

VOLUME 2 ★ FROM 1800 TO THE PRESENT

# AMERICA

IN GOD'S PROVIDENCE

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,  
But fools despise wisdom and instruction.”  
(Proverbs 1:7)*

EDITED BY KEVIN SWANSON



Generations  
PASSING ON THE FAITH

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UNIT IV

# One Nation Under God

## Unit IV

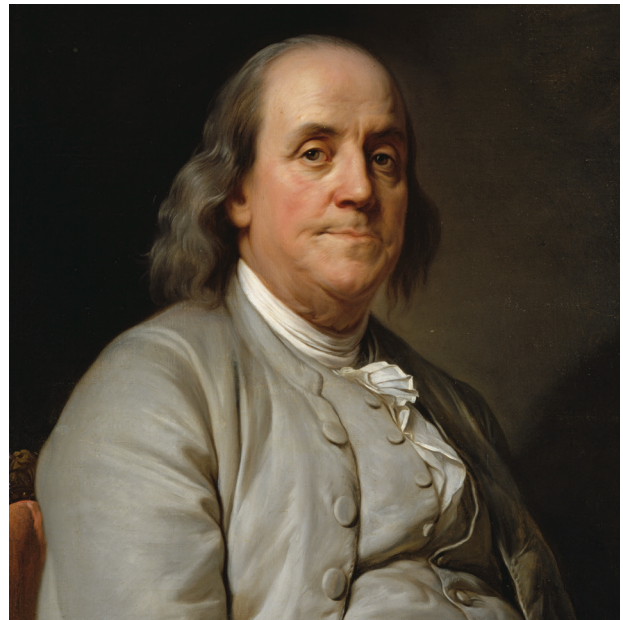
### Introduction

# A Republic . . . If You Can Keep It

*“Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.”  
(Psalm 33:12)*

As Benjamin Franklin was leaving the Constitutional Convention, a certain Mrs. Powell approached him and asked the question, “Well, Doctor, what have we got, a republic or a monarchy?” To which, Franklin gave his famous answer: “A republic, if you can keep it.”

In the year of our Lord 1789, America became a **Constitutional Republic**. It would be a free nation—if Americans could keep it. It would be a nation with a uniquely rich Christian heritage—if they could keep it. It would be a nation blessed by God—if they could keep it. This history book tells the story of how America lost it over the next two hundred years following Benjamin Franklin’s memorable words. It is the story of how America changed from a Christian nation to a secular nation and lost its Christian heritage. This change



Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)

## A Constitutional Republic

America was a country governed by the rule of law. This means that the political leaders would have to be subject to rules laid down in the Constitution. From the beginning, this nation was not a pure democracy or a dictatorship where people could rule at their whim. The Founders of this country assumed that there was an eternal law and rights codified by the Creator Himself that nobody should ever violate.

came about in the schools, the universities, the newspapers and media, the popular culture, the churches, and the civil governments.

## Getting the Big Picture Across the Centuries

Changes to nations and civilizations come in ebbs and flows, like ocean waves which beat on the shores. It's hard to make out the overall direction of a nation in a ten year period. There are micro trends, and macro trends working at the same time. However, we do see the trajectories of nations over centuries. Between AD 1789 and AD 2017, vast changes came about in America. As the story plays out, we realize several striking truths and general patterns:

### Striking Pattern #1

A heritage of Christian faith can be a blessing for hundreds and hundreds of years. It is astounding how 300 million citizens of the United States continued to enjoy some freedom and prosperity well into the 21st century. This freedom and prosperity finds its roots in the faith and faithfulness of men like John Winthrop and Samuel Adams who lived in the 1600s and 1700s.

### Striking Pattern #2

A nation can turn away from its Christian roots very quickly. Within a single generation, men and women forget what their godly fathers and mothers taught them. This was the legacy of America between 1776 and 1826.

### Striking Pattern #3

God was longsuffering towards a nation that set itself on a path of rebellion against Him. We are amazed that God held off His punishing of the nation for a hundred years and more. His mercy continued generation after generation, century after century.

