, this meant apathy. The Jesuits, who had spearheaded the fight against Protestantism, were thrown out of country after country and finally (though temporarily) disbanded. Among Protestants, this settling in meant a conservative theology that was largely dead. People believed the right things, but those doctrines no longer had a major influence in their lives.

In England, the stagnation took a different form. Compromise had won out, and men began seeking a least-common-denominator "natural religion" that would provide a moral basis for society and that everyone could easily accept. The result of this quest was Deism, with its distant Creator-God who had left the universe in man's care, and man to his own devices. Deism was accompanied by Unitarianism, and both fit in very nicely with the rational humanism coming out of the Enlightenment in France.

Though the two situations were different, the responses were the same - movements that emphasized a life-changing God who called men to "work out their salvation in fear and trembling." In Germany, this movement was called Pietism; in England, Methodism. Both were attempts to inject life into dead churches, and both were sorely needed and greatly used by God. But both also had serious weaknesses, and those weaknesses and the disastrous results they produced should serve as a warning against the "pendulum effect" in the church - the tendency of the church to react against a bad situation by going to the opposite extreme.

By the way, the dates for this lesson were chosen because 1680 was the year of publication of Spener's *Pia Desideria*, the manifesto of German Pietism, while 1833 marks the abolition of slavery in the British Empre, perhaps the most recognizable achievement resulting from the Methodist revival in England.

Lesson Procedure

Start by giving students the information from the Lesson Background section relating to the aftermath of the Reformation. Indicate that we will be looking today at the two great revival movements of eighteenth-century Europe, Pietism and Methodism.

1. Pietism in Germany

The challenge to the dead orthodoxy of seventeenth-century German Lutheranism was begun by a Lutheran pastor named Philipp Jakob Spener. While reading the writings of medieval German mystics, he realized that the reality of God in the lives of those men was something he lacked. He became convinced that the essence of Christianity lay in a holy life devoted to God, not in the details of theology. He soon began a series of home Bible studies known as conventicles for the purpose of encouraging devotional disciplines and holy living. It was his vision that the men and women of the conventicles would transform the churches by their godly examples. Eventually, he wrote down his teachings in a book called *Pia Desideria* ("Pious Desires"). The followers of Spener were scorned by many church leaders, however, who viewed them as "holier-than-thou" and schismatic. In fact, the name *Pietist* was given to the movement by its critics.

Before his death, Spener helped found the University of Halle, which became the center of Pietism in Germany. The university sponsored social services such as an orphanage and was at the forefront of Protestant foreign missions.

One of the most remarkable graduates of Halle was Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. Though interested in foreign missions, he was pressured by his family to enter government service. Upon inheriting his father's estate, he opened the property to a persecuted remnant of the followers of John Huss. He reorganized them along Pietist lines and produced what came to be called the Moravian Brethren. The Moravians were very active in missions, and it was John Wesley's contact with the Moravians that provided a major impetus for English Methodism.

2. Methodism in England

The Methodist revival is attributed largely to the efforts of John Wesley. One of eleven surviving children of a poor country pastor, Wesley was given a strict moral upbringing, largely through the influence of his mother. At Oxford University, he began reading some of the writings of the Pietists and started a devotional group called the Holy Club to encourage disciplined devotional exercises. After ordination as an Anglican priest, Wesley and his brother Charles went to Georgia as missionaries to the Indians. Though

their work in Georgia was a dismal failure (largely because they admit they were at this point unconverted themselves), it was in Georgia that the Wesleys met a group of Moravians. The impression made by the Moravians was so strong that John was determined to pursue the connection further. After returning to England, John was converted at a Bible study in Aldersgate Street in London (Charles followed suit shortly thereafter), and not long after visited Zinzendorf in Germany. What he saw there provided the basis for the organization of his future ministry.

Meanwhile, another member of the Holy Club, George Whitefield, was busy in Bristol preaching to the coal miners. Their schedules were such that they could not come to church, so Whitefield went to them, preaching daily outside the mines at the changing of the shifts. Whitefield invited Wesley to join him, and the revival that began in Bristol soon spread throughout England and beyond. Wherever he went, Wesley organized his converts into Methodist societies, based on the model of the conventicles. Wesley and Whitefield both preached frequently in the open air, thus incurring the wrath of the Anglican bishops, who did not like preachers they could not control.

Doctrinally, Wesley was a true Pietist, more interested in Christian living than in doctrine. At one point he said his understanding of salvation was "a hair's breadth away" from that of Calvin, but he called his magazine *The Arminian*. Whitefield, on the other hand, was a Calvinist, and the doctrinal difference caused a rift between the two men.

In terms of influence, Wesley left behind him a church, though that was never his intention. His Methodist societies were designed to rejuvenate the churches, not replace them, but the Anglican church leaders largely rejected the Methodists, and the result was the formation of the Methodist Church shortly after Wesley's death. The Methodists, like the Pietists, were strongly committed to applying the Gospel to society, and many Methodists were active in reforming the abuses of the Industrial Revolution. The hand of the Methodists was visible, among other areas, in the abolition of slavery in the British Empire, a fight led by William Wilberforce, whose background included significant contacts with Methodism.

While Whitefield left no church behind him, he was instrumental in tying together the First Great Awakening in the American colonies during his seven visits there.

3. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Pietist Revivals

Pietism and Methodism were badly needed correctives, but they went too far in the opposite direction. The following strengths and weaknesses should be noted:

A. Strengths of Pietism and Methodism

i. Emphasis on conscious conversion

The church had become so institutionalized that many thought they had been born into it. As a result, the Gospel was not being preached in churches, and church members were going comfortably to hell. Pietism insisted that many church members were unsaved and that they needed to repent and turn to Christ.

ii. Emphasis on Bible study

This was to be a personal activity, not just a Sunday morning sermon. Private, disciplined times of prayer were also encouraged.

iii. Emphasis on holy living

The Pietists and Methodists believed that the work of God produced changed lives, and they insisted that those who were truly saved should live lives overtly different from others.

iv. Emphasis on social change

Both Pietists and Methodists believed that the Gospel could change the world. They pursued this change through orphanages, Bible societies, prison reform, humane labor laws, and the abolition of slavery.

v. Emphasis on foreign missions

The Pietists were really the first among Protestants to catch the vision of foreign missions. The University of Halle, with funding from the King of Denmark, established some of the earliest Protestant mission works in India, Africa, and the New World.

B. Weaknesses of Pietism and Methodism

i. Experiential emphasis in conversion and life

Feelings and works became the standard by which conversion and the Christian life were measured. This fundamental weakness generated weaknesses in several other areas as well.

ii. Hermeneutical laxity

Bible study became an exercise in "What does it mean to me?" rather than "What does it mean?", leaving the door open for subjective interpretations that had no foundation in context or grammar.

iii. Doctrine ignored

The first generation of Pietists assumed sound doctrine while emphasizing holy living, but the second generation was taught to live good lives without ever understanding why. This, in combination with the previous weakness, left the children of the Pietists wide open for liberalism. It is no surprise that most of the early leaders in the development of German higher criticism came from Pietist families.

iv. Pragmatism

This was especially a problem among the Methodists. Whatever needed to be done to spread the Gospel, Wesley did it, whether it meant field preaching or lay leadership. The tendency to do God's work by man's methods set an example that led, among other things, to the denominations under the Methodist umbrella being among the first to ordain women.

v. Legalism

The experiential emphasis led to defining a Christian by what he did or did not do. In our own country, the stereotypical "don't drink, don't smoke, don't dance, don't go to movies, etc." view of Christianity has its roots in Methodism.

