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Teaching Notes

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A.C.T.S. Church History Seminar

20th Century: Fundamentalism vs. Modernism, Missions

Period Overview

I. The Onslaught of Modernity

- A. German Higher Criticism
- B. Darwinism
- C. Liberalism

II. The Era of Crusades (1890-1917)

- A. Evangelism
 - D.L. Moody (1837-1899): Three R's: Ruin, Redemption, Regeneration
 - The Student Volunteer Movement: *"The evangelization of the world in this generation."*
 - Billy Sunday (1862-1935)
- B. Missions
 - Foreign Missions
 - John R. Mott
- C. Social Causes
 - The Social Gospel
 - The Social Service of the Churches
 - The Salvation Army

III. Fundamentalism vs. Modernism

- A. The Advance of Darwinism
- B. The "Fundamentals"
- C. The Presbyterian Controversy
- D. The Scopes Monkey Trial: July, 1925
- E. The Rise of Evangelicalism
- F. The Southern Baptist Controversy

IV. Neo-Orthodoxy

- A. WWI: The End of Pure Liberalism
- B. Neo-Orthodoxy's Leaders
 - 1. Karl Barth
 - 2. Rudolf Bultmann

- 3. Emil Brunner
- C. Neo-Orthodoxy's Doctrines

V. The Amazing Advance of Missions

- A. Explosion of Evangelization
- B. Key movements & Leaders
- C. Church in China
- D. Third-World Missions

III. Fundamentalism vs. Modernism

A. The Advance of Darwinism

1. 1873 unscheduled debate from floor of Evangelical Alliance

[Rev. James McCosh tried to reconcile Darwinism and the Bible, sparking debate]

[on Scripture and Science] "Both reveal order in the world; the one appointed by God; the other discovered by man." James McCosh

2. Darwinism was making serious headway in major institutions of higher education
3. Soon, there came a separation between science and faith
4. German Liberalism (Ritschl) well able to make this split: religion operated in the realm of spiritual, with the heart, not the head
5. Charles Hodge, Princeton Theological Seminary:

"What is Darwinism? It is atheism! ... Is development an intellectual process guided by God, or is it a blind process of unintelligible, unconscious force, which knows no end and adopts no means?"

Charles Hodge, **What is Darwinism?**

6. Choice before Christians:

- 1) [Hodge] Darwinism irreconcilable to Christianity—a new form of unbelief; therefore, it is also bad science, since true science is from God
- 2) [Modernists, following Ritschl] Darwinism is irrefutable, so Christianity might as well just get used to it; Christian faith and science operate in different realms: science with solid, provable facts, religion with morality and spirituality; HOWEVER: where science and the Bible disagree, priority must be given to science

"While we are taught by the scientists in truths that belong to the sensual nature, while we are taught by the economists of things that belong to the social nature, we need the Christian ministry to teach us those things which are invisible." Henry Ward Beecher

[Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887) was the best example of a progressive (modernist) Protestant preacher: "The oaks of civilization have evolved since biblical times. Should we then go back and talk about acorns?" Christianity had evolved into the highest ethical principles, not a set of medieval dogmas]

7. Three Key Points of Modernism:

- 1) Adaptation of religion to modern culture
- 2) Cultural immanentism: God reveals Himself in the development of human culture
- 3) Religiously-based progressivism: human society moving steadily toward realization of Kingdom of God

B. The "Fundamentals"

1. A series of paperbacks (twelve in all) published from 1910-1915
2. A response to modernism's ever-advancing encroachment
3. Many enemies: Romanism, socialism, modern philosophy, atheism, Eddyism, Mormonism
4. Wide-ranging doctrinal issues; articles well-written, polite toward opponents
5. Eventually enemies and fundamentals narrowed

C. The Presbyterian Controversy

1. 1910 General Assembly of Northern Presbyterian Church: "Five Fundamentals"

- 1) inerrancy of Scripture; 2) virgin birth of Christ; 3) substitutionary atonement of Christ, Christ's bodily resurrection; 5) historical validity of miracles

Bible Prophecy Camps: versions included statements on premillennial doctrine or the deity of Christ

2. The Conflict erupts:

- Harry Emerson Fosdick's Bombshell Sermon: May 21, 1922: First Presbyterian Church, NYC; "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" liberals were sincere evangelicals trying to reconcile new knowledge of history, science, and religion with the old faith; fundamentalists were intolerant conservatives trying to shut the doors of Christian fellowship against any who would modify their traditional doctrines
- Fosdick's sermon started a process that ultimately split Presbyterianism in two

3. J. Gresham Machen responds: "Shall Unbelief Win?" and his classic *Christianity and Liberalism* (1923)

"At every point, the liberal movement is in opposition to the Christian message." Machen

4. Presbyterian denomination lost battle against modernism; little by little, its agencies (e.g. missions board) went liberal; fiercest battle over Princeton Seminary
5. Machen pulled out and helped start PCUSA denomination and Westminster Seminary

D. The Scopes Monkey Trial: July, 1925

E. The Rise of Evangelicalism

F. The Southern Baptist Controversy

V. The Amazing Advance of Missions

Matthew 24:14 “This gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

Now, remember that Matthew 24:14 is a marvelous prophecy by Christ... seated on a rocky hill in an insignificant part of the Roman empire, Christ's prophetic vision predicted sweeping success for the message He was living. And history has proven Him true!!

A. The great commission is here to produce worshippers

“Missions is not the ultimate goal of a church. Worship is. Missions exist because worship doesn't When this age is over, and countless millions fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more.” John Piper, **Let the Nations Be Glad**

B. Survey of the Fulfillment; the last 200 years

Two hundred years ago

- True biblical faith confined to the following regions: most of Europe, the new nation of America, other portions of the New World, slim trading outposts in South America, Africa, India, China, and the South Pacific
- Overwhelming majority of world's land mass nowhere near a witness to Biblical Christianity
- Roman Catholics cited lack of Protestant missionary zeal as proof that Protestantism was heretical
- Four men (and countless others) were used by God to change that forever... they greatly “hastened the Day of the Lord” by their insights and actions

C. Four Key Leaders

1. William Carey: “Father of Modern Missions”

“Expect great things of God, attempt great things for God.” William Carey

- courageously opened discussion among Protestants of the need for cross-cultural missions
- impoverished English shoemaker with hunger to preach the word... pastor of a small Baptist church
- read *Captain Cook's Voyages*, record of the daring exploits of British explorer
- formed convictions about missions, directly in the face of prevailing 18th c. conviction that Great Commission was given only to apostles... famous rebuke

“Young man, sit down. When God pleases to convert the heathen he will do it without your aid or mine.”

- Undaunted, turned to Scripture and wrote powerfully influential 87-page book

1792, *“An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens.”*

- Organized Baptist Missionary Society; soon many other such agencies came into being
- Landed in India in 1793 and poured out his life in service to Christ, through some terrible trials... his greatest successes came in Serampore where over 600 nationals were converted and disciplined; the trail had been blazed
- Within 25 years of Carey's writing, twelve other Protestant mission agencies were formed, and the work was born

2. Hudson Taylor: China Inland Missions

- Served as a missionary in the Shanghai area in 1854, but soon grew depressed around other missionaries, who lived luxurious lifestyles
- decided to move further inland, and totally immersed himself in Chinese ways
- In 1857, resigned from his mission agency because they rejected his immersion lifestyle and because their financial support was erratic
- Returned to England. In 1865, Hudson Taylor began a new era in Protestant missions when he stared at the "accusing map" of China on the wall of his study. He became increasingly burdened for the inland regions of China, and committed his life to bringing the gospel to those inland provinces. He was in Brighton in England when he wrote these words:

"On Sunday, June 25, 1865, unable to bear the sight of a congregation of a thousand or more Christian people rejoicing in their own security while millions were perishing for lack of knowledge, I wandered out on the sands alone, in great spiritual agony, and there the Lord conquered my unbelief, and I surrendered myself to God for this service. I told Him that all the responsibility as to issues and consequences must rest with Him; that as His servant, it was mine to obey and follow Him—His to direct, to care for, and to guide those who might labor with me. Need I say that peace at once flowed into my burdened heart."

