



Continental Congress

The Presbyterian Story Part II

Presbyterianism in America

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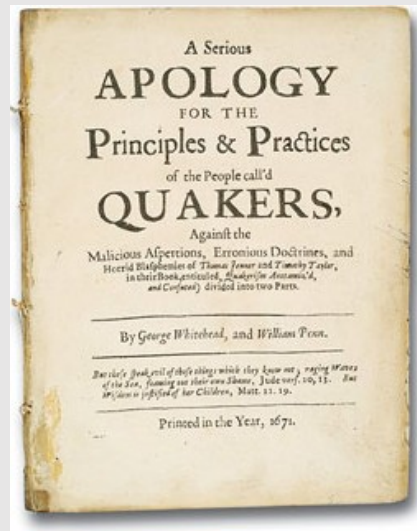
Presbyterians in Colonial America



- Presbyterians became more diverse as they moved to the American Colonies.
- The Colonial Presbyterian Church included English Puritans, Continental Reformed Christians (French Hugguenots, Dutch, Swiss, Italians), and the Scottish.
- Cotton Mathers claimed that around 4,000 Presbyterians lived in the American Colonies before 1640.

Religious Freedom

- The United States was the first Protestant nation.
- It was settled primarily for religious freedom.
- Many American Colonies did have a state sanctioned religion (Virginia was Anglican). However, ordained ministers could apply for a “dissenter’s license”.



Scotts-Irish Immigration



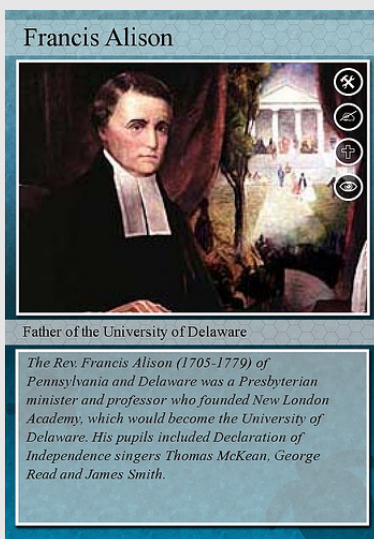
- In 1717 a massive amount of Scotts-Irish settled in the colonies. 500,000 to be exact.
- They kept their Scottish ethnicity and their religious beliefs.
- Their Presbyterianism was grass roots. Laity paid for salary (not the state). This grass roots movement would make a strong impression on American Presbyterianism.

Ministerial Training

- William Tennent from Philadelphia realized the need to train pastors.
- He founded the Log College in order to train ministers in biblical languages, theology, and preaching.
- He stressed the importance of piety and godly character. Many of the graduates aided in revival and renewal movements.



The Great Awakening



- The first split between Presbyterians occurred during the Great Awakening. The pro revival was named the “New Side” while those against were named “the Old Side”.
- Old Side minister Francis Allison wrote “we must maintain union in essentials, forbearance in lesser matters, and charity in all things. In a church like ours in American, collected from different churches in Europe...there is a peculiar call for charity and forbearance”. One hears echoes of the EPC!

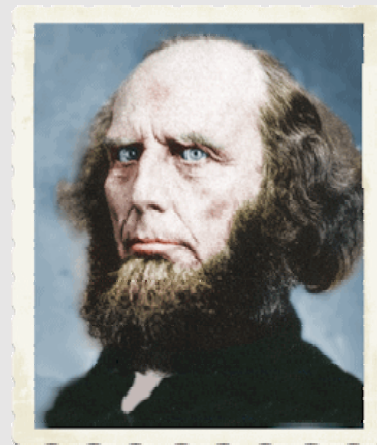
John Witherspoon



- Was one of the founders of College of New Jersey (Princeton University) who believed in a strong liberal arts education that would combat Deism and unorthodox Christian teaching.
- He was also one of the founding fathers of the United States of America.
- He taught James Madison, Aaron Burr, and trained over 114 ministers of the gospel.

Second Great Awakening

- Presbyterians had to deal with what would be named “The Second Great Awakening”. The movement is credited to Charles Finney.
- This would divide Presbyterians into two groups named “Old School” and “New School”.
- The issue of slavery was tied into these debates too. New School was pro abolition while the Old School was neutral or pro slavery.



Modernism Versus Fundamentalism



- The higher critical method of interpreting the Bible became dominant within the mainline (PCUSA) and things such as the virgin birth, resurrection, and miracles were denied.
- In response, the fundamentals of the faith needed to be revisited by Christians.
- EPC names them the essentials. Things such as infallibility of scripture, virgin birth, resurrection of Christ (bodily), return of Christ.

Current Presbyterian Denominations



- Current Presbyterian denominations reflect Old School and New School divisions.
- The heirs to the New School (Charitable interpretation of Westminster) approach would be the EPC and ECO.
- The heirs to the Old School (Strict interpretation of Westminster) approach would be the PCA and OPC.

Origins of the EPC

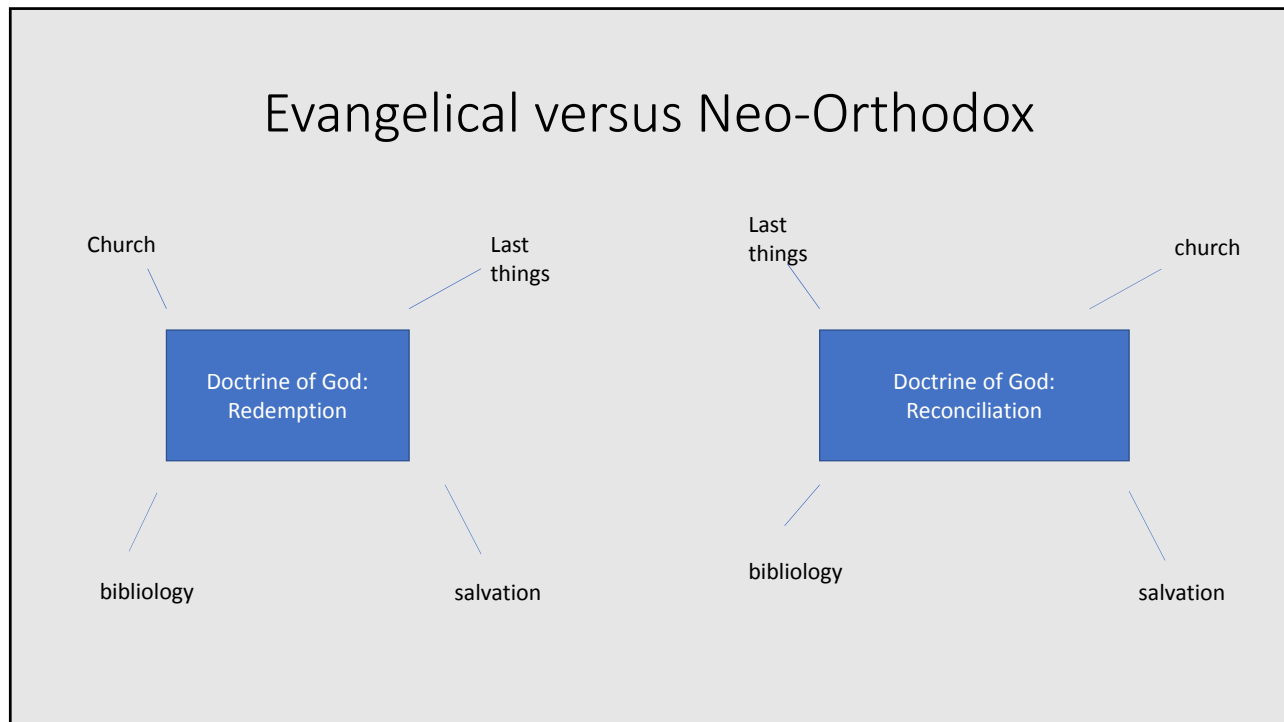


- A group of ministers became increasingly concerned with the encroachment of liberalism within mainline Presbyterianism.
- The EPC was founded as a response to a minister not being ordained who was a complementarian (he admitted he would serve on staff with woman). And a minister who denied Jesus is God.
- The EPC was founded as a response to both of these cases within their respective presbyteries.

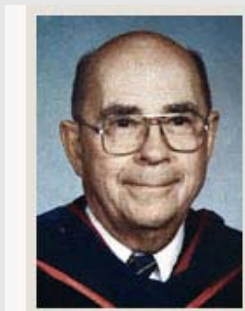
First EPC Newsletter

- What is the first business of the Church? Isn't it going into all the world to share the good news of what God has done in Jesus? Isn't it making disciples? Isn't it leading persons into a saving relationship with Jesus as personal Lord and Savior? Jesus said it was. The Bible says it is. Our social concerns and our ministry to others is not the gospel – it is the fruit of the gospel. The Gospel is Jesus. It always has been and always will be.

Evangelical versus Neo-Orthodox



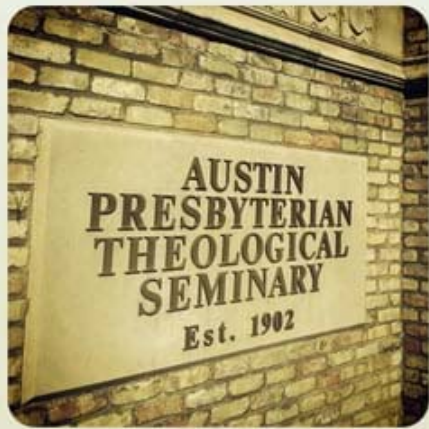
Bartlett L. Hess (1910-1999)



BART L. HESS

- “During seminary, I was introduced to various forms of liberal Christianity that I rejected. Throughout my ministry I became more convinced that if one denied that the Bible entirely was the Word of God, it readily followed that one denied miracles, denied that Christ is God, denied that He was Virgin-born without sin, that He died to save us, that He was resurrected, that He is coming again to establish His kingdom. I had watched this cancer of rejection increase.”
- “In the process of that experience, we discovered what was universal about Christianity, or essential, and what was local or non-essential. We met devout Christians in France who drank wine. We met devout Christians in Holland who smoked like chimneys and were very strict about the Sabbath. We came back to the United States realizing that what was essential was faith in Christ and acceptance of the Bible as the Word of God. All other matters were non-essentials. So we made the motto of the early church our motto for ministry “In essentials united; in non essentials liberty; in all things, charity”.

Andrew Jumper (1927-1992)



- Andrew Jumper attended the mainline seminary Austin Theological Seminary. He became popular through his writings on the office of ruling elder and deacon.
- He was known for pushing for renewal within the PCUS.
- He was renewed himself by a charismatic awakening after a counseling session.

Andrew Jumper (1927-1992)

- Andrew Jumper's story is a perfect case for liberty in non-essentials.
- "There was a day when I stood with both feet firmly planted in the camp of the liberal left. My career had been marked with modest accomplishment and I could claim some small status symbols of ministerial success. I awoke one morning to find myself in crisis – a personal, spiritual crises – for my ministry suddenly lost its meaning. Somehow I felt cheated and betrayed by my liberal left position. I believed, taught, and practiced all of the things it preached. But that morning my disenchantment was complete. The realization burst upon me that, in spite of my best efforts, my earnest liberal discipleship had not resulted in a life of great spiritual power and vitality either from myself or my people".
- "Presbyterians then (and now!) were not always comfortable with charismatic expression – often with good reason! There were many excesses and much poor theology".

Essentials: Unity

- We believe in one God, the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To Him be all honor, glory and praise forever!
- Jesus Christ, the living Word, became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. He who is true God became true man united in one Person forever. He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. On the third day He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Mediator.
- The Holy Spirit has come to glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to our hearts. He convicts us of sin and draws us to the Savior. Indwelling our hearts, He gives new life to us, empowers and imparts gifts to us for service. He instructs and guides us into all truth, and seals us for the day of redemption.
- Being estranged from God and condemned by our sinfulness, our salvation is wholly dependent upon the work of God's free grace. God credits His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, thereby justifies them in His sight. Only such as are born of the Holy Spirit and receive Jesus Christ become children of God and heirs of eternal life.
- The true Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit are united together in the body of Christ. The Church finds her visible, yet imperfect, expression in local congregations where the Word of God is preached in its purity and the sacraments are administered in their integrity; where scriptural discipline is practiced, and where loving fellowship is maintained. For her perfecting, she awaits the return of her Lord.
- Jesus Christ will come again to the earth—personally, visibly, and bodily—to judge the living and the dead, and to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).
- The Lord Jesus Christ commands all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to make disciples of all nations. Obedience to the Great Commission requires total commitment to "Him who loved us and gave Himself for us." He calls us to a life of self-denying love and service. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

Non-Essentials: Liberty



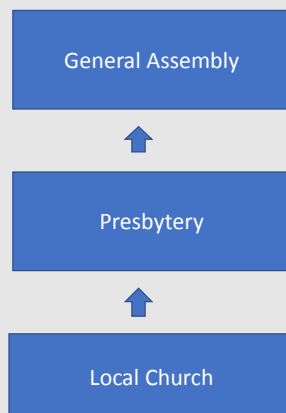
- The founders of the EPC believed that most American Presbyterians were moderate. That is why they wanted to create a denomination that expressed liberty in non-essentials.
- These are related to woman being elders, study of the last things, charismatic gifting, and social justice concerns.
- This element of the EPC marks it out as different than all other Presbyterian denominations.

All Things Charity

- The chief virtue of the EPC is charity (grace).
- That means, if somebody disagrees with you on a non-essential that you should be charitable towards them.
- These views should not divide those who find themselves at an EPC church.



EPC Distinctives



- The EPC has a missionary sending agency named World Outreach. It primarily focuses on countries that have a high Muslim population.
- Has working relationships with Presbyterians in Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil.
- Grass roots driven: the flow of the EPC is bottom up; not top down.