

Why So Many Protestant Denominations?

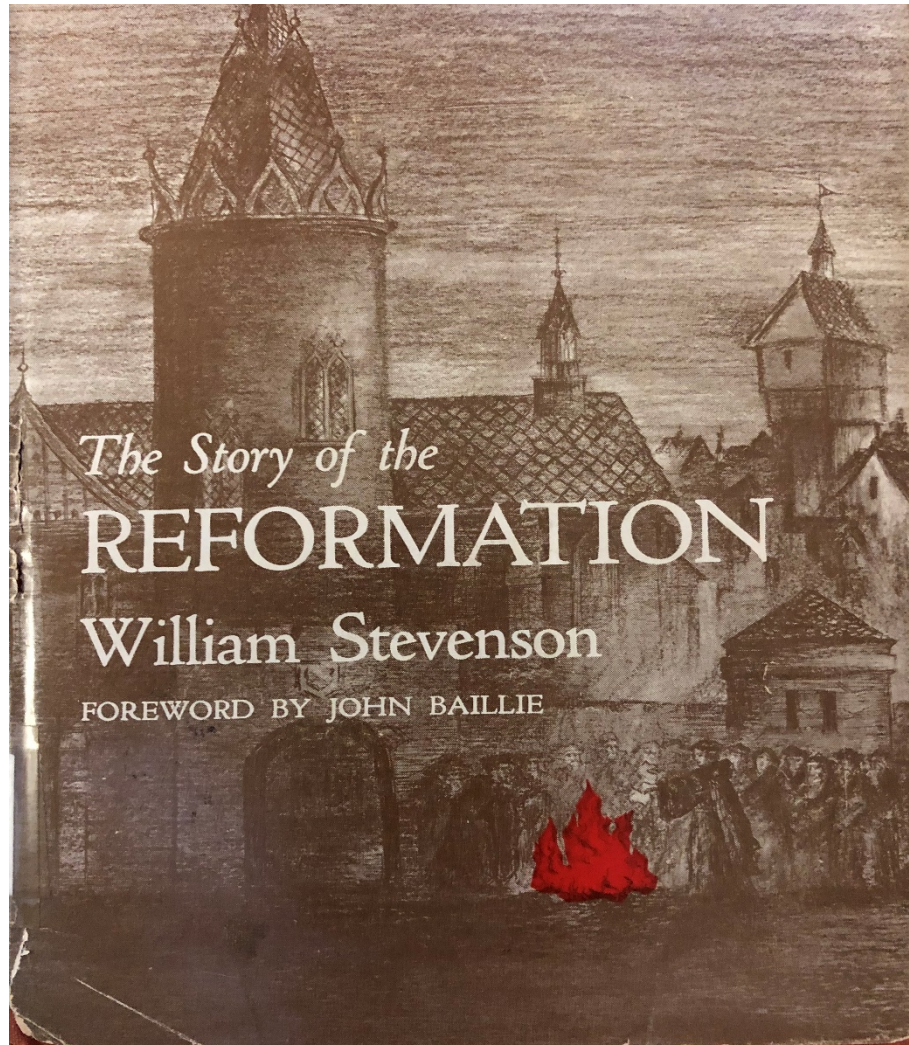
Part 2

America:

Awakenings and Visions

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Where We Left Off in 1648

- Starting in 1517, four* *major* Protestant movements in Europe develop:
 1. Lutheranism
 2. Reformed (Calvinism)
 3. Anabaptism
 4. Anglicanism
- They all survive the Religious Wars of the 16th and 17th centuries, but they fail to unite, and in fact begin to splinter in the face of state religion (the state/prince decides the religion).
- **Protestantism has unleashed the forces of individual conscience, freedom of choice, equality, and demand for toleration.**
- Religious refugees abound. But where can the Protestants go for freedom of religion? The wilds of America maybe?

* You're thinking, "Great. Let's see, 51,000 denominations – 4. Only 50,996 more to go."

Aftermath of Religious Wars -1648



Religious Developments in Europe 1648-1700

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lutheran | Pretty much settled in northern Germany and Scandinavia but theology influential |
| Reformed (Calvinist) | Now has French Huguenots (refugees), Dutch Reformed, German Reformed and Scottish Presbyterians; theology influential, particularly in England |
| Anabaptist | Refugees in search of a home - scattered and unloved by authorities but will be given a home in America |
| Anglican | RCC theology influenced by Reformed thought but the C of E remains as state church. <u>Toleration Act 1689 frees various Reformed groups (e.g. Congregationalists, Baptists and the Religious Society of Friends) from persecution.</u> |

Time Out – Who Believes What?

| Denomination | Founded | By | Key Beliefs |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lutheran | 1517 Germany | Luther | Solas, Christ present at Eucharist, man can influence salvation via faith; Augsburg Confession 1530 is doctrine |
| Calvinism (Reformed) | 1519 Switz. | Zwingli /Calvin | Solas like Lutheranism, irresistible grace, the elect is predestined, live like you are the elect |
| Anabaptist* | 1525 Switz. | The people | Live plain, scripture inerrant, adult baptism, pacifism, no oaths, retreat from world, shoofly pie |
| Anglican | 1533 England | Henry VIII | RCC like at first, more Calvinist like over time but C of E still state church. Book of Common Prayer 1662 |
| Presbyterian | 1560 Scotland | Calvin | Church of Scotland – Westminster Confession 1647 is doctrine |
| Dutch Reformed | 1520's | Calvin | Calvinism TULIP trumps Arminians (conditional) in 1618 |
| German Reformed | 1524 | Calvin | Calvinism in Germany |
| Baptist* | 1611 England | Helwys | Adult baptism; divided between those who think Jesus died for all (General) or just the elect (Particular) |
| Congregationalist* | 1600's England | Many | Scripture alone and Congregational polity, aka Independents; Puritans morph into Congregationalists |
| Society of Friends* | 1658 England | Fox | Inner light. Speak as spirit moves one, no sacraments – rejects Calvinist total depravity; aka Quakers |

Meanwhile There is Business To Be Done: English Colonies 1607 - 1732



Religious Foundations In America

1607-1681

| Colony | Date | Original Founding Religion |
|---------------|------|----------------------------------|
| Virginia | 1607 | Anglican |
| Massachusetts | 1620 | Reformed (Puritan) |
| New York | 1624 | Reformed (Dutch Reformed) |
| Maryland | 1634 | Roman Catholic (!) |
| Delaware | 1638 | Lutheran (Swedish) |
| Carolina | 1663 | Anglican |
| Pennsylvania | 1682 | Society of Friends (aka Quakers) |

City on a Hill - Not Tolerant

1620-1660

- After hanging out with the Dutch Reformed, the Pilgrims (Reformed/Calvinists who reject the C of E) establish colony in 1620.
- Puritans (Calvinists who remain in the C of E but who want to purify it) follow in quantity.
- The Puritans, refugees from intolerance, establish their own intolerant theocracy, execute Quakers and expel Baptist Roger Williams.
- Williams founds Baptist Church in Rhode Island and the Baptist Church spreads.
 - He deeply respects the Native Americans
 - He concludes all churches are false and that Scripture is to be understood in purely spiritual terms.

Pilgrim Image



Brotherly Love – Tolerant

1682-1700

- Pennsylvania experiment founded in 1682 by William Penn a Quaker - no official church established in PA.
- Recruits Scots-Irish Presbyterians from Ulster.
- Recruits Huguenots, German Lutheran and Catholic refugees.
- Recruits Anabaptists – Amish, Mennonites, Brethren (Pennsylvania Dutch).
- Moravians!
- Anglicans too.
- First Synagogue in U.S.

Have I Got a Deal for You



In Europe - The Ying and Yang of Orthodoxy v. Pietism 1675 -1730

- The established order (the RCC) was repudiated in many parts of Europe beginning in 1517.
- The question is: If you don't believe in the RCC, what do you believe in?
- Hence, lots of Protestant diets, assemblies and synods determining creeds, confessions, dogma, and catechisms – the orthodoxy.
- And if you disagree? Order v. Freedom.
- Push back on orthodoxy - Lutheran Pietism (1675 – early 1700's) was about individual and small group devotion via scripture.

Pietism



Moravians Make Methodists

1730 - 1738

- Pietism inspires Lutheran Count von Zinzendorf to embrace refugee Moravians (Unitas Fratrum) 1730 – they found the Moravian Church in Germany.
 - Moravian missions to Africa, India, South America, Pennsylvania 1741 and North Carolina 1753.
- An Anglian priest, John Wesley, (and leader of an Oxford society dubbed “methodists”) is inspired by Moravians on a ship to Savannah in 1736. He doubts his faith....
- In 1738, back in London, his life changes...

Methodists

1738 - 1786

- In England, with a warm heart, Wesley remains Anglican, however:
 - With matters of predestination and free will, Wesley is an Arminian (i.e. man has freewill to follow Christ)
 - He develops an emotional preaching style (ala George Whitefield) to help “awaken” the faith of the masses. It appeals to uprooted urban workers.
 - Wesley organizes followers into societies, classes and circuits.
 - Lay preachers allowed and include women; preach to the poor.
 - By 1786, Methodism is effectively a separate church.
- American Methodists defy Wesley, a staunch Royalist, and support the cause of American Independence leading to a separate American church.

George Whitefield (can be heard by 25,000 outside)



The Great Awakening – America

1734 -1749

- In short, an emotional Pietistic wave.
- Started in 1734 with Jonathan Edwards, Calvinist/Congregationalist – “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” (1741)
- Many will preach Whitefield Methodist style – outside and loud.
- Started with Congregationalists (formerly Puritans) and Presbyterians – Baptists and Methodists join in; entire congregations become Baptist.
- “Revivals included deep sighing, trembling, shaking, howling and barking, uncontrolled laughing or weeping” – miracles were witnessed.
- Baptist and Methodist traveling ministers organize frontier churches with great success.
- Evangelical Protestantism becoming mainstream.
- Intense!

Whitefield in Action



War and Separation

1775-1781

- Rejection of traditional religious orthodoxy paves way for Unitarianism in New England in 1784.
 - Reject Trinity (back to Arianism!); no creeds or dogma.
 - Appeals to the elite
- Anglican Church in US becomes the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1783.
- The Methodist Episcopal Church formed in 1784; episcopal organization with circuit riders.
 - Anti-elitist
 - Anti-slavery

The Second Great Awakening (One Is Not Enough) 1790 -1849

- Begins at first in New England – quiet devotion.
- Thoughtful societies formed:
 - American Bible Society
 - Abolition of slavery societies
 - American Society for the Promotion of Temperance, forerunner of the WCTU.
 - Women's rights
- Gives way to fervor and big tent revival meetings
 - Not favored by all Presbyterians, but Methodists and Baptists loved 'em
 - Emblematic is the raucous Cane Ridge Revival in 1801 in Kentucky—up to 20,000 Methodists/Baptists/Presbyterians (big party - as many souls conceived as saved, they say)
 - Baptists and Methodists effectively use lay ministers on the frontier to spread the word and they become the largest denominations.

Gimme that ol'Time Religion



A Couple of Visions – Different Outcomes

- 1770 - Shakers (The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing)
 - Founded by Mother Ann Lee who saw herself as the Second Coming of Christ
 - Dancing but no sex
 - Dies out
- 1830 - Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 - Joseph Smith sees an angel who lends him golden tablets which contain the Book of Mormon in code
 - Brigham Young takes them to Utah
 - Drinking forbidden but sex ok
 - Flourish

Shakers Dancing



Let's Just Be One Happy Family: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

- Thomas Campbell breaks away from the Presbyterian church and calls for all Protestants to unity in a nondenominational church.
 - Founds Disciples of Christ in 1830
- Barton Stone breaks away from the Presbyterian church and calls for unity of all who follow Christ
 - Founds the Christian Church 1830
- They merge in 1832 with a handshake between Stone and “Raccoon” John Smith and agree on everything -- except the name for the merged denomination.
- Adult baptism, weekly Communion, congregational; however two groups split off in 1906 and 1926 over music and too liberal baptism
 - into the Churches of Christ and the Christian Churches/Churches of Christ not to be confused with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
- Is that pretty clear?

African American Denominations and the Civil War

- Prior to the Civil War, The African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia 1816 and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in New York 1821 established.
- Post Civil war, in the wake of Jim Crow laws, various African-American denominations founded (including our own First United Presbyterian).
- During the Civil War, only The Society of Friends remained firmly anti-slavery for the duration while the other churches (famously the Baptists) split along regional lines.

Health Visions from Big Personalities

- Seventh-Day Adventists (Sabbath on Saturday) founded 1863 by Ellen G. White a former Methodist and Millerite from Maine, a visionary (over 2,000 visions), prophet, author and public figure.
 - The Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844 – where was Christ? In the Sanctuary preparing for the Last Judgment.
 - Imminent Second Coming so be ready – keep yourself pure and healthy – vegetarianism, water therapy, cornflakes.
- The Church of Christ, Scientist 1879 by Mary Baker Eddy, former Congregationalist from New Hampshire, author, public figure and the ultimate control freak whose book held that illness was a mental error that is curable by spiritual science, not physicians or medicine.
 - God is infinite Love and through prayer God has the power to physically heal and transform everyone.
 - No preaching. Just her writings and the Bible.
 - Suffered great pain, resulting in ultimate use of morphine.

Ellen G. White



Mary Eddy Baker



More Visions - Jehovah's Witnesses

- Jehovah's Witnesses – movement founded in Pittsburgh late 1870's by Charles Taze Russell, editor of *The Watchtower*. Named Jehovah's Witnesses by Joseph Rutherford in 1916.
 - Like the Millerites, the Second Coming is imminent, in fact it is here.
 - Jesus is King of God's Kingdom, a real government to replace human governments already established in heaven in 1914.
 - 144,000 to be resurrected to be with Jesus (already happening), others to be resurrected to life on earth, except for the wicked.
 - No Trinity, no Christmas or Easter, no personal views on Bible allowed, pacifism and resistance to secular authority.
 - No blood transfusions.

Pentecostal and Holiness Churches

- The Salvation Army - Founded in London in 1865 by William and Catherine Booth, no sacraments, equality of the sexes, focus on urban poverty.
- Church of the Nazarene – Founded in 1908 through union of 15 Holiness denominations – “second works of grace”
- Assemblies of God – Founded in 1914 for “believers in the baptism of the Holy Spirit” became the main Pentecostal denomination in the U.S. Multi-racial, speaking in tongues, combining both Methodist and Baptist traditions.
- United House of Prayer for All People – Founded in 1919 – charismatic leadership in an evangelical setting

Squabbles Among the Mainstream

- It is not like the mainstream churches are monolithic
 - For example, among one of the larger denominations in the U.S:
 - Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church
 - Bible Presbyterian Church
 - Cumberland Presbyterian Church
 - Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America
 - Evangelical Assembly of Presbyterian Churches in American
 - Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians
 - Evangelical Presbyterian Church
 - Korean-American Presbyterian Church
 - Korean Presbyterian Church in America
 - Orthodox Presbyterian Church
 - Presbyterian Church in America
 - Presbyterian Church (USA)
 - Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America

Unification – Kinda

There has a movement for churches to combine:

- The United Church of Christ in 1957
- United Methodist Church in 1968
- Unitarian Universalist Association in 1961

They've done it in Germany and Australia!

Ok – So Why So Many Denominations?

- Ask four Presbyterians a question about theology and you'll get six opinions.
- That tension between orthodoxy and freedom, and freedom wins out?
- Without a worldwide church hierarchy ala the RCC or *cuius regio, eius religio*, what is the restraint?