Conclusion

Close by emphasizing the importance of balance in the Christian life. A Christian must be characterized by both sound doctrine and holy living, not just by one or the other.

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT THE PIETIST REVIVALS (1680-1833)

1. What happened after the Protestant Reformation that brought about the need for movements like Pietism and Methodism?

2. Why did Pietists and Methodists, who originally had no intention of forming their own churches but instead wanted to revive the churches from within, eventually wind up forming independent churches anyway?

3. What problems can arise from emphasizing experience over doctrine?

4. What can we learn from the Pietists and Methodists about the impact the church can have on the society around it?

5. In preparation for next week, look up the following: Bartholomaus Ziegenbalg, Thomas Bray, William Carey, Samuel A. Crowther, David Livingstone, C. T. Studd, Hudson Taylor, Adoniram Judson, Albert Schweitzer.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 8**
Year 2
Quarter 2

THE GOLDEN AGE OF MISSIONS

1790-1930

Lesson Aim

To acquaint students with the enormous worldwide spread of the Gospel in the nineteenth century, along with some of the causes and effects of that spread.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:8 - "We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did - and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died."

Lesson Background

In the area of foreign missions, Protestants lagged far behind the Catholic Church. There are several reasons for this. The first is the progress of colonialism. Like it or not, the early history of missions corresponds closely to the history of European colonization. The most active explorers and colonizers were the most active senders of missionaries, and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, these countries were Spain and Portugal. When colonial expeditions were sent out, the first boat would carry the conquistadors, the second the Jesuits. Some brave Jesuits even struck out on their own without the support of colonizers, the most notable being Francis Xavier, one of the founders of the Jesuits, who traveled all over the Far East, baptizing hundreds of thousands of people. But colonization is not the only reason for Protestant slowness - even after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, when England became mistress of the seas, there was no flurry of Protestant missionary activity.

Another factor that must be considered is the matter of survival. The major concern of the early Protestant churches was staying alive more than reaching out. The turmoil and warfare of Reformation Europe left little opportunity for the consideration of foreign missions.

Sadly, though, the greatest factor involved in Protestant reluctance, which inhibited missionary work long after the Protestant countries became colonial powers and the wars of the Reformation ended, was deadness in the churches. Whether it was the sterile orthodoxy of the Lutherans or the Unitarianism of the Anglicans and Presbyterians, few Protestants really cared about spreading the Gospel. It was only the Pietist and Methodist revivals of the eighteenth century that finally spurred Protestants into action in this area. When the action finally began, though, it was wonderful to behold, and as a result the nineteenth century became known as the Golden Age of Missions, with the far-flung British Empire leading the way.

Lesson Procedure

Begin by discussing, using the background material, why Protestants were so slow to involve themselves in missionary work. At the appropriate point, review last week's lesson about the eighteenth-century revivals.

1. The Danish-Halle Mission and the Moravians

As noted last week, the Pietists were among the first Protestants to become involved in the work of foreign missions. The University of Halle, using funds supplied by the king of Denmark, sent missionaries to many lands, most notable among whom were Bartholomaus Ziegenbalg and Christian F. Schwartz, who did pioneer work in India. The Moravians also sent out missionaries, most notably to the Caribbean islands and to the Indians in Georgia. Many of these early missionaries lost their lives at the hands of the hostile inhabitants of the countries to which they went.

2. Missionaries in North America

The oldest British colony was also the first to receive its missionaries. Missionaries to the American colonies fell into one of three categories. They either came to convert the Indians, convert the heathen among the settlers, or provide church ministries for the settlers who were already Christians. Into the first category fell the Pietists and Puritans. We already mentioned the Moravian mission in Georgia, but it should be noted that the New England Puritans also sought to convert the Indians in their vicinity. Most notable among the Puritan missionaries were John Eliot and David Brainerd.

The second category encompasses the thrust of Methodist missions in North America. It was to the lawless, godless frontiersmen that the Methodists ministered, and did so with a great deal of success, as we shall see in a few weeks.

The Anglican focus was primarily on the Christian colonists who were in need of churches and ministers. Even those who, like John Wesley, came to the colonies to preach to the Indians, often wound up spending most of their time with the settlers.

3. Missionary Societies

The organization that did the most to advance the cause of missions, while at the same time changing the face of the church, was the missionary society. Though most of the early missionary societies were sponsored by and affiliated with churches, many independent societies arose in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Among the church-sponsored societies, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK - 1698) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG - 1701), both founded by Anglican minister Thomas Bray, were the pacesetters.

The independent missionary societies accomplished many things the denominational ones could not. They crossed denominational boundaries, sending out all who were willing to go within a broad evangelical perspective. They cut through much of the red tape associated with denominational bureaucracies. They tended to focus much more on the Gospel than on denominational distinctives in their preaching.

But the independent societies had some drawbacks as well. Because they were not affiliated with any church, they were under no external authority or oversight. Leaders were often laymen who served with great dedication and skill, but had not been set aside or recognized as having been called by God by any church body. The result was that the missionary societies became the first great parachurch movement in church history (actually, the Sunday School was originally a parachurch organization, but they were soon assimilated by the churches), with all the downgrading of the organized church that that development implies.

4. William Carey, the Father of Modern Missions

Not all missionaries were sent out by missionary societies. Some simply went out on their own, trusting the Lord to take care of them. Such a man was William Carey. Carey was a cobbler by trade who became a Particular Baptist pastor. In 1792, he preached a famous sermon entitled "Expects Great Things From God; Attempt Great Things For God," the thrust of which was the need for foreign missionaries. When he himself expressed a desire to go to India, the response of the Particular Baptists was not altogether positive. One elder told him, "Young man, if God chooses to convert the heathen, He can do so without your help or mine!" Carey was undeterred, however, and formed the Baptist Missionary Society, under which he set sail the following year. After arriving in India, he worked in a factory while learning the language of the people. Over the next forty years, he was involved in setting up schools, hospitals, and printing presses, and translated parts of the Bible into thirty Indian languages. His three-pronged approach (church planting, translation of Scripture, and social services) became a model followed by many in the ensuing years.

5. European Missions and European Colonization

The connection between the colonial powers and their missionaries was a very complex one, in which mission work was sometimes helped and sometimes hindered. Note the following:

A. European colonialism opened doors to missionaries

Missionaries gained access to many unevangelized peoples through the establishment of colonies.

B. Colonial governments provided protection for missionaries

Though some missionaries still wound up losing their lives, the presence of a colonial government limited the danger faced by missionaries significantly.

C. Colonial governments often had reasons for hampering missionary efforts

The British East India Company and others like it were in business to make money, and often exploited the natives in the process. But missionaries brought education, and educated men are harder to exploit than ignorant ones. Besides, one might attempt to justify the exploitation of the heathen, but no rationalization could excuse the ill treatment of "fellow Christians."