- Trusted God for missionaries:

At that moment, Taylor wrote in the margin the results of his new insight; he trusted God for 24 new workers, two for each of the eleven inland provinces of China, and two for Mongolia. Taylor summed up his God-honoring insight this way: "God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply." Hudson Taylor's zeal for inland regions was copied by many other mission agencies, many of them American... China Inland Mission was followed by Sudan Interior Mission and many others.

God had brought clarity to Christ's phrase: "in the whole world, as a testimony to all nations."

BUT Taylor still thinking in terms of political regions... the eleven inland provinces of China; more clarification was on the way

3. Cameron Townsend: Wycliffe Bible Translators

- In 1917, became missionary to Guatemala; mastered Spanish, the national language of Guatemala, began to go house to house distributing Spanish literature... realized that few of the people spoke Spanish as their first language

- Indian asked him, “If your God is so smart, why he can’t speak our language?”
- Convinced, Townsend saw the need for someone to concentrate on unreached tribes by translating the Scriptures into their language; founded Wycliffe Bible Translators
- At first, estimated 500 different languages; then, revised estimate to 1000, then to 2000; in April of 1982, at the time of his death, they estimated the number at 3000; now Wycliffe Bible Translators believes there are over 5000 distinct languages in the world
- Language is intrinsic to culture... thus Christ again brought greater clarity to the phrase

“This gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations...”

- The preaching was to be in the heart language of the people, and the overlooked tribal groups would be overlooked no more

4. Donald McGavran: U.S. Center for World Missions

- At the same time as Townsend was doing his work, McGavran was serving as a missionary in India, and was observing cultural differences in social groups
- He identified “homogenous units” which we now call “people groups,” which each must be penetrated with the gospel before the Great Commission is finished
- Language and culture, plus various geographic and social factors go into the identification of a “people group.”

D. Present Status

1. No geographical nation on earth without a New Testament Church

- couldn’t have said that even ten years ago
- God has broken through in Mongolia, Albania, and various closed Muslim nations
- The fall of the Soviet bloc has opened access to countless hidden people groups

2. Tremendous force for final thrust: Two-Thirds World Missions Agencies

- up until recently, missions dominated by Western nations
- estimates indicate that, by 2000, more missionaries on the field will be from non-Western nations than from Western nations... in 1988, there were more than twice as many Western missionaries as non-Western missionaries

3. Unreached people groups

- 1950 estimated 24,000 unreached peoples
- 1980 estimated 17,000 unreached peoples
- 1992 estimated 11,000
- 1996 estimates put it around 9,000... almost half what it was in 1980 when I started praying for them

- MANY local churches have adopted unreached peoples and have prayed for them until there were local churches planted in their midst!!

4. Various amazing statistics: TO GOD'S GLORY

- 3500 new churches opening worldwide every week
- 28,000 additional Christians in People's Republic of China every day. In 1950 when China was closed to foreign missionaries, cons. estimates at 1 million Chinese Christians; now conservative estimates at 40-50 million
- 20,000 new Christians in Africa every day; in 1990, 3% of continent was Christian; now over 40%
- In Muslim Indonesia, the number of Christians is so high the government has stopped printing the statistic... estimates place it at around 25%!!
- In Iran, more Muslims have come to faith in Christ since 1980 than in the previous 1000 years combined!!
- In Russia, after 70 years of oppression, Christians number at least 100 million- five times the number in the Communist parts and 36% of the total population
- In A.D. 100, 360 non-Christians for every believer; now the estimate is 7 non-Christians for every evangelical believer
- In A.D. 100, estimated 12 unreached people groups per church congregation; in 1991, with 5 million congregations worldwide, there are at least 500 congregations for every unreached people group!

Christ prophesied accurately when He said, "This gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

We're seeing the greatest fulfillment of that prophecy in history right before our eyes!!

E. The Work Still to Do:

1. The newly opened nations still have a very small and weak witness
2. There are still 9000 unreached people groups
3. There is much degeneration of the church in previously strong areas... look at America... many of our own people hardly know anything about Jesus Christ
4. There are still almost 4 billion people who have never heard the name of Jesus Christ