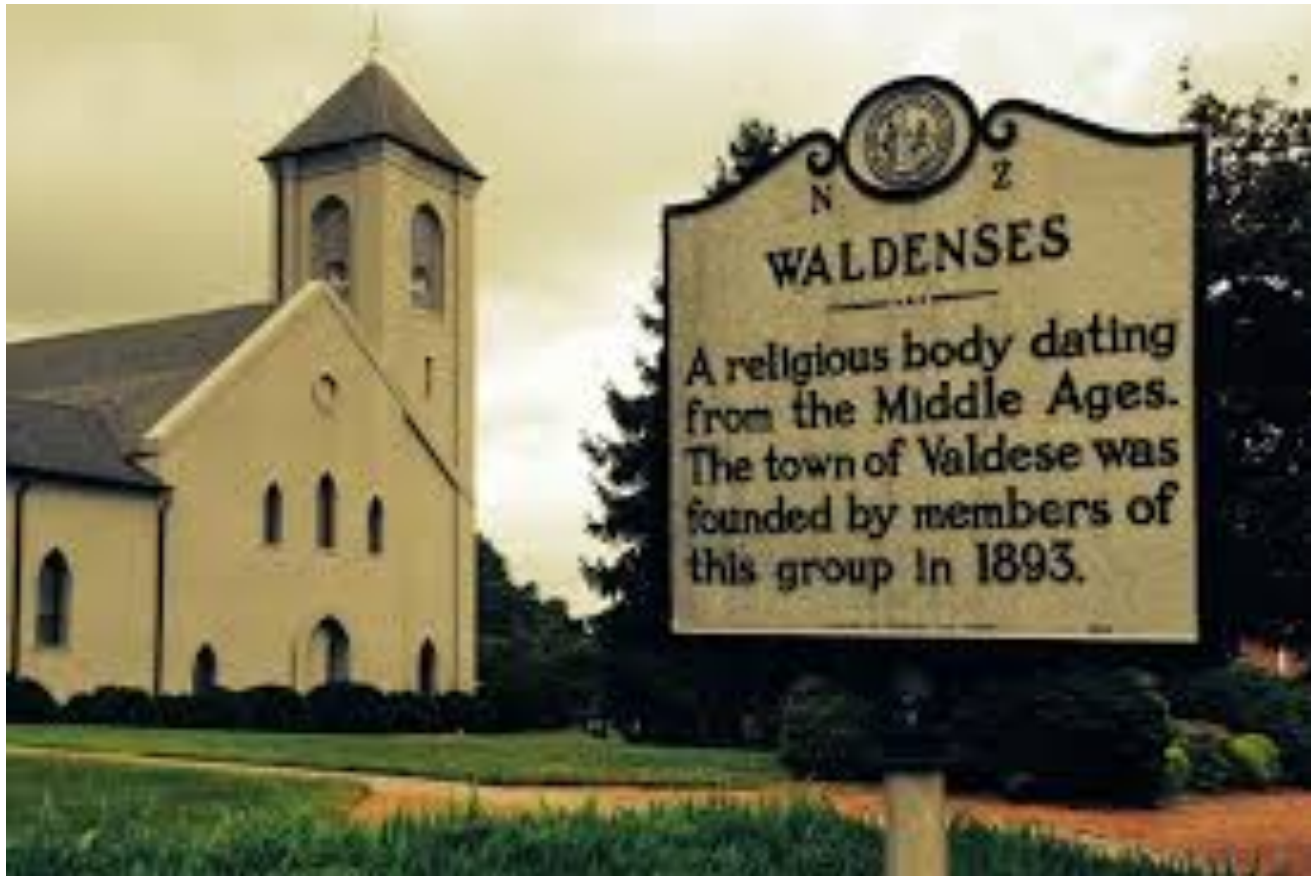
We Have Seen...

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Theological Disagreements | Calvinists v Lutherans |
| Polity Disagreements | C of E v Congregationalists |
| Political Expediency | Henry VIII England, Henry IV France |
| Literal Interpretation of Bible | Anabaptists |
| Language/Cultural Differences | State churches |
| Spiritual Transformation | Quakers, Moravians, Methodists, the Pentecostal churches |
| Visions and Charismatic Leaders | Seventh Day Adventists, Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses |
| Rejection of Division | Disciples of Christ |
| Political/Economic Disagreement | US v UK break, North/South division over slavery |
| Prejudice | African American denominations |
| Intra Denomination Disagreements | Many, many |

Is It a Good Thing?

- What do you think?

Parting Thought #1- Comforting to Know that We Are Connected in Faith



Parting Thought #2 – Aren't We Really Though Just One Denomination?

- One universal truth – God Loves You.
- Our job, very simply:

Matt 22: 37-40

“ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’. On these two commandment hang all the law and the prophets.”