Of course, the worst form of exploitation was slavery, and missionaries were at the forefront of those fighting to end this abuse. Letters sent from Africa by men such as David Livingstone described firsthand the horrors of the slave trade and did much to turn public opinion in America in favor of abolitionism.

D. Missionaries often exported European culture along with the Gospel

Often unwittingly, and in the name of progress and humanitarianism, missionaries conveyed a belief in the superiority of Western ways, and thus brought upon themselves the currently popular accusation of cultural imperialism.

E. Missionaries contributed to the eventual demise of colonialism

Most of those who eventually became leaders in the emerging nations were trained by missionaries in mission schools.

Conclusion

That the start of Protestant missions coincided with the Pietist revivals was no accident. A living church seeks growth; only a dead church does not reach out. By that measure, what are the vital signs of your church?

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT — THE GOLDEN AGE OF MISSIONS (1790-1930)

1. Why were Protestants much slower than Catholics to involve themselves in foreign missions? Were these reasons legitimate or not?

2. In what ways did the Pietist revival spark the modern missionary movement?

3. Were missionaries helped or hindered by European colonization? How?

4. What theological objections did certain Particular Baptists raise against William Carey's desire to go to India? Were their objections valid?

5. In preparation for next week, look up the following: John Cotton, Roger Williams, Solomon Stoddard, Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, Cecil Calvert, William Penn.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 9**
Year 2
Quarter 2

EARLY SETTLERS IN AMERICA

1607-1700

Lesson Aim

To make students aware of the religious motivations of the early American colonists and the spiritual condition of the colonies in the seventeenth century.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:9 - "We should not test the Lord, as some of them did - and were killed by snakes."

Lesson Background

This week we begin the final segment of our course, which focuses largely on the church in the United States. Today's lesson covers the first half of the colonial period, which is basically the period of settlement. Settlers came to the American colonies from many places and for many reasons, yet certain generalizations may be made about the early colonists, particularly if taken region by region. In looking at the seventeenth century in America, we will be trying to bring out these general characteristics, as well as tying what was going on in America to conditions previously discussed in Europe. Though our main focus will be on the Puritans in New England, we will be looking at the entire colonial region at least somewhat.

At least two applications may be derived from this material. One is the great value of religious freedom. In contrast to the turmoil, warfare, and persecution in Europe, the settlers in colonial America were deeply grateful to God for the freedom they found - a freedom we too often take for granted. The second application stems from the zeal of the Puritans to build a Biblical Commonwealth. Though that zeal was sometimes misguided and sometimes produced intolerance, we should have the same kind of dedication to doing everything according to the Word of God.

Lesson Procedure

Begin the lesson with a review of seventeenth-century Europe. Concentrate on the situation in England under the Stuart kings James I, Charles I, Charles II, and James II. Note then that it was during the reigns of these kings that the American colonies were first settled. Today we will be considering the seventeenth century in colonial America, and we will divide the lesson into three parts. Each part will deal with a different geographical area in the colonies - the southern colonies, New England, and the middle colonies.

1. The Southern Colonies

The first permanent settlement in the American colonies was established at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. The colony was largely economic in its motivation, though most of the colonists were members of the Church of England. What was true of Virginia was true of the other southern colonies as well. They were predominantly Anglican, and motivated largely by economic rather than religious goals.

A few very basic generalizations can thus be made about the southern colonies. They tended to be a microcosm of England rather than a reaction against England. The Anglican Church was established as a matter of course in these colonies, but was not the focal point of life, by any means. In fact, a good picture of the religious condition of the southern colonies at any point can be gained by looking at the state of the Anglican Church in England at the same time. This is particularly notable with regard to Deism, which was just as pervasive in Virginia as it was in England. The Methodist revival also reached America, but did not have a major impact until after the Revolution.

Not all southern colonists were Anglicans, of course. There were also several large settlements of Huguenots from France, who fled to America to avoid the persecution of Louis XIV.

2. The New England Colonies

A. The Pilgrims

The first settlement in New England was by the Pilgrims at Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620. The Pilgrims were a group of Separatists (Congregationalists who had removed themselves from the state church) who had been harried out of England by James I. They had settled in the Netherlands, but found that religious freedom there had a price - tolerance of all sorts of heresy and immorality. Concerned about exposing their children to such harmful influences, they set sail for America, intending to settle in the Virginia colony. A slight miscalculation put them in Massachusetts instead. The Pilgrims, who as Separatists were considered dangerous radicals by the Puritans, were eventually swallowed up by the much larger Massachusetts Bay Colony. They made no lasting contribution to American religion apart from their famous Thanksgiving dinner with the Indians.

B. The Puritans

While some of the English Puritans struggled to reform the English church, fighting on through a bitter civil war, others could take the persecution of Archbishop Laud no longer and left for a place where they could complete the Reformation and set up a Biblical Commonwealth without interference - Massachusetts Bay. The first Puritans arrived in 1628, and were joined by tens of thousands more within a decade.

To the Puritans, a Biblical Commonwealth meant starting from scratch and basing everything - church, state, education - on the Bible. In doing this, Calvin's Geneva provided a useful model, but the Puritans had the advantage of building from the ground up. The church, though still formally affiliated with the Church of England, had a Congregational form of church government. The state was separate from the church, but also was to be operated on the basis of biblical principles. Several notable practices developed from this situation:

- No distinction was made between civil and religious offenses. Many forms of visible sin were punishable by law. Such things as Sabbath-breaking and swearing in public carried civil penalties. Excommunication often led to exile, and witchcraft was a capital offense, as 19 residents of Salem discovered in 1692.

- Religious freedom did not imply religious toleration. The Puritans wanted everything done biblically, and those who wanted anything else, or who had differing ideas about biblical behavior, were not welcome. The most famous example of this is Roger Williams, a Separatist who found his views unwelcome in Massachusetts Bay. Unwilling to keep his views to himself, he was exiled from the colony and became the founder of Rhode Island, where he established the first Baptist church in America (he practiced believers' baptism, but probably not by immersion). His insistence on religious freedom resulted eventually in a large influx of Catholics, and Rhode Island remains today the most strongly Catholic state in the Union.

- Education was given high priority. The Puritans realized that their Biblical Commonwealth could not continue if men could not read the Bible and if ministers were not trained to lead the churches. As a result, the first compulsory education system in America was established to teach children to live all of life from a biblical perspective (and people today say that religion is alien to public education!). The Puritans also established schools to train ministers, since they had little confidence in the ones in England. It was for this purpose that the two oldest colleges in America, Harvard and Yale, were started.

The Puritan theocracy did not last, however. In order to preserve the purity and standards of the Commonwealth, only adult male land-owning church members were permitted to vote. But rapid immigration brought with it a clamor for the broadening of the franchise. The Puritan fathers had three choices. They could leave the situation the way it was, requiring a visible profession of faith for church membership and keeping the franchise narrowly defined; they could separate the franchise from church membership; or they could loosen the requirements for church membership. The first approach would produce a colony run by an increasingly smaller minority, leading to general unrest. The last two would destroy the theocracy - one immediately, the other more gradually. The third alternative was the one they chose. This broadening was accomplished with something called the Half-Way Covenant. The Puritans were paedobaptists. As such, children of church members were baptized into the church as infants. This affiliation with the church would allow them (the boys, at least) to vote when they reached adulthood. Apart from a well-defined conversion experience, however, their children could not be baptized. The Half-Way Covenant changed all this. It allowed the children of baptized but unconverted church members (half-way Christians?) to be baptized into the church. This decision produced both a dilution in the church and the eventual destruction of the theocracy.

3. The Middle Colonies

The middle colonies were a mixed bag religiously. The following should be noted.

A. The Dutch Reformed

The Dutch settlements in New York and northern New Jersey were similar to the British settlements in the south in that they were primarily economic rather than religious in character. Despite the lack of concern for religion (at one point the entire colony of New Amsterdam had only one pastor), this region was one of the scenes of revival during the First Great Awakening.

B. Roman Catholics

The only colonial charter granted to a Roman Catholic was that of Maryland, given to Cecil Calvert (Lord Baltimore). He wanted to establish a place where Catholics could worship freely, but he was unable to attract many Catholic immigrants. The Church of England was established there when the colony reverted to the crown in 1692.

C. Pennsylvania

William Penn set up a colony with the specific purpose of allowing religious freedom for all. He was a Quaker himself, and many Quakers joined him. But the colony also attracted German Lutherans ("Pennsylvania Dutch"), Scottish Presbyterians (among whom revival broke out in the eighteenth century), Anabaptists fleeing persecution (Mennonites, Amish, Schwenkfelders), and later some German Pietists.

Close the lesson with the applications suggested in the Lesson Background.

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT

EARLY SETTLERS IN AMERICA (1607-1700)

1. What were some of the major differences among the three regions of the American colonies studied today?

2. Why did the Puritan theocracy fail? What can we learn from that failure?

3. Is it possible to have a Biblical Commonwealth in the twenty-first century? Why or why not? To what extent is it possible for us today to do everything according to the Word of God?

4. What is the difference between religious freedom and religious toleration? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each?

5. In preparation for next week, look up the following: Theodore J. Frelinghuysen, William Tennent, Jonathan Edwards, Samuel Hopkins, Francis Asbury, John Witherspoon.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 10**
Year 2
Quarter 2

THE FIRST AWAKENING

18th Century

Lesson Aim

To help students see how God brought great revival to the declining religion of colonial America, yet the decline continued after the death of the generation in which the revival came.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:10 - "And do not grumble, as some of them did - and were killed by the destroying angel."

Lesson Background

In last week's lesson, we saw that the Puritan theocracy began to deteriorate as a result of the Half-Way Covenant, itself resulting from the pressures of increased immigration. The decline continued into the early part of the eighteenth century, but was temporarily arrested by an outbreak of revival known as the First Great Awakening. Rarely has a revival been so obviously the work of God. New vitality transformed churches in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New England. While each local revival was independent of the others, they were roughly simultaneous and were tied together by the itinerant ministry of George Whitefield.

Just as suddenly as it had begun, however, the revival died, and the colonies moved inexorably toward the American Revolution. This brought with it a renewed decline in religion, in which many factors were involved. By the end of the eighteenth century, the original home of the Puritan theocracy had become strongly Unitarian - few signs remained of the great revival a generation earlier.

The purpose of this lesson is to examine and learn from the revival and decline of religion in the eighteenth century in America. The lesson will emphasize the work of God in revival, the decline that always seems to occur in the generation following a revival, and the effects of the American Revolution on the churches.

Lesson Procedure

Again begin with a review of last week's lesson, placing special emphasis on the Half-Way Covenant and its results. Note that the decline of the fervor of the first Puritan settlers that occurred in the following generations is repeated in the eighteenth century, as we will see today in our examination of the one-generation-long First Great Awakening.

Unlike the Methodist revival in England, which occurred at about the same time, the First Great Awakening cannot be traced to the initiative of one great man who was greatly used of God. The Awakening was rather a simultaneous outbreak of revival in several parts of the American colonies, independent of and at first without knowledge of one another.

1. The Awakening Among the Dutch Reformed

We noted last week that the Dutch Reformed Church played much the same role in Dutch settlements such as New Amsterdam (New York) as the Anglican Church played in the southern colonies. It was part of the culture the settlers brought with them, but was not by any means the focal point of their lives. Into this environment God brought a man named Theodore J. Frelinghuysen (FRAY-ling-hi-zen), who had been influenced by Pietism as a young man in the Netherlands. He came to the Raritan River Valley in northern New Jersey in 1720 and quickly discovered that the majority of the people in the congregation he had been called to pastor gave no evidence of true conversion. He refused to allow those who lacked a credible profession of faith to take communion, including several of the church's elders. This caused considerable uproar, but under Frelinghuysen's preaching, many in his church and in the surrounding area were converted. Later, in order to perpetuate the revival, he helped found Queen's College to train men for the ministry (it is now Rutgers University).

2. The Awakening Among the Presbyterians

The Presbyterian Church was first planted in the colonies by Scottish Presbyterian evangelist Francis Makemie. The Presbytery of Philadelphia, the first in America, was organized in 1706. It was an Irish Presbyterian pastor in the Philadelphia area who brought the Awakening to Pennsylvania, however. William Tennent, evangelist and pastor, built a small log cabin in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania, in which he personally trained about twenty-seven men, including his own sons, for the Gospel ministry. In the years that followed, the men trained in what others scornfully called the Log College turned the Middle Atlantic colonies upside-down for Christ. Their revival preaching was opposed by many Presbyterians and split the church into pro-revival and anti-revival factions, but God used them to plant many churches and convert many sinners. The Log College closed when William Tennent died, but its graduates helped found the College of New Jersey to carry on the work of training pastors. Today, this school is known as Princeton University.

3. The Awakening Among the Puritans

The Awakening in New England blossomed under the preaching of Jonathan Edwards, considered by some to be the greatest theologian America ever produced. A prodigy who was fluent in Hebrew, Greek,

and Latin by the time he entered Yale University at age 13, Edwards labored for most of his life at the church in Northampton, Massachusetts. Ten years after his ministry began, revival broke out in a miraculous way in Northampton and continued for the next seven years. Edwards, amazed at the blessing granted him by God, insisted that the revival proved the sovereignty of God in salvation, since he himself did nothing in the seven revival years that he had not been doing during the years in which little response was evident. The responsiveness of the people stopped as suddenly as it had started, and Edwards was eventually forced out of his pulpit by several powerful families in his church. He spent the remainder of his life writing and preaching to the Indians.

These various manifestations of revival were tied together by the ministry of George Whitefield, who, in his seven trips to America, traveled all up and down the coast, carrying news and having contact with Edwards, Frelinghuysen, the Tennents, and many others, while encouraging and contributing to their various revival efforts.

4. The American Revolution and the Decline of Religion in America

It could with some justification be asserted that the low point in American religion occurred at the end of the eighteenth century, in the period during and immediately following the American Revolution. The following factors contributed to that decline:

A. Division in the churches

With everyone's attention focused on the struggle with England, everyone took sides. While Anglican clergymen took their oath of loyalty to the king seriously and many Quakers sided with England out of a desire to avoid war, most churches supported the Revolution, though for differing reasons. Some had come to America to get out of England and feared religious persecution. Others wanted to see their own churches become state churches and feared the establishment of the Anglican church. Most Anglicans had long since become Deists, and favored the Revolution for humanistic reasons.

The British sought to use the church to strengthen their position by sending an Anglican bishop to America. They feared, however, that the imposition of a bishop could trigger war, so they hesitated. They finally offered the position to the enormously popular George Whitefield, who wisely declined the honor.

B. Irreligious Leadership

The leaders in the colonies during the Revolution did not for the most part give priority to spiritual things. In fact, most of the "Founding Fathers" were either Deists or Unitarians. The example set by these men did not enhance the reputation of the church.

C. Destructiveness of War

In the war itself, many young men were killed, depleting the church's leadership pool. Many pastors fought in the war and many church buildings were destroyed or commandeered for other purposes. The confusion of the war setting made it impossible for most churches to function normally, and many people simply "got out of the habit" of churchgoing. Political issues involved with the founding of the nation pushed spiritual things to the back of most people's minds.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the First Great Awakening was a tremendous work of God that transformed a generation, but it served as little more than a temporary brake applied to the declining church in the American colonies. Next week, we'll see that, in the nineteenth century, God again sends revival, but its character is vastly different from that of the First Great Awakening.

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT THE FIRST AWAKENING (18th Century)

1. What aspects of the First Great Awakening indicate that it was truly a work of God?

2. What factors caused good men to oppose one another on opposite sides of the American Revolution?

3. Why did the American Revolution cause a decline in the American Church?

4. Why do revivals rarely last longer than one generation?

5. In preparation for next week's lesson, look up the following: Transcendentalism, James McGready, Charles G. Finney, D. L. Moody, Theodore Weld, Frances Willard, Charles Hodge.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 11**
Year 2
Quarter 2

THE SECOND AWAKENING

19th Century

Lesson Aim

To give students an appreciation for both the positive and negative aspects of the Second Great Awakening and its impact on church and society in America.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:11 - "These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come."

Lesson Background

The Second Great Awakening is a term used in various ways by various church historians. Some speak of the Great Awakening as the one we studied last week and acknowledge the existence of no other. Others use the phrase "Second Great Awakening" to describe the revival fervor that swept the country (particularly the South and West) between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Still others use the phrase to describe the revival methods developed in the early part of the nineteenth century, and thus see the Second Great Awakening as continuing even until recently in the preaching of men such as Billy Graham. In this lesson, the phrase "Second Great Awakening" will be used in the second way described above, in reference to the revivals that took place between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. In considering the aftermath of that period, however, we will also be bringing in other manifestations of revival up to the end of the nineteenth century.

The character of the Second Great Awakening was vastly different from the revival we studied last week. While the revival preaching of the First Great Awakening was Reformed in its theological orientation, the Second Great Awakening was largely Arminian (in the broad sense of that word). The First Awakening

took place mostly in the Northeast, while the Second Awakening was mostly in the South and what is now the Midwest. While the First Awakening appeared mostly in the Reformed, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches, the Second Awakening was dominated by Methodists and Baptists.

Today's lesson is divided into three parts, dealing with the decline of religion in New England after the First Awakening, the rise of the Second Awakening, and the results of the Second Awakening. Positively speaking, today's lesson should emphasize the ability of Christians committed to the truth to change their world by the power of God. Negatively, the lesson can be used to demonstrate to students the importance of sound theology in the life of the church and the consequences of ignoring the doctrines of Scripture.

Lesson Procedure

Begin as usual with a review of last week's lesson, concentrating on the religious decline associated with the American Revolution. Note that the decline continued in the years following the Revolution, particularly in New England.

1. Decline in New England

The Half-Way Covenant had devastated the Puritan theocracy, and the First Great Awakening arrested the slide downward only temporarily. In the years following the Revolution, Unitarianism made tremendous inroads into the churches of New England.

As is usual with such religious declines, this one began at the top - in the theological seminaries. The desire for academic respectability and the encouragement of broad-mindedness and academic freedom have led many a school down the path to liberalism. In following this pattern, both Harvard and Yale (originally founded to train ministers) appointed Unitarians as professors of theology in the first decade of the nineteenth century.

It should be no surprise that seminaries staffed by Unitarian faculties should produce pastors with Unitarian tendencies. At first the churches of New England resisted these men, but the tide was turned in 1818 when the Connecticut Supreme Court handed down the Dedham Decision. Massachusetts and Connecticut at this point still had established churches (as a sidelight, it is interesting to note that, unlike the way it is being used against religion today, the First Amendment to the Constitution was designed only to prohibit a national church - the Congregational Church was the state church of Massachusetts until 1833!), and the Supreme Court decided that since all citizens in a parish contributed to the support of the church through taxes, all had the right to vote in pastoral elections, whether they were members or not. Needless to say, broad-minded Unitarians would be more attractive to unbelievers than narrow evangelicals, and many of the pulpits soon passed into Unitarian hands. The churches themselves quickly followed, as Christians were unable to bear the leadership of Unitarian ministers and gradually pulled out of the churches.

2. The Second Great Awakening

The Second Great Awakening, like the First, broke out in several places at once, but in very different forms.

A. New England

The most notable outbreak of revival in New England was on the college campuses, sparked by the preaching and teaching of Timothy Dwight, grandson of Jonathan Edwards and president at Yale. His vigorous defense of the deity of Christ and the reliability of Scripture turned many away from Unitarianism and to Christ, both at Yale and at other New England colleges. The revival preaching of Asahel Nettleton also was used by God in the conversion of many. The revival faced stiff opposition in the colleges from the Transcendentalist movement, led by intellectuals like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau.

B. Middle Atlantic States

The preacher who epitomized the Second Great Awakening in the Middle Atlantic States (if not in its entirety) was Charles G. Finney. A lawyer who was ordained as a Presbyterian minister three years after his conversion upon affirming agreement with the Westminster Standards, which he had never read, Finney was a marvelously effective communicator. His early evangelistic preaching produced many decisions for Christ, but as the years went on, the results seemed to follow the law of diminishing returns. Finney could persuade hundreds to walk the aisle and sit on the mourner's bench, but, year after year, many of those responding were the same people. It was Finney who developed the so-called New Measures, the techniques of evangelism that characterized not only the Second Awakening, but also much revival preaching up to the present day.

C. Southern and Midwestern States

In the early nineteenth century, anything west of the Appalachians was "frontier." The frontier areas were sparsely populated, usually by rough-and-ready types with little interest in religion. An unsuccessful attempt to evangelize the frontier was the Plan of Union devised by the Presbyterians and Congregationalists. Under the plan, churches were formed jointly, could be served by ministers of either denomination, and would use the form of church government favored by the majority of members. This succeeded in reaching church members who moved west, but did little for the unchurched.

The difficulty of ministering on the frontier stemmed from three sources - the sparse and far-flung population, the low level of education (both religious and otherwise), and the shortage of qualified ministers. The churches that devised methods aimed at overcoming these obstacles were the Methodists and Baptists.

i. The Population Problem

A far-flung population could not effectively be served by placing ministers in every settlement. One could either send the preachers to the people or else bring the people to the preachers. The Methodists and Baptists did both.

The former was accomplished by the practice of circuit-riding, pioneered by Francis Asbury. On the sparsely-populated frontier, a single pastor would serve several congregations, traveling periodically around his "circuit," preaching, baptizing, marrying, and burying as he went.

