The Enlightenment and Religion

Religion in America

Principles of the Enlightenment

- From “Age of Faith” to “Age of Reason”
  - Futility of religious war & fear of fanaticism
  - Arguments for toleration: Milton, 1644, & John Locke, 1689

- Search for universals
  - Reason + Nature = Truth
  - Sir Isaac Newton (1643-1727)
  - Universal morality
  - Universal human nature
  - Man good by nature

Growing Arminianism

- Reason and Religion
  - John Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, 1695

- Reason & the moral sentiment
  - Cotton Mather, *Essays to Do Good*

- Opposition to the Great Awakening
  - Arminianism comes out of the “closet”
    - Charles Chauncey, Jonathan Mayhew of Boston

Religion of Nature

- “Book of Nature” & “Book of Revelation”
  - Cotton Mather, *Christian Philosopher*

- Deism: religion of reason
  - Matthew Tindal, *Christianity as Old as the Creation*, 1730
  - No miracles or revelation
    - God known from nature
  - God wants men to act morally, and be happy
  - Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography*
    - I never doubted ... the existence of the Deity; that He made the world, and governed it by His providence; that the most acceptable
service of God was the doing good to man; that our souls are immortal; and that all crime will be punished, and virtue rewarded, either here or hereafter.