

# ***A SURVEY OF CHRISTIAN HISTORY***

## **Thursday Morning Bible Study**

**Week Nine: From 1900 – 1965**

**June 1, 2017**

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1–2*

### **I. The Welsh Revivals (1904)**

- They lasted only a short time from late 1904 into 1905 yet during that time over 100,000 people were converted in Wales alone.
- The revivals were marked not by preaching but by worship and prayer and visions by some of the leaders said to be from the Holy Spirit.
- Following the revival public drunkenness dropped 50% in Wales.
- The revival branched out into other countries including, the rest of Britain, Scandinavia, parts of Europe, North America, the mission fields of India and the Orient, Africa and Latin America. Some estimates put the number of conversions in Britain as close to 1,000,000.
- Prayer meetings resulted in America in the early 1900's. One on Wall Street was so well attended during the lunch hour that the stock market closed during that time. In Portland, Oregon 240 department stores closed daily from 11am to 2pm for prayer.

### **II. "The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man!"**

- Well known German liberal theologian Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930) coined the phrase to reflect liberal theology's belief that human progress would be brought about through social justice and the founding of the Kingdom of God on earth.

### **III. The Social Gospel – Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918)**

- Rauschenbusch was an American pastor and leader in the German Baptist Church in New York City.
- He pastored in Hell's Kitchen in New York and was frustrated when individual conversions failed to bring about the necessary changes to solve the urban problems his parishioners faced.
- He combined liberal theology, social justice and Biblical piety into a format that dovetailed with the progressive politics of the time in America. He preached that Jesus advocated social justice and salvation from social sin. He stressed the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth as the goal of the church. His views have influenced many progressive theologians today.

#### **IV. Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) and *The Quest of the Historical Jesus***

- Schweitzer was a virtuoso organist, a theologian, a medical doctor and finally a medical missionary in Africa.
- He studied in Berlin under Harnack and earned his PhD in 1899.
- He published his *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* in 1910. It was a great scholarly work and challenged Harnack's liberal view of Jesus and showed he was a Jewish rabbi who stressed the coming of the Kingdom of God and eschatology far more than liberal theologians wanted to talk about. It fueled great debate in seminaries in Europe and America between the "Christ of faith" and the "Jesus of history."
- After World War I he said he could not escape Jesus' command to "*follow me*" and so in obedience to Jesus he gave up his prosperous career in Europe as a musician and theologian and went to Gabon in what was then French Equatorial Africa to become a missionary doctor. There he stayed for the rest of his life, earning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952 for his humanitarian work.

#### **V. The Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles and the beginning of the Pentecostal Movement (1906-1909)**

- A Holiness African American pastor William J. Seymour began preaching at an abandon African Methodist Episcopal Church at 312 Azusa Street in downtown Los Angeles in 1906.
- Seymour called for people to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and soon manifestations began to happen such as speaking in tongues, miraculous healings, and people falling to the floor in repentance and sorrow over their sins. Holy Rollers was a frequent title given to them.
- The meetings were attended by people of many races and denominations at the height of the "Jim Crow" laws in America sanctioning racial segregation. Thus the revival drew harsh criticism for mixing the races.
- Many Wesleyan Holiness churches embraced the Pentecostal Movement like the Church of God and Church of God in Christ. New denominations were formed like the Assemblies of God. Missionaries were sent out around the world including Africa. Most of the Protestant Christians with which we have dealt in Uganda and Rwanda are Pentecostal. Today Pentecostals number over 500 million worldwide and it is the fastest growing group among Christians worldwide.

#### **VI. The Church of the Nazarene founded (1908)**

- The Church of the Nazarene is the largest of the Wesleyan-Holiness denominations that seek to follow Wesley's "methods" of Christian discipleship. They emphasize holiness in life and an Armenian view of salvation.
- The Church of the Nazarene is a holiness church but does not embrace Pentecostal teaching and doctrine.

#### **VII. The Schofield Reference Bible published**

- Published in 1909 it championed a Dispensational view of Biblical interpretation and was instrumental in the spread of Dispensationalism in America. It used a King James Translation and coupled it with study notes that were side by side with the Biblical text. It was the first “study Bible” published in America and became the template for many study Bibles that followed.