The latter was carried out through the development of the campmeeting. Started first by James McGready, a Presbyterian, but quickly adopted by Methodists and Baptists, a campmeeting was a gathering for religious meetings that lasted over several days. Thousands of people would camp out together for as much as a week or two to listen to revival preachers. These meetings were often accompanied by

extraordinary phenomena such as barking, jerking, rolling on the ground ("holy rollers"), being "slain in the Spirit," and speaking in tongues.

ii. The Education Problem

The uneducated frontiersmen had little patience with the doctrinal emphasis of the Presbyterians and Congregationalists. In contrast, the anti-creedal approach of the Baptists appealed to their desire for simplicity, while the Arminianism of the Methodists fit right in with their prized self-reliance.

iii. The Ministerial Problem

Getting ministers for the frontier was hard. Few men who had been educated in Europe or on the East Coast were willing to submit themselves to the rigors of frontier life. Even circuit riding could not solve the problem completely. The Baptist and Methodists overcame this problem because of their willingness to license and ordain uneducated men. Thus the majority of frontier preachers were men with little or no formal education of any kind, let alone theological training.

3. Results of the Second Awakening

The Second Great Awakening had far-reaching effects in many areas of American life and religion.

A. Social Issues

One of the great strengths of the preachers of the Second Awakening was their insistence that Christianity was a religion to be lived. Though not often theologically astute and frequently legalistic, these preachers influenced the morals of a nation.

i. Frontier Morality

The revival preachers did much to put a stop to the twin evils of the "Wild West" - drunkenness and dueling ("Ah'm a-callin' you out, pahdnuh!").

ii. Abolitionism

The revival preachers fought slavery in many ways. On the one hand, they held evangelistic services among the blacks, making it clear that all men were equal in God's sight. On the other hand, they used the emotional New Measures techniques to stir up support for the abolitionist cause in the north. It was not unusual to see men like Theodore Weld, who once traveled with Finney, leading abolitionist rallies that sounded suspiciously like revival meetings.

iii. Temperance

It was also the frontier preachers who led the crusade against Demon Rum, aided considerably on the distaff side by organizations like the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Perhaps never in the history of our country has the evangelical church been a greater force for change than when the Prohibition Amendment was enacted in 1919.

iv. Woman Suffrage

Though direct evangelical involvement in the suffrage movement was limited, the movement was in a sense an outgrowth and continuation of abolitionism. After all, if blacks had the right to full recognition in the eyes of the law, why not women, too?

B. Evangelism

Finney's New Measures have become so much a part of American religion that most people no longer know their origin. The altar call, the mourner's bench, the "sawdust trail," the mood music ("Just As I Am"), and various other techniques have been perpetuated by evangelists such as D. L. Moody, Billy Sunday, Billy Graham, and countless others. Decisionism, with all of its inherent weaknesses, is one of the legacies of the Second Great Awakening.

C. The American Cults

The area in which Finney preached (southern New England, western and northern New York, upstate Pennsylvania, Ohio) became known as the Burned-Over District. The emotional nature of the revival preaching produced a gradual hardening that left much of the region spiritually dead and impervious to the Gospel. Strange plants grow in blighted soil, so it should be no surprise that the four major nineteenth-century American cults (Mormons, Seventh-Day Adventists, Christian Science, and Jehovah's Witnesses) all started in this region.

D. Church Divisions

Though most of the major church splits in the period were over slavery and occurred along north-south lines (the Baptists and Presbyterians being the most notable), the revival itself also generated dissension, most evidently among the Presbyterians.

i. New School vs. Old School

The division here was over the methods used in the revival, with its evident lack of concern for theological precision. The revival-oriented New School advocated any methods that advanced the Gospel and refused to quibble over details of doctrine (e.g., Albert Barnes, who denied the substitutionary nature of the Atonement and the doctrine of imputation, among other things). On the other side, the Old School emphasized theological accuracy (led by men like Charles Hodge of Princeton Theological Seminary) and deplored the carelessness of the revivalists.

ii. The Cumberland Schism

The Cumberland Presbytery in Kentucky, facing the same problems as many other frontier regions, licensed four unqualified (according to church standards) men to preach in vacant pulpits. After being threatened with disciplinary action by the denomination, the presbytery seceded and formed the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

E. The Bible Belt

As a result of all of this revival activity, the former frontier, which is now our South and Midwest, has become a culturally unique region. While there is no more religious area in our country, there is perhaps also no region where the shiny veneer of religiosity is so thin.

While morals are puritanical, God is thought to be satisfied by those who abide by the prescribed do's and don't's. Preaching is loud, often long, but rarely deep. "The simple Gospel" satisfies people who have no desire to know "the whole counsel of God." The pastor's ministry is still defined by the circuit-rider and the campmeeting - he is to preach, baptize, marry, and bury, but not to meddle. Throughout much of the Bible Belt, the concept of pastoral oversight is sadly truncated.

At this point, draw the lesson to a close by emphasizing the conclusions stressed at the end of the Lesson Background.

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT — THE SECOND AWAKENING (19th Century)

1. What is it about educational institutions that tends to draw them in the direction of liberalism, as we saw with Harvard and Yale? How may this tendency be prevented?

2. How did the preaching of Charles G. Finney contribute to the growth of the cults?

3. In the work of evangelism, why is it just as important to use biblical methods as it is to strive for a biblical goal?

4. What social issues today are ones where the evangelical church can and should have an impact? How can the church today work so that historians succeeding centuries will be able to look back and credit today's church with bringing about positive social change?

5. In preparation for next week, look up the following: Benjamin B. Warfield, Charles A. Briggs, Walter Rauschenbusch, John T. Scopes, William Jennings Bryan, J. Gresham Machen, Carl McIntire.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 12**
Year 2
Quarter 2

MODERN LIBERALISM

Lesson Aim

To acquaint students with the disastrous impact of liberal theology on the American churches, and through this to illustrate the relationship between sound doctrine and godly living.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:12 - "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!"

Lesson Background

We saw several weeks ago how the experiential emphasis of Pietism produced a generation of liberals in Germany whose theologies devastated the church. This week, we will see that the same thing happened in America. Pietism in Germany spawned Methodism in England, and English Methodism was transplanted in America and became one of the major driving forces behind the Second Great Awakening. Though the Second Awakening did not produce liberalism quite as directly as Pietism did in Germany, the connection is there nonetheless, and is one worthy of our examination.

We will be looking this week at two major historical manifestations of liberalism. The first of these is the Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy, which tore apart most of the main-line denominations early in the twentieth century. The second is the Ecumenical Movement, which provided both national and worldwide forums through which liberalism has advanced.

The major applicatory thrust of this week's lesson should be that doctrine has consequences. Relativism in theology cannot help but lead to relativism in morality. God's authority in faith must carry over into God's authority in life.

Lesson Procedure

Again begin the lesson with a review from last week, concentrating on some of the results of the Second Great Awakening. Then ask the students if they know what "liberalism" is. This term is used frequently in evangelical circles in a derogatory way, but many young people grow up without any clear idea of what it means. After giving opportunity for student input, note that liberalism involves, among others, the following concepts:

1. Religion is man-centered rather than God-centered.

2. Religion has as its proper goal the improvement of society.

3. The Bible is a human book, and as such is uplifting, but not authoritative.

4. As society changes, moral standards should be adapted accordingly.

5. All religions contain some elements of truth, and each can learn from the others.

6. There are no absolutes, either in truth or morality.

Liberalism is a dominant force today in American religion and American thought. How did such a situation come to pass? Today we will attempt to ascertain some of the answers to that question. Our search will take us into two major developments in twentieth-century American religion - the Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy and the Ecumenical Movement.

