

The Second Great Awakening

American History to 1877

Religion and the New Nation

- Religion essential to morals of republic
- Most states keep tax-supported churches
- Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, 1786
 - Jefferson, Madison, Baptists, and Presbyterians vs. Anglicans
 - Jefferson: religion a private opinion; state should not impose opinions
 - Baptists: US not a “Christian nation”; separation of church & state
- Disestablishment’s slow progress elsewhere
 - Vermont 1807; Connecticut 1818; New Hampshire 1819; Mass. 1833
- Baptists and the First Amendment
 - “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

1790s: Is religion dead?

- French Revolution, 1793
- New England ministers worry
 - Victory of rationalism?
- Revivalism quiet in the South
 - Migration from Piedmont to the West
- Jefferson’s victory in 1800: official atheism?

Revivalism returns

- Revivals in Connecticut & at Yale, 1802
- Presbyterians on the Kentucky frontier
- Cane Ridge, 1801: “America’s Pentecost”
 - First large camp-meeting
 - Perhaps 20,000 attend

The Camp-Meeting

- Presbyterian communion scene

Camp Meetings

- Lorenzo Dow and the “jerking exercise”
- Presbyterians recoil from Cane Ridge
- Baptists grow reluctant
- Methodist Camp Meeting Plan, 1809
- Methodist Camp-Meeting, 1819
- Methodist Camp Meeting, 1839

Methodism

- John Wesley (1703-1791)
- Francis Asbury
 - First bishop, 1785
- Success of the circuit rider
- Methodist meetings
 - Arminian theology (anti-Calvinist)
 - Emotional religion
 - Dreams and visions
 - Miraculous healings, speaking in tongues

Methodists & Revivals

- Embrace camp-meetings
 - Peter Cartwright
- Appeal to women
- Appeal to African Americans
 - Antislavery principles
 - “Thoughts upon Slavery,” 1744

African Americans & Revival

- Attraction of emotional spirituality
 - Roles for women
- African elements
 - Ring shouts

- Call and response hymns
- African Methodist Episcopal Church
 - Richard Allen, 1816
- Baptist churches in the South

Fire in the “Burnt-Over District”

- Settlement after 1815
 - Erie Canal opens New York & Great Lakes
 - Godless frontier?
- Charles Grandison Finney
 - Presbyterian minister
 - Rejects Calvinism
 - “New measures”
 - “Protracted meeting”
 - Role of women

Fervor sweeps the nation

- 1820s-1836: High expectations
- America: a new kind of nation
 - Freed from constraints of history
- Confidence that all would be solved
 - 1800 years of error to be overcome

Millennialism

- New expectations of Second Coming
 - Finney: evangelize the world in 3 years
- William Miller
 - Predicts millennium 1843
 - Recalculated for 1844
 - The “Great Disappointment”
 - Hiram Edson: cleansing of temple in heaven
- Seventh-Day Adventists, 1860-63

Restorationism

- Denominationalism
- Dismay at proliferation of churches
 - Goal of Christian unity recedes
- Disciples of Christ/Churches of Christ
 - Alexander Campbell, 1808
 - “Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent”
 - Simple creed; radical ecclesiology
 - Popular on frontier, along Ohio River

The Mormons

- Joseph Smith, Palmyra, NY
 - Confusion of denominations
 - Treasure seeker
 - Angel Moroni, Mt. Cumorah, golden plates
 - Translation of Book of Mormon, 1830
- Restoration of the true church
- Conversion in Kirtland, Ohio
- Battle in Far West, Missouri, 1839

The Mormon Zion

- Nauvoo, Illinois
- Schism & strange new doctrines
 - Revelations
 - Polygamy
- Arrested for destroying presses
 - Killed by mob, 1844
- Brigham Young
 - Trek to Utah, 1846-48

Democratization of religion

- Faith in the “common man”
 - Priesthood of all believers: right to decide for oneself
 - *Sola scriptura*: pure Bible, pure doctrine

- Arminianism replaces Calvinism
- Vernacular preaching
- Mass-market religious press
- American popular religious music
- Ministers: From office to profession
- Feminization of Christianity
- Christianization of the nation
 - Northern and Southern revivalisms