#### **VIII. The Edinburgh Missionary Conference (June 14-23, 1910)**

- The conference was made up of representatives from the major Protestant denominations from North America and Northern Europe plus representatives from most major mission agencies and societies.
- Eight major papers or presentations were given of which two had the most impact. First was a presentation on mission strategy which advocated a change in the way churches were planted in unreached areas. The report favored raising up indigenous leadership as soon as possible. The second presentation that had major influence advocated for missionary cooperation in the field. This idea began to spread to other areas of the worldwide church’s life which eventually resulted in the Ecumenical Movement.

#### **IX. World War I (July 1914-November 1918)**

- Often dubbed the war to end all wars it involved nations from almost every continent. 9 million soldiers died along with 7 million civilians. It re-shaped the geography of the planet, especially in Europe and the Middle East.
- Marked by horrific trench warfare World War I saw new technologies introduced including poison gas as weapons of warfare. The Battle of Verdun alone caused over 1 million casualties with over 160,000 dead.
- From a religious standpoint World War I shattered the liberal Christian vision of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. It dealt a deathblow to the idea of the human race progressing inevitably towards the Kingdom of God through the efforts of the church and well-meaning people. It left Europe in a complete shambles and Germany a broken nation.

#### **X. The Russian Revolution and the rise of atheistic Communism (February and October 1917)**

- Marxist forces led by Lenin overthrow the Tsar and his government and established a socialist state. The power and influence of the Russian Orthodox Church was severely curtailed. Priests were jailed or executed and church properties were seized. Russia becomes an officially atheist country.

#### **XI. Karl Barth publishes his *Commentary on Romans* (1919) and the beginning of the Neo-Orthodox Movement**

- Karl Barth (1886-1968) was a Swiss Reformed theologian and pastor. He had studied theology in the great liberal universities in Germany. Following World War I he came to view liberal German Christianity as bankrupt and unable to

deal with the realities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Barth famously commented that he mounted the pulpit one Sunday to preach and had nothing whatsoever to say.

- He re-evaluated his theology and went back to the Scriptures publishing several editions of his *Commentary on Romans*. In it he begins to outline a new way of looking again at God, human sin and salvation. It is often called neo-orthodoxy or crisis theology. Barth said the revelation of God in Jesus Christ has put humankind in a crisis. Barth rejected the liberal optimism of his German education and said human beings cannot reach God but are wholly dependent upon him to reveal himself. He called God the "*Wholly Other*." When God came to humanity in the person of Jesus it put us all in a crisis. Now we must decide what to do with Jesus Christ. Barth had a renewed respect for Scripture and its message even though he accepted some of the higher critical methods of German scholarship. His greatest work was his 12 volume *Church Dogmatics*.
- He influenced a re-discovery of the Bible, Luther, Calvin and the great Reformers in Europe and America.
- One story told about him was during his lectures at Princeton Seminary following World War II. A student asked him how he would summarize the Christian message or the Scriptures. Barth famously replied, "*Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so.*"

## **XII. The Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy**

- The Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy was a major schism that originated in the 1920s and '30s within the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. At issue were foundational disputes about the role of Christianity, the authority of Scripture, the death, Resurrection, and atoning sacrifice of Jesus. Two broad factions within Protestantism emerged; Evangelicals who held to traditional Christian Orthodoxy, and Modernists who to varying degrees argued that "antiquated" beliefs should be modified for the times. At first, the schism was limited to Reformed Christianity and centered about Princeton Theological Seminary, but soon spread, affecting every denomination of Christianity in the United States, including the Lutheran Church and Roman Catholicism.
- By the end of the 1930s proponents of Theological Liberalism had effectively won the debate, with the Modernists in control of all Mainline Protestant seminaries, publishing houses and denominational hierarchies in the United States. More conservative Christians withdrew to the margins of society, founding their own publishing houses such as Zondervan, universities (such as Biola University and Liberty University) and seminaries (such as Dallas Theological Seminary and Fuller Theological Seminary). This would remain the state of affairs until the 1970s, when conservative Christianity reemerged, resulting in resurgence of traditional Christianity among the Baptists, Presbyterians and others.
- The Five Fundamentals were as follows:
  - The inspiration of the Bible by the Holy Spirit and the inerrancy (or infallibility) of Scripture as a result of this.
  - The virgin birth of Christ.