1. The Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy

A. The German Roots of Modernism

We noted earlier that the doctrinal vacuum left by Pietism in Germany led to a generation of theologians who sought to draw biblical conclusions from humanistic thinking and to motivate godly behavior by an appeal to social conscience. In short, the children of the eighteenth-century German Pietists were the nineteenth-century German liberals. The appeal of liberalism in the academic community was much the same as the appeal of Unitarianism at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and before long universities in Europe and America were inundated with the new scholarship.

B. The Social Gospel

We saw last week that the Second Great Awakening brought with it a tremendous surge in evangelical social reform, including far-reaching activity in the areas of abolitionism and temperance. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, however, some began suggesting that such social reform could be carried out much more effectively without the divisive "excess baggage" of doctrine. Implicit in this entire approach were at least two assumptions, namely that all truth is relative (therefore doctrine is unimportant), and that social reform is the primary task of the church. These ideas grew into a movement known as the Social Gospel, which took as its theme "the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man," with all the universalism the phrase implies. The most famous proponent of the Social Gospel was a German Baptist pastor in New York named Walter Rauschenbusch.

C. The Fundamentalists

The cavalier dismissal of doctrine by the Social Gospelers was perceived with horror by evangelicals in the churches. Though many recognized that legitimate doctrinal differences did exist and that dwelling on these could be divisive and counterproductive, they wished to insist that there were certain fundamental doctrines that stood as the irreducible minimum of what one must affirm in order to call himself a Christian. This insistence led to the publication, between 1905 and 1915, of a set of five books called *The Fundamentals*. These books were written by a large number of evangelical scholars and were published and distributed free of charge to every clergyman in America by two oilmen from Los Angeles. The books dealt with the following basic doctrinal issues: the virgin birth, deity, substitutionary atonement, bodily resurrection, and second coming of Christ, and the inerrancy of Scripture. Before long those who affirmed these doctrines came to be referred to as Fundamentalists. It was not until later that the term "Fundamentalist" took on its present connotation of separatism, narrowness, and anti-intellectualism.

D. The Scopes Trial

The present negative connotation of the term "Fundamentalist" received considerable impetus from a widely-publicized court case in 1925. In the obscure mountain town of Dayton, Tennessee, high school biology teacher John T. Scopes was arrested and brought to trial for teaching the theory of evolution in violation of Tennessee state law. The case was set up as a test case by the American Civil Liberties Union and they secured for Scopes the most famous trial lawyer in the country, Clarence Darrow. The prosecution, not to be outdone, called in three-time presidential candidate and former Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, the greatest orator of his day and a devout Christian. The trial soon took on the atmosphere of a circus, hyped by the irreverent commentary of the cynical H. L. Mencken, then a reporter for the Baltimore Sun.

Through Bryan won the case, it was a Pyrrhic victory at best. Scopes was given a minimal fine. But Bryan (and by implication, all fundamentalists) was made to look like a fool by Darrow and portrayed as a buffoon in the press. Shortly after the trial, he collapsed and died. The public perception of "fundamentalism" has never been the same since, and the media have habitually dismissed all evangelical Christians by lumping them together under the same derogatory term (as far as the press is concerned, professors at Westminster Seminary, Jerry Falwell, and snake-handlers are all "fundamentalists").

E. Church Divisions

Most of the major denominations in the country split over the Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy. One of the clearest examples of this pattern is what happened in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. (Northern Presbyterians). Throughout the nineteenth century and into the early decades of the twentieth, the Presbyterian seminary in Princeton had been a bastion of orthodoxy, led by professors such as Charles Hodge and B. B. Warfield. As modernism began to infiltrate the hierarchy of the church, first the board and then the administration of the seminary began to develop liberal sympathies. Matters came to a head in 1929 when a reorganization of the seminary was instituted. At this point, most of the evangelical professors left to form Westminster Theological Seminary. Since the problem also existed in the denominational mission board, many of the same people, led by J. Gresham Machen, formed the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions. When this new board began drawing financial support away from the denomination, the hierarchy moved to have Machen and the others defrocked. At this point (1936), they left the church and formed the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Internal squabbles, fueled mostly by the activity of Carl McIntire, produced several subsequent splits. The experience of the Presbyterians was

mirrored among Episcopalians, Northern Baptists, and Methodists, who also split over the issues raised by liberalism.

2. The Ecumenical Movement

The ecumenical movement gained its original impetus from the interdenominational missionary organizations formed in the nineteenth century. Seeing denominational distinctions as a barrier to the work of the Gospel, they sought to unite in service those who could not be united in matters of doctrine or polity. The same desire for concerted effort led to the formation of the Federal Council of Churches (now the National Council of Churches) in 1908, as well as the subsequent founding of the three organizations from which the World Council of Churches developed - the International Missionary Council (1910), Life and Work (1925), and Faith and Order (1927). All of these organizations originally contained both evangelicals and liberals, seeking to work together in areas where they were able to do so. Before long, however, it became evident that unified effort could not be possible apart from unified principles. Since vast differences existed among the member churches in both doctrine and church government, the only road to agreement was the road of relativism - all could agree that all had something to offer. The absolute relativism of truth thus became a fundamental dogma of the ecumenical organizations, one that at first left evangelicals in the minority, and eventually found most of them on the outside looking in.

Beginning in the period between the world wars, the ecumenical agenda became more and more politicized. The church no longer ministers to the world, it identifies with the world. Salvation is not God making men godly, but people helping people to be more human. Missions is not evangelism (after all, if all denominations have something to offer and should be affirmed, is not the same true of all religions?), but the undermining of unjust social structures. All of this liberalism in theology led inexorably to a left-wing political stance and a relativistic approach to moral issues. In conclusion, the ecumenical movement demonstrated that those who try to affirm a biblical ethic apart from biblical doctrine wind up subverting the ethic because they have departed from the foundation upon which it was built.

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT MODERN LIBERALISM

1. What is liberalism? Why has it damaged the church since the twentieth century?

2. What is the relationship between the Second Great Awakening and the Social Gospel? How was the latter a perversion of the former?

3. How did the Scopes Trial alter the American attitude toward fundamentalism?

4. How did the liberal theology of the ecumenical movement lead to left-wing politics and relativistic ethics?

5. In preparation for next week, obtain copies of several evangelical periodicals such as *World* magazine and scan them to see what some of the issues are that confront the church today.

Grades 9-12 **Lesson 13**
Year 2
Quarter 2

THE CHURCH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Lesson Aim

To give students a general picture of the present condition of the church in the perspective of history.

Memory Verse

I Corinthians 10:13 - "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."

Lesson Background

The most difficult period about which to write history is the present. One who writes about the past has the advantage of hindsight to single out those people, books, and movements that have left a lasting impression on the world (or the church). One who writes of the present has no such advantage. It is extremely difficult to discern which aspects of the church in the present day will be worth noting a hundred years from now. Having made my disclaimer, however, such discernment is precisely what I will attempt to accomplish in this final lesson of the quarter.

The lesson will be divided into two parts, one dealing with movements, the other with issues. The treatment will be general, but will attempt to place in historical perspective the church at the end of the twentieth century. The best application that can be made is the application of this quarter's memory passage - that God is at work in history and His people must learn from the past, following the examples of the obedient and shunning the paths of those who have deviated from the faith. If last week's verse warns against pride, this week's gives the comforting assurance that the tide of events will never overwhelm those who put their trust in Christ.

Lesson Procedure

Unlike the normal procedure, do not begin this final lesson with a review. Instead, the material of the lesson itself will serve as a review, bringing in many things studied during the quarter in the process of explaining the key developments in the contemporary church.

Start the lesson by asking the students what people, movements, events, or ideas from our present-day church will be remembered and recorded by church historians one hundred years from now. Aside from mentioning a few people (Billy Graham?), they probably will have no idea whatsoever. Tell them that, in today's lesson, we will be looking at three key movements and three key issues in the contemporary church - movements and issues for which the second half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first may well be remembered - and relating those movements and issues to matters studied throughout the quarter.

1. Three Key Movements in Today's Church

A. The Charismatic Movement

The Charismatic Movement is without question one of the more significant developments in the contemporary church. The Charismatic Movement is one in a long line of efforts made in the history of the church to emphasize the power and uniqueness of Christian experience. Like Montanism in the second century and Pietism and Methodism in the eighteenth, charismatics sought to emphasize the life in the Spirit, often in contrast to the lifeless Christianity around them. As Pietists reacted against a cold orthodox Lutheranism and Methodists against an ultimately self-defeating Deism, charismatics sought to bring life to mainline denominations destroyed by the liberalism that had driven fundamentalists from their midst a generation earlier. Like Pietists and Methodists also, most charismatics were in the long run unable to remain within those churches they sought to revitalize. The majority either formed their own churches or were assimilated, setting aside their distinctives in the process.

The greatest impact of the charismatics has probably been in the Roman Catholic Church, particularly in Latin America. The liberalizing of Catholic practice encouraged by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) paved the way for the impact of charismatics in a church where more doctrinally-oriented evangelicals were able to do little more than leave.

B. American Evangelicalism

The character of American evangelicalism has been undergoing a gradual shift in recent years. Three major groups of evangelicals may be cited.

i. Fundamentalists

Following the Scopes Trial, fundamentalists became increasingly strident and defensive. The anti-intellectualism and isolationism that the press was so eager to ridicule unfortunately found some basis in reality. The last half of the century saw a mellowing attitude, a greater interest in scholarship, and a more aggressive involvement in society at large among some fundamentalists.

ii. Dispensationalists

Though most fundamentalists are dispensationalists, the converse in not necessarily true. Dispensationalism dominated American evangelicalism in the early part of the twentieth century, but is largely unknown outside the United States apart from its parent group, the Plymouth Brethren, and the efforts of missionaries with dispensational leanings. Dispensationalism, too, has mellowed, as seen in the revised notes of the New Scofield Reference Bible. Though it is still the dominant theology of many American evangelicals, there are not as many people as there used to be who know no other approach to Scripture beyond that of dispensationalism.

iii. The Reformed Faith

For all practical purposes, evangelical Christianity in America was Reformed Christianity until the Second Great Awakening. The nineteenth century saw the tremendous numerical growth of Baptists and Methodists, and the consequent spread of an Arminian view of salvation in America. In the second half of the twentieth century, Reformation theology made a comeback, spurred by the growth of denominations such as the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church in America, and various associations of Reformed Baptists. Seminaries such as Westminster, Reformed Episcopal, Covenant, Biblical and Reformed Seminary have also contributed to this growth.

C. Third World Expansion

The nineteenth century brought a shift to the church that had not been seen since the sixth and seventh centuries. In the sixth and seventh centuries, the center of Christianity shifted from the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa to Europe. Europe remained the center of world Christianity until the nineteenth century, when the focal point clearly began to shift to the United States - a shift that was completed in the early part of the twentieth century. We may now be witnessing the beginning of another such geographical shift. The fastest growth in the church today is occurring in the Third World, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. It is possible that the twenty-first century could witness the dominance of Africa in the affairs of the Christian Church, with America becoming, as Europe is now, more of a mission field than a source of missionaries!

2. Three Key Issues in Today's Church

A. The Inerrancy of Scripture

Contrary to the assertions of many liberals, the inerrancy of Scripture is no new doctrine, any more than the doctrine of the Trinity was new when the word was first used by Tertullian in the second century. Throughout the history of the church, truth has been defined in response to false teaching, not in a vacuum. Consequently, the doctrine of inerrancy, given its classical statement in the writings of B. B. Warfield, did not really need to be enunciated until critical scholars began to question and finally deny the veracity of God's Word. Francis Schaeffer called inerrancy "the watershed of evangelicalism," and rightly so, since no doctrine of the Scriptures will long stand once the authority of Scripture has been undermined.

B. Feminism

In a strange sort of way, this second issue is related to the first. It is no accident that those who wish to relegate the biblical teaching on the role of women in church and society to the cultural backwardness of

the first century are often the same ones who are willing to acknowledge the inspiration of Scripture "only in matters relating to salvation." Feminism in the church is only the latest of many examples of the church being ruled by the world's agenda rather than standing as a witness against the world's insistence on human autonomy.

C. Church and State

One of the major contributions of the United States to the life of the church has been the separation of church and state. Ever since the Edict of Milan, both church and state have suffered from minding one another's business. In recent years, however, the concept of separation of church and state has been under increasing pressure. Since the early 1960s, the Supreme Court has had a tendency to interpret the First Amendment in a way never intended by its authors - as requiring the separation of religion from any endeavor involving public sponsorship. In response to this radical secularism, groups such as the Moral Majority sought to interject religious and moral considerations into the agenda of public life. Though the conservative Reagan administration sought to reverse the trend of secularism, the flavor of American life has continued to sour as the courts continue to favor the philosophies and morals of the atheist over those of the acknowledged Christian.

On a positive note, the church at the beginning of the twenty-first century has the opportunity, with God's help, to have the greatest social impact at any time since the passage of the Prohibition Amendment, which was largely the result of evangelical pressure. The great evil of abortion has been on the American scene officially since 1973, and in that time over fifty million babies have been slaughtered. By the grace of God, the greatest accomplishment of the church in our age could well be the ending of this holocaust. We also have witnessed in recent years open attacks against a biblical view of marriage and the family, with the denigration of the institution of marriage and the legalization of homosexual marriage in the United States and in many other places around the world. Under these circumstances, the testimony of Christians in the world becomes increasingly vital.

FOR REVIEW AND FURTHER THOUGHT THE CHURCH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

1. In what ways is the Charismatic Movement similar to Pietism and Methodism? In what ways is it a reaction against a different abuse in the church?

2. How has fundamentalism changed since its inception in the first decade of the twentieth century?

3. In what way is the current debate over the inerrancy of Scripture a result of the Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy we studied last week?

4. How are the current discussions about biblical inerrancy and feminism related?

5. In I Corinthians 10, Paul warns his readers to take seriously the lessons of history. What principles have you learned from your study of Church History this quarter that can help you serve God more faithfully?