### Striking Pattern #4

Every revival is an added blessing to a nation. Although the revival may not turn the whole nation around, it may very well delay God's judgment or extend the blessing of a godly heritage for another fifty years.

### Striking Pattern #5

The church, the culture, the school, and the family are more important than the wars, elections, and economic and technological developments. Many history books focus on the presidents and the politics of the nation. This is not our focus. The character of the church and the schools is more important than the political issues being discussed at the nation's Capitol.

### Striking Pattern #6

A nation can appear very healthy and economically robust on the outside, and still be doing very badly on the inside. It may be rotting at the core. A beautiful red apple may have six worms eating it out from the inside. This is what happens where modern nations appear very rich, while family life and the character of the nation are breaking down on the inside.

ADAMS &amp; JEFFERSON DIE

1826

ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE VISITS AMERICA

1831

OLD &amp; NEW SCHOOL PRESBYTERIANS SPLIT

1837

CHEROKEE TRAIL OF TEARS

1838

COMMUNIST MANIFESTO PUBLISHED

1848

1830

INDIAN REMOVAL ACT

1836

MCGUFFEY READER PUBLISHED

1836

BATTLE OF THE ALAMO

1845

ANDREW JACKSON DIES

1852

1ST COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW



The Constitutional Convention (1787)

### Striking Pattern #7

God's hand truly rests upon the nations. Usually, it is the worst and most immoral nations which become the first to receive the force of His punishing Hand.

The story of the rise and decline of the United States is a tremendously interesting story in all of the history of God's world. It stands out because America was the recipient of the best Christian heritage of any modern nation. By AD 1900, America became the most powerful empire on

earth, and powerful ideological forces played tug-of-war over the heart of the nation. Sometimes, spiritual revivals resulted in a setback for the forces of evil. Institutions were reformed by God's Word for a time, but the nation continued its downward spiral into the 21st century. Short of an unprecedented spiritual revival, the nation could not survive.

*"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Psalm 9:17)*

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION  
1787

LOUISIANA PURCHASE  
1803

LEWIS & CLARK EXPEDITION  
1804-06

WAR OF 1812  
1812-15

CREEK & SEMINOLE WARS  
1813-19

1803  
MARBURY V. MADISON

1804  
HAMILTON-BURR DUEL

1810  
CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIANS FORM

1813  
BOSTON MANUFACTURING CO. FOUNDED

1821  
MEXICO'S INDEPENDENCE FROM SPAIN

## CHAPTER 39

# The Softening of the American Faith

*“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” (Ephesians 6:12)*

As soon as America was formed, the nation turned into a battleground. This battleground was not one in which men shot each other with guns. It was a war of ideas. Also, as Christians we cannot ignore the spiritual element. Demonic forces really did work in the hearts of men. **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809) and Benjamin Franklin were influenced by French revolutionary thinkers. Paine lived in France throughout the 1790s, and enthusiastically supported the revolution. His books *Rights of Man* (1791) and *Age of Reason* (1793) were influential in France and America solidifying a man-centered view of government.



Thomas Paine (1737-1809)

## The Radical God-Hating Ideas of the French Revolution

The French Revolution was the crowning achievement of the “**humanist Enlightenment**” of the 18th century. This would set the pattern for the mass bloodshed, the atheism, and the Satanic cruelty of future Marxist revolutions in the 19th and 20th centuries. Thomas Paine summarized the thinking of the revolution in these most radical, blasphemous words:

*“It is from the Bible that man has learned cruelty, rapine, and murder; for the belief of a cruel God makes a cruel man. . . I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. My own mind is my own church.”*<sup>1</sup>  
(Age of Reason, 1793)

These revolutionaries were pure in their own eyes but their teeth were like swords, devouring the poor from off the earth, as it is put in Proverbs 30:11-14.