The belief that Christ's death was an atonement for sin.

The bodily resurrection of Christ.

The historical reality of Christ's miracles.

- Henry Emerson Fosdick was a leader of the Modernists or Liberals. He was a Baptist pastor preaching at First Presbyterian in New York City. In a famous sermon he labeled Fundamentalists as intolerant conservatives who refused to deal with modern discoveries in history, science and Biblical scholarship. That description stuck.

### **XIII. World War II & the Holocaust (September 1939-August 1945)**

- The aftermath of World War I sowed the seeds for the even greater conflict of World War II. At its end estimates range from between 50 to 85 million military and civilian casualties making it the bloodiest conflict in human history.
- The Holocaust was Hitler's "Final Solution" to the "Jewish problem". At various Nazi death-camps around Europe some 11 million people were murdered including some 6 million Jews, 1.5 million who were under the age of 18. Along with the Jews the Nazis murdered Gypsies, priests and pastors, homosexuals and the mentally and physically disabled. All those who did not fit their Arian master-race. It was wholly evil in nature and affected Christian responses to the war and to human evil and sin.

### **XIV. The National Association of Evangelicals founded (1942)**

- Founded in 1942 by several Evangelical leaders who were concerned about the isolation of Evangelical churches after the Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy. Harold John Ockenga was one of the founders. He was pastor at Park Street Church in Boston and instrumental in the founding of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California and was the first president of Gordon-Conwell Seminary in Boston.
- Today the NAE represents some 40 different evangelical denominations and organizations. One of the oldest continuing operating local chapters is right here in Spokane, the Greater Spokane Association of Evangelicals or the GSAE.

### **XV. Dietrich Bonhoeffer executed by the Nazis (1945)**

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a German Lutheran pastor who was also friends with Karl Barth and some of the neo-orthodox theologians and pastors in Germany and Switzerland.
- He wrote extensively and also taught at a small Lutheran seminary in Germany. His best known works are *Life Together*, *The Cost of Discipleship* & *Letters and Papers from Prison*. In *The Cost of Discipleship* he said, "When Christ calls a man he bids him come and die."
- Bonhoeffer fled Germany when anti-Jewish legislation was forced upon his church going first to England then later to the United States. However, he felt compelled to return to Germany and join the resistance to Hitler. He was

captured and imprisoned for plotting to assassinate Hitler. He was executed on April 9, 1945 one month before Germany unconditionally surrendered.

#### **XVI. The Dead Sea Scrolls discovered (1947)**

- The scrolls were discovered by a Bedouin goat herder near the ancient site of Qumran on the northwestern shores of the Dead Sea. The scrolls contain the writings of the Qumran Community who were of the sect of the Essenes dating to several centuries before Jesus' time and who were destroyed by the Romans in 70 during the First Jewish Revolt.
- The scrolls were contained in sealed pottery jars and among them have been found many Biblical manuscripts including complete scrolls of the Book of Isaiah. They date from 200BC and later. Many scholars have termed their discovery as the greatest find in Biblical archeology in history.
- Up until the scrolls were discovered the oldest extant Hebrew manuscript of the Old Testament was dated between 800-900AD. The Isaiah scroll is dated at 200BC, giving scholars a much earlier text for the Old Testament!

#### **XVII. The World Council of Churches formed (1948)**

- The Ecumenical Movement had seen cooperation across denominational lines in mission, youth work, and social justice concerns. There was a desire after World War I & II to unite the churches in order to fulfill Jesus' prayer in John 17, *"that they may be all one."*
- In Amsterdam in 1948 the World Council of Churches was formed with 147 denominations from 44 countries taking part.
- The World Council seeks to promote cooperation between churches on various issues and causes and seeks dialogue in order to bring the different factions of the Christian Church together into one.
- Ecumenism has been criticized by Evangelicals as seeking to form a watered down super-church that is nothing more than a huge church bureaucracy. However, even Evangelicals exhibit the spirit of Ecumenism when we cooperate with other churches on community mission projects, evangelistic crusades or things like the National Day of Prayer.

