



CHURCH HISTORY

MODERN CHURCH

1650AD - PRESENT

1. Modernism
2. Liberalism
3. Fundamentalism
4. Evangelicalism
5. Postmodernism

A Philosophy of Church History

by C. Michael Patton

www.credohouse.org

DNA



-100

All the building blocks of the church present with the completion of the Bible

INFANCY



100-325

Early Church

A state of innocence and self-discovery as the church attempts to find and meet the expectations and requirements of being the Body of Christ

ADOLESCENCE



325-524

Creedal Church

The church learns and begins to define itself in more definitive ways due to doctrinal reflection, internal controversy, and communal discovery

TEENS



525-1517

Medieval Church

The church continues to grow, but moves in the direction of over-definition, authoritative abuse, arrogance, bullying and rebellion

20s



1517-1900

Reformation Church

Mistakes of the past are reflected upon and begin to find remedy through repentance, reformation, and renewed purpose, hope, and confidence

30s & 40s



1900-Present

Postmodern Church

Reality and hope begins to be adjusted due to experience and unmet expectations. Hope and optimism become more narrowed and focused or abandoned completely

50s & BEYOND



Future

Future Church

Maturation in mind and thought are brought into practice as settlements are made and values and convictions become well-established though knowledge and wisdom

MODERNISM



Rene Descartes (1596-1650)

“Father of Modern Philosophy” who introduced the “Cartesian method” of inquiry which required indubitability (absolute certainty) in all areas of life.

cogito ergo sum

“I think therefore I am”

The new Philosophy calls all in doubt,
The Element of fire is quite put out;
The Sun is lost, and th'earth, and no man's wit
Can well direct him where to look for it
-John Donne

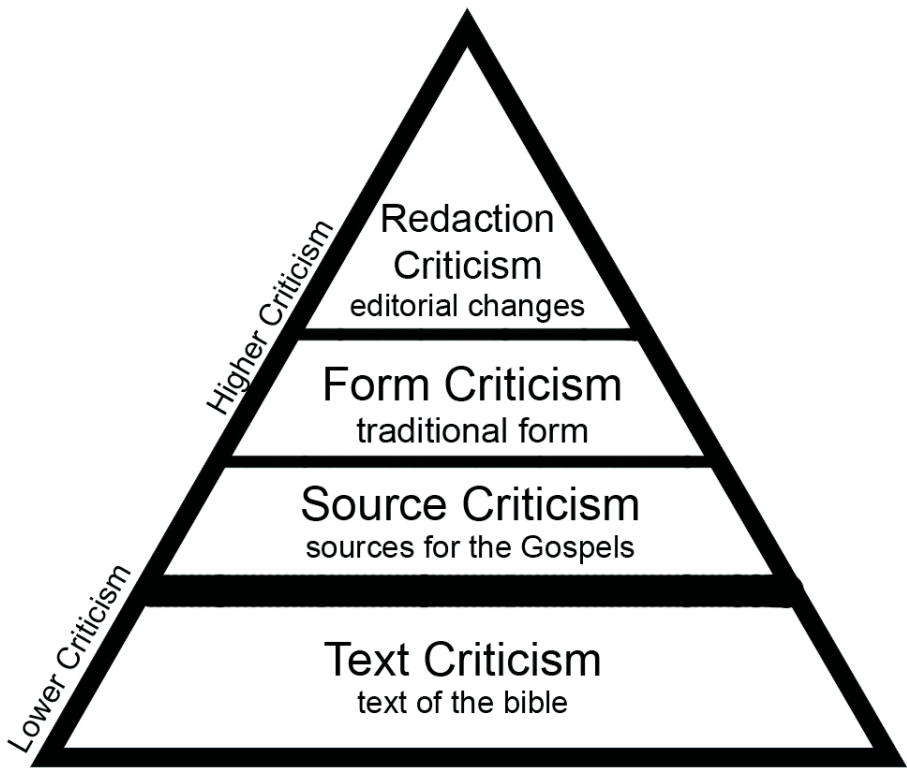
Doubt Everything!

Scientific Revolution

1. Earth is not the center of universe; Sun is the center of the solar system
2. Scientific method
3. Discoveries in anatomy
4. Language of mathematics and geometry
5. Laws of nature discovered
6. The authority of science and reason began to replace the authority of the church and Scripture

Higher Criticism:

A branch of biblical studies that flourished in Germany in the 18th and 19th centuries which sought to apply the principles of the Enlightenment, scientific inquiry, and modern philosophy to the text of the Scriptures.

**Demythologization:**

The process most famously used by Thomas Jefferson to remove from the Bible all the elements that seemed mythological.

Quest for the Historic Jesus:

Movement in Biblical studies which sought to separate the Jesus from faith from the Jesus of history (Albert Schweitzer).



Charles Darwin
(1809-1882)

Father of Darwinian Evolution which gave people an alternative and scientific explanation for the origin of species.

Four pivotal issues for Darwin:

- Flightless birds (rhea)
- Goose with webbed feet that never went into the water
- Ichneumonidae wasp who laid its eggs in a caterpillar in a painful process
- Death of his 11-year-old daughter

“Evolution made it possible to be
an intellectually satisfied atheist.”

-Richard Dawkins

Liberalism: A movement birthed out of modernism which sought to “save” Christianity (and religion in general) from the damage caused by modernistic thinking by adapting its essence.

Friedrich Schleiermacher
(1768-1834)

Father of Theological
Liberalism who expressed
his faith not as rational
belief, but as a feeling of
dependence on God.



“You reject the dogmas and propositions of religion.... Religion does not need them; it is only human reflection on the content of our religious feelings or affections.... Do you say that you cannot accept miracles, revelation, inspiration? You are right; we are children no longer; the time for fairy-tales is past.”

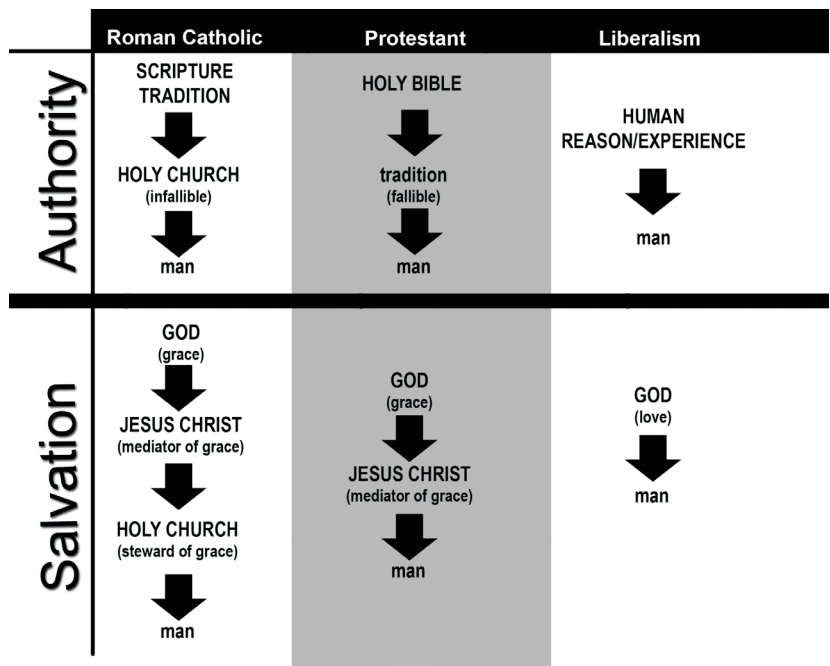
-Friedrich Schleiermacher



Ecumenicalism:

Sought to bring unity to the church under the banner of moral cause rather than doctrinal creed. This movement is represented most by the World Council of Churches.

	Liberalism	Historic Christianity
Essence of Christianity	Morality	Christ redemption
Scripture	Mythology	God’s word
Christ	Example to be followed	God to be worshipped
God	Love	Love and Justice
Ultimate authority	Experience and reason	Bible
Man	Essentially good	Morally fallen
Sin	Vestiges of perverse animal instincts	Rebellion against God
Salvation	Good works	Faith in Christ
Church	Concerned with world and society (Social Gospel)	Concerned with the salvation of souls.
Eschatology	No hell, all “saved”	God’s judgment, Christians saved



“A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross.”

-H. Richard Niebuhr

“A chorus of ecumenical voices keep harping the unity tune. What they are saying is, “Christians of all doctrinal shades and beliefs must come together in one visible organization, regardless... Unite, unite!” Such teaching is false, reckless and dangerous. Truth alone must determine our alignments. Truth comes before unity.”

-Charles H. Spurgeon

Fundamentalism: A movement in the early 21st century which sought to rescue Christianity from liberalism, restoring and defending the fundamental creeds of the Christian faith.

The Fundamentals, published from 1915-1920, was a monumental work of 90 essays contained in twelve volumes. Drawing from dozens of authors including James Orr, B.B. Warfield, and G. Campbell Morgan, these essays defended the essence---the Fundamentals---of the Christian faith against the threat of Liberalism.

OLD SCHOOLS

Princeton
(1746; Presbyterian)

Harvard
(1636; Calvinist)

Yale (1701; Calvinist)

Dartmouth
(1769;
Congregationalist)

Brown (1746; Baptist)

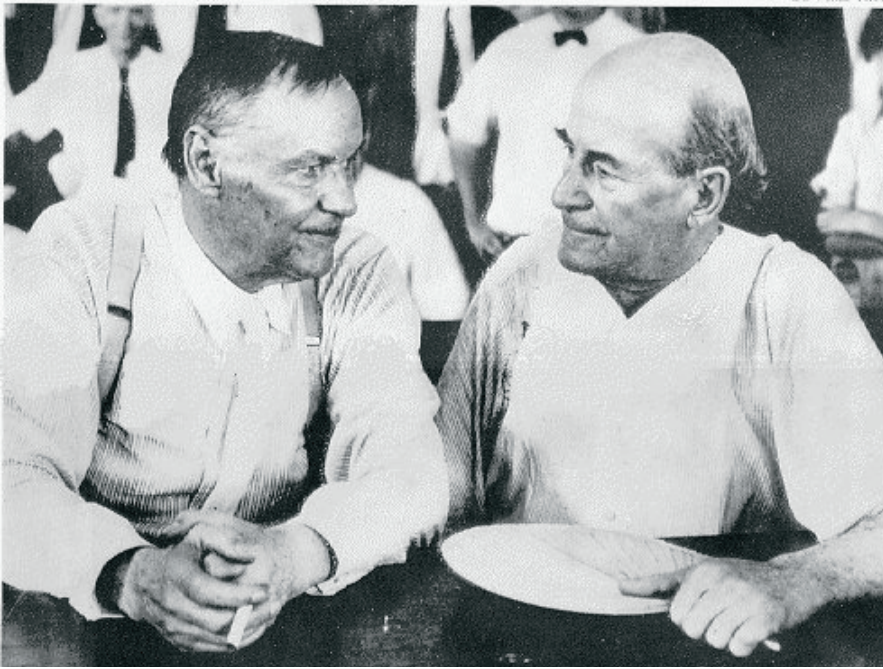
NEW SCHOOLS

Wheaton College
(1860)

Westminster Theological
Seminary
(1929)

Dallas Theological
Seminary (1924)

Fuller Theological
Seminary (1947)



Scopes Monkey Trial (1925):

A nationally publicized trial which shaped and defined Fundamentalism as an anti-intellectual “back-woods” religion that resisted scientific reality in favor of cultish beliefs.

Williams Jennings Bryan disappeared from public life and died in his sleep five days after winning the verdict.

Fundamentalism disappeared from culture and died in the court of influence.

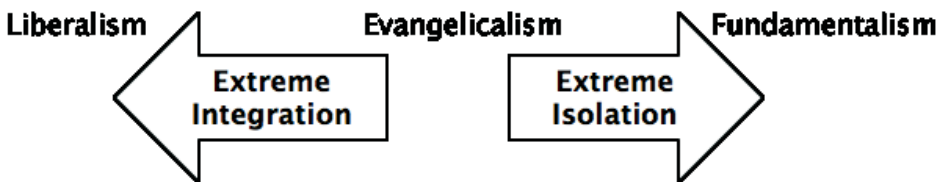
Fundamentalism:

- No tolerance for any compromise.
- Became defined more by non-essential morals than doctrines.
- Don't drink, don't smoke, don't dance, and don't play cards, don't go to movies.
- Left the Universities and started their own schools.
- Became separatists and "cultish Christianity"; "A holy nation". No longer a "kingdom of priests".

Evangelicalism (American): A movement in conservative Christianity which responded to the treats of Liberalism and Fundamentalism by seeking to engage culture with the Gospel without compromising the essentials.

Fundamentalism: “Orthodoxy gone cultic.”
-Edward J. Carnell

third way (tertium quid)

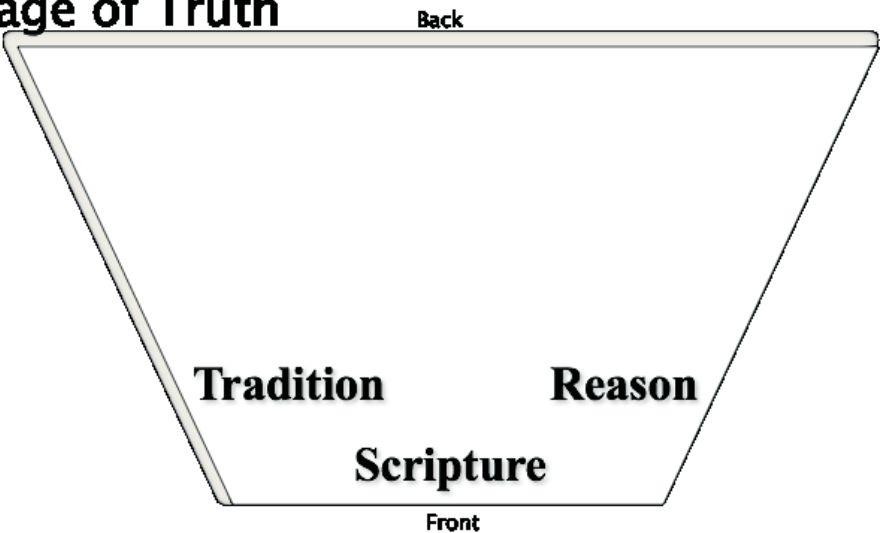


"Our New York Campaign has been challenged by some extremists on two points. First as to sponsorship, I would like to make myself clear. I intend to go anywhere, sponsored by anybody, to preach the Gospel of Christ, if there are no strings attached to my message. I am sponsored by civic clubs, universities, ministerial associations and councils of churches all over the world. I intend to continue" (Christian Beacon, April 4, 1957).



POSTMODERNISM

Stage of Truth



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT DARWIN'S FOUR PIVOTAL ISSUES? IF DARWIN SAT DOWN WITH YOU AT A COFFEE SHOP WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO HIM?

2. WHAT ARE SOME WAYS YOU SEE SCHLEIERMACHER'S INFLUENCE IN OUR WORLD?

3. WHAT IS THE BIGGEST THING YOU WILL TAKE AWAY FROM LEARNING ABOUT THE MODERN CHURCH?

4. LET'S LOOK BACK OVER OUR ENTIRE 2,000 YEAR STUDY. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS?

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