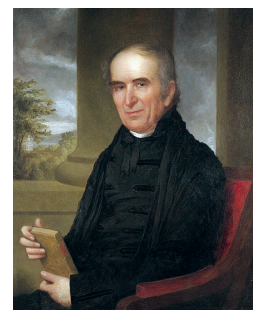
The storming of the Bastille during the French Revolution, 1789

## A Secular American State

The United States’ transition into a secular state began almost immediately. Though the first Supreme Court Chief Justice, John Jay, recommended that Americans should prefer Christians for their leaders, not everybody agreed. In 1802 Thomas Jefferson wrote a letter to the **Danbury Baptist Association** in Connecticut. He argued for a “wall of separation” between the church and the government. Furthermore, he wanted to open up American public life to full participation from “the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and the Mohammedan, the Hindu and the Infidel of every denomination.” James Madison went so far as to speak out against paying chaplains in the military, and at points he opposed proclamations of days of prayer.

However, it would take a long time before American governments would reject the Christian faith as the basis for its laws. The seeds for that rejection were planted by men who had rejected the Christian faith in the early 19th century. Yet, in the early 1800s, Supreme Court Justice (and organizer of Harvard Law School), Joseph Story, insisted that “A republic [must have] the Christian religion, as the great basis on which it must rest for its support and permanence.”<sup>2</sup>

Though America was originally established by orthodox Christians, during this time many of the nation’s churches devolved into Deism and Unitarianism. The seeds of this spiritual backsliding began in the early 1700s. At the turn of the 19th century, Harvard College was still churning out about 40 pastors a year, out of a total of 250 graduates. In 1802, Yale College produced 17 graduates in divinity.<sup>3</sup>



Henry Ware (1764-1845)

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

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1813

BOSTON MANUFACTURING CO. FOUNDED

1821

MEXICO'S INDEPENDENCE FROM SPAIN

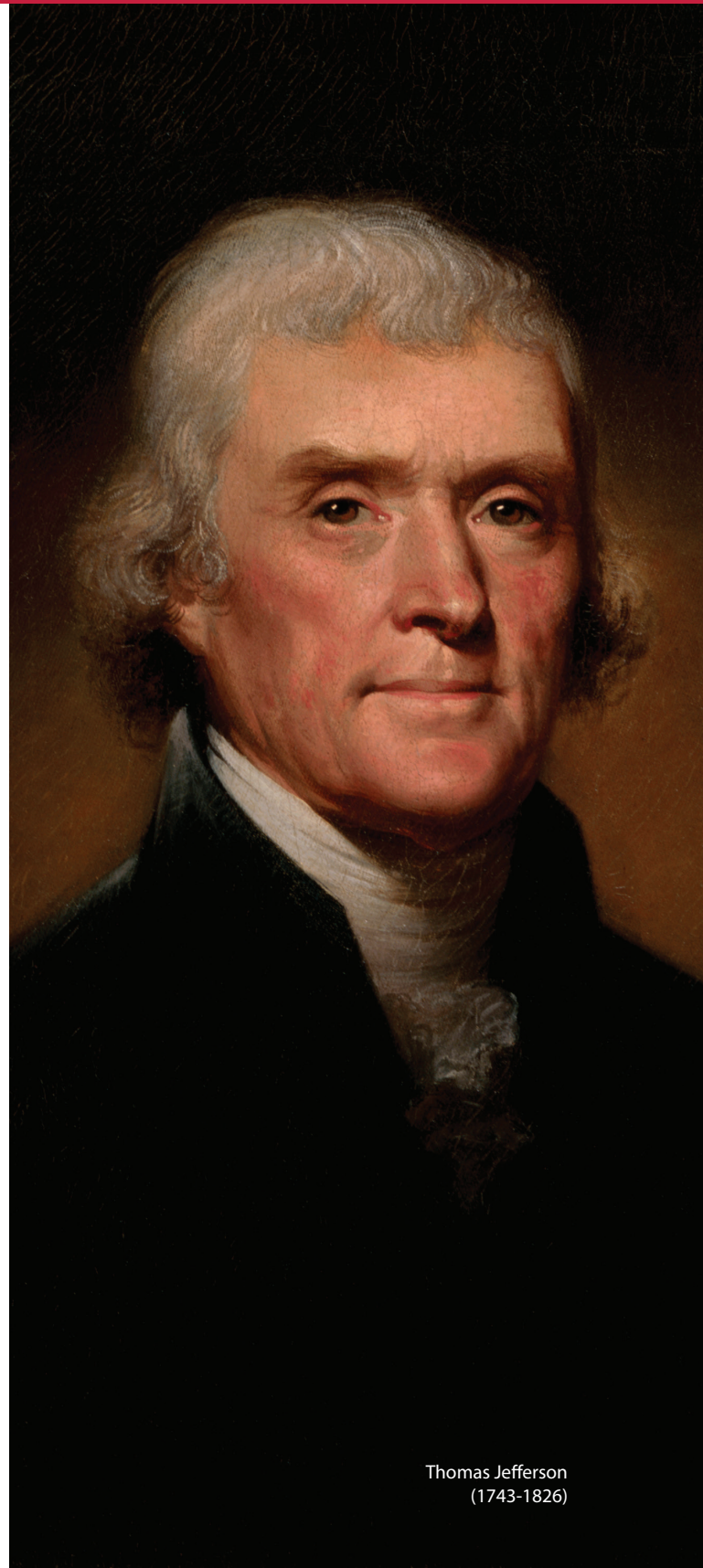
## The Problem with the Wall of Separation

Almost immediately, Americans took the separation of church and state, as a separation of the Christian faith from government (and all of life). This was extremely dangerous to the faith itself. From the Scriptures, we see that God does not want a civil leader to control the church. King Uzziah got himself in trouble when he tried to do the priest's work (2 Chron. 26:19-21). However, the Lord still wants every Christian to apply his faith in all areas of life. Every nation is subject to the laws of God as the standard of justice (or right and wrong). Either we will apply man's laws and man's false religions in government, or we will apply the laws of the true and living God.

*"Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him? And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day?'" (Deuteronomy 4:6-8)*

Since these colleges served as the source of New England's pastors, it is important to know that Harvard College officially turned Unitarian in 1805. That was the year the college appointed **Henry Ware**, a Unitarian, to the Chair of Divinity.

Regrettably, humble farm families would send their young men to Harvard College to receive an education in the radical ideas of the day. Although many of these parents were just hoping their sons would receive a "good education," their sons would



Thomas Jefferson  
(1743-1826)

ADAMS & JEFFERSON DIE

1826

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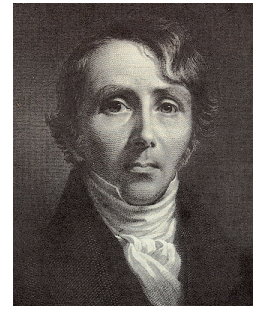
1852

1ST COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW

become the new leaders in the churches to take the populace even further away from biblical truth. This was how America turned towards proud man-centered humanism. One farming family sent their son, Theodore Parker (1810-1860), to Harvard in 1830. Parker became an important leader in the Christian apostasy of the Northern states. Over time, he became increasingly skeptical concerning Scriptural supernaturalism, questioning whether Jesus' miracles ever happened at all. He tried to carve out a Christian system of belief independent of the Bible, and went so far as to support John Brown and his terrorist activities.

Another young man, **William Ellery Channing** from Rhode Island, entered Harvard College in 1795, having been raised in a family with a rich Puritan, evangelical heritage.

Channing became the most outspoken Unitarian of his day. He rejected the doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of the depravity of man. By this time, America was tired of the Calvinist teaching on the sinfulness of man. Americans (especially in the North) wanted to believe in the inherent goodness of men against what the Bible taught.



William Ellery Channing  
(1780-1842)

*"There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." (Romans 3:11-12)*



Harvard Yard at Harvard University

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MEXICO'S INDEPENDENCE FROM SPAIN



Modern-day Yale University

## Seeds of Revival Return

*“Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” (Acts 3:19)*

A Presbyterian Calvinist named James McGready (1763-1817) is generally accepted as the first evangelist in the “Second Awakening” in America. McGready was a humble preacher who received a discipleship (not at Yale or Harvard Seminaries), but in a log cabin discipleship center in Washington County, Pennsylvania. He arrived in Logan County, Kentucky in 1796. The new settlements were filled with unbelief, Deism, skepticism, and general immorality (and very few churches). After dedicating a whole year to prayer and fasting, one young woman was converted in the congregation where McGready served. Then, revival broke out in 1798, with what the pastor called a “remarkable spirit of prayer and supplication...a sensible, heart-felt burden of the dreadful state of sinners.”<sup>4</sup> By 1801, tens of thousands were attending revival meetings throughout the state of Kentucky.

When George A. Baxter, president of Washington College, visited the state in the same year, he reported that, “I found Kentucky . . . the most moral place I have ever been. A profane expression was hardly ever heard. A religious awe seemed to pervade the country.”<sup>5</sup>

## Revival at Yale

European skepticism and radical Enlightenment ideas from France had infected conservative Yale College by the turn of the 19th century. Officially, the college policies were still strongly biblical:

*“If any Scholar shall deny the Holy Scriptures, or any part thereof, to be of divine authority; or shall assert and endeavour to propagate among the Students any error or heresy subverting the foundations of the Christian religion, and shall persist therein, after admonition, he shall be dismissed.”<sup>6</sup>*

However, nobody was paying much attention to the stated rules by the early 1800s. The school was rife with atheism, and left-wing Enlightenment ideas from France. Reports have it that “intemperance,

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1ST COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW

profanity, and gambling were common; yea, and also licentiousness.”<sup>7</sup> The students would call each other “Voltaire, Rousseau, and D’Alembert,” after the radical, atheistic French philosophers.<sup>8</sup>

**Timothy Dwight** (1752-1817), a grandson of Jonathan Edwards, accepted the position of President of Yale College in 1795. On his first day addressing Yale’s senior class, Dwight posed the question, “Are the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament the word of God?” Not one member of the class had the faith to answer the question in the affirmative. The question posed to the class demonstrated the extent to which Enlightenment thinking and skepticism had undermined the faith in America. Dwight spent the next six months arguing the case for scriptural inspiration in the college chapel. It took seven years before revival finally broke out on the campus. At that time about one third of Yale’s 230 students professed faith in Christ. One student commented on the revival:

*“The whole college was shaken. It seemed for a time as if the whole mass of the students would press into the kingdom. It was the Lord’s doing, and marvelous in all eyes. Oh, what a blessed change! It was a glorious reformation.”*<sup>9</sup>

Sitting in one of the Timothy Dwight’s classes in 1798, was the son of a blacksmith from New Haven, a young man named **Lyman Beecher**. He spoke of his experience on hearing Dwight preach,

*“I rose to pray and had not spoken five words before I was under as deep a conviction as ever I was in my life. The sinking of the shaft was instantaneous, I understood the law and my own heart as well as I do now, or shall in the Day of Judgment, I believe. The commandment came, sin revived, and I died, quick as a flash of lightning.”*<sup>10</sup>



Timothy Dwight (1752-1817)



Lyman Beecher (1775-1863)

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Serving both Presbyterian and Congregational pulpits through his pastoring career, Beecher was a conservative voice in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Following the Hamilton-Burr duel, he spoke strongly against dueling, in a sermon that shook the nation. He called America “a nation of murderers, while we tolerate and reward the perpetrators of the crime.”<sup>11</sup> By 1826, his daughter Harriet Beecher reported that:

*“all the literary men of Massachusetts were Unitarian. All the trustees and professors of Harvard College were Unitarians. All the elite of wealth and fashion crowded Unitarian churches. The judges on the bench were Unitarian. . .”*<sup>12</sup>

However, Lyman Beecher remained an evangelical Calvinist, and when he arrived in Boston, his reception was icy cold. Beecher’s Calvinist theology wasn’t well received, but his sermons

on temperance (avoiding the consumption of alcohol) were hugely popular and this spearheaded a new movement in America. While Beecher was not able to beat Unitarianism in Connecticut and Boston, he did his best to stem the bleeding and salvage a little of the biblical faith in America.

Beecher’s support for the revivalism of the day made him suspect among the traditional Presbyterians. Later, he joined the **New School Presbyterians** as President of Lane Theological Seminary. This newly formed seminary was much more supportive of the revivals of the



Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio,  
in operation from 1829 to 1932

## Asahel Nettleton—Still Keeping the Faith through Dark Days

Also, sitting under the professorship of Timothy Dwight at Yale was the son of a farmer from North Killingworth, Connecticut, a young man named Asahel Nettleton (1783-1844). He had been converted at 17 years of age during a revival that touched New England in 1801. At this time, about 150 churches received the gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit.<sup>13</sup> Nettleton came under conviction for several years, until finally he found that a:

*“great change had been wrought in his views and feelings concerning divine things. Old thing had passed away—all things had become new. The character of God now appeared lovely. The Saviour was exceedingly precious; and the doctrines of grace, towards which he had felt such bitter opposition, he contemplated with delight, and had now no doubt of their truth.”*<sup>14</sup>

During the years of his ministry (1811-1844), Nettleton did not witness the sweeping awakening across America seen by George Whitefield a century earlier. However, his biographer records his participation in twenty small awakenings in “destitute churches of Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, and Virginia.”<sup>15</sup> His job was to “strengthen the things that remained and were ready to die” (Rev. 3:2), and he fulfilled his task. Asahel Nettleton never married, but continued with evangelistic preaching and pastoring his whole adult life.



Asahel Nettleton (1783-1844)

ADAMS & JEFFERSON DIE

1826

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Second Great Awakening and came behind the “social gospel” causes like temperance, abolition, and Sabbath legislation. Regrettably, these Christian moral efforts distanced themselves from the objective biblical standards of God’s laws. However, the issues championed found support with the masses who were looking for a “semblance of godliness, while denying the power thereof” (2 Tim. 3:5).

When the **Old Light and New Light Reformed Presbyterians** split in 1833, it wasn’t just over revivalism. The more important question was whether members should swear allegiance to the United States Constitution. The Old Lights were concerned that the Constitution refused to acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Remaining firm on their principles, the group became the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America denomination (RPCNA).

## The Robust Reformation Faith Further Dissolves

Despite the yeoman efforts of a few pastors at the beginning of the 19th century, the Christian faith brought to America by the children of the Protestant Reformation continued to dissolve. The compromise was radical in the form of Unitarianism, but there were other less potent forms of retrograde as well.

Joseph Bellamy (1719-1790) and Samuel Hopkins (1721-1803) were students of Jonathan Edwards. However, they developed a new theology that did not allow for the doctrine of original sin (the guilt of Adam’s original sin transferred to every baby born into the world). Christian pastors began to interpret



Samuel Hopkins  
(1721-1803)

## A Brief Analysis of Finney’s Theology

In his systematic theology, he wrote, “I have felt greater hesitancy in forming and expressing my views upon this Perseverance of the saints, than upon almost any other question in theology.”<sup>16</sup> Finney was mistaken when he wrote that “perseverance in faith and obedience, or in consecration to God, is also an unalterable condition of justification.”<sup>17</sup> This kind of teaching mixes up **justification** (forgiveness of sins) and **sanctification** (growth in holiness). It undermined the reformation doctrine of justification by faith alone. Sanctification is an inevitable consequence of our justification, but justification should never be conditioned on our sanctification. Finney’s wording creates a dependence upon man’s decisions and man’s works instead of a reliance on God’s grace. His theology turns towards a man-centeredness and it was extremely dangerous to the faith. Natural man wants to rely on man. This is the essence of the humanism that captured the hearts of Americans in the 19th century.

*“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.”  
(Romans 3:28)*



Charles G. Finney (1792-1875)

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION  
1787

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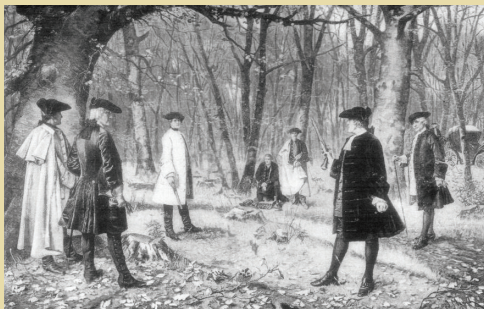
1821  
MEXICO’S INDEPENDENCE FROM SPAIN

## The Hamilton-Burr Duel—A Scourge on American History