#### **XVIII. The State of Israel formed by the United Nations (1948)**

- The United Nations partitioned the modern State of Israel out of lands held by the British after World War I. On May 14, 1948 the State of Israel was declared by David Ben Gurion, the head of the Jewish Agency.
- The spiritual and prophetic implications are gigantic. The Jewish people have a homeland in the Promiseland after 2000 years!

#### **XIX. The Communists take control of China; western missionaries expelled**

- Communist forces under Mao Zedung defeated Nationalist forces under Chiang Kai-shek in 1948. On October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Chiang Kai-shek, 600,000 Nationalist troops,

and about two million Nationalist-sympathizer refugees retreated to the island of Taiwan.

- Soon after all western Christian missionaries were expelled from China. They had been there since Hudson Taylor in 1854. The western church feared that Christianity would be wiped out by the Communists.

## **XX. Billy Graham (1918 - ) holds his first crusade (1947)**

- Graham is a Southern Baptist preacher who became the greatest evangelist the world has ever seen.
- His evangelistic work began with Youth for Christ. He held his first adult crusade in Grand Rapids, Michigan in September 1947. His crusade in Los Angeles in 1949 attracted national media attention. It lasted for 8 weeks and was held in circus tents in a parking lot.
- Throughout his career that spanned 7 decades Graham has held over 400 crusades in 185 countries on 6 continents, including here in Spokane. It is estimated that he has preached to over 2.2 billion people through his crusades and radio and TV broadcasts. An estimated 3.2 million people have responded to his call to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He has preached the gospel to more people in person than any other person in the history of Christianity.

## **XXI. Campus Crusade for Christ formed (later CRU) (1951)**

- Campus Crusade or CRU was founded by Bill and Vonette Bright at UCLA in 1951. It was first designed to reach college students with the gospel but has since expanded to include athletes (Athletes in Action), military personnel and high school students.
- CRU has some 25,000 missionaries operating in 191 countries, including our Southside missionaries Damian and Grace Long in Kazakhstan.
- One of their most successful projects had been the *Jesus Film*. It has been translated into over 1000 languages and is the most viewed film in history seen by literally billions of people worldwide since its debut in 1979.

## **XXII. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968) leads the Civil Rights Movement in America**

- He was an American Baptist minister best known for his role in the advancement of civil rights using nonviolent civil disobedience based on his Christian beliefs.
- King led the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott and helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957, serving as its first president. He helped organize the 1963 nonviolent protests in Birmingham, Alabama. King also helped to organize the 1963 March on Washington, where he delivered his famous "*I Have a Dream*" speech, often considered the greatest speech in 20<sup>th</sup> century America.
- On October 14, 1964, King received the Nobel Peace Prize for combating racial inequality through nonviolent resistance. In 1965, he helped to organize the Selma to Montgomery marches, and the following year he and SCLC took the

movement north to Chicago to work on segregated housing. In the final years of his life, King expanded his focus to include opposition towards poverty and the Vietnam War, alienating many of his liberal allies with a 1967 speech titled "Beyond Vietnam".

- On April 4, 1968 King was assassinated by James Earl Ray in Memphis, Tennessee.

### **XXIII. 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council and Pope John XXIII (1958-1963)**

- John XXIII was elected a "caretaker" Pope in 1958.
- He desired to reform the church in light of the pressing needs of the modern world. He called the 21<sup>st</sup> Ecumenical Council of Bishops from around the world (Vatican II) to St. Peter's in Rome. The Council began on October 11, 1962. Pope John did not live to see the fruits of the council. He died before it was finished.
- Some of the greatest reforms instituted by Vatican II that are still being debated and implemented today are:

The Mass was revised by putting it into the language of the people and was no longer required to be in Latin.

There was a movement to seek reconciliation with the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

Protestants were no longer labeled as heretics but as "*separated churches and communities*" who have "*by no means been deprived of significance and importance in the mystery of salvation.*" This had the effect of opening up dialogue and cooperation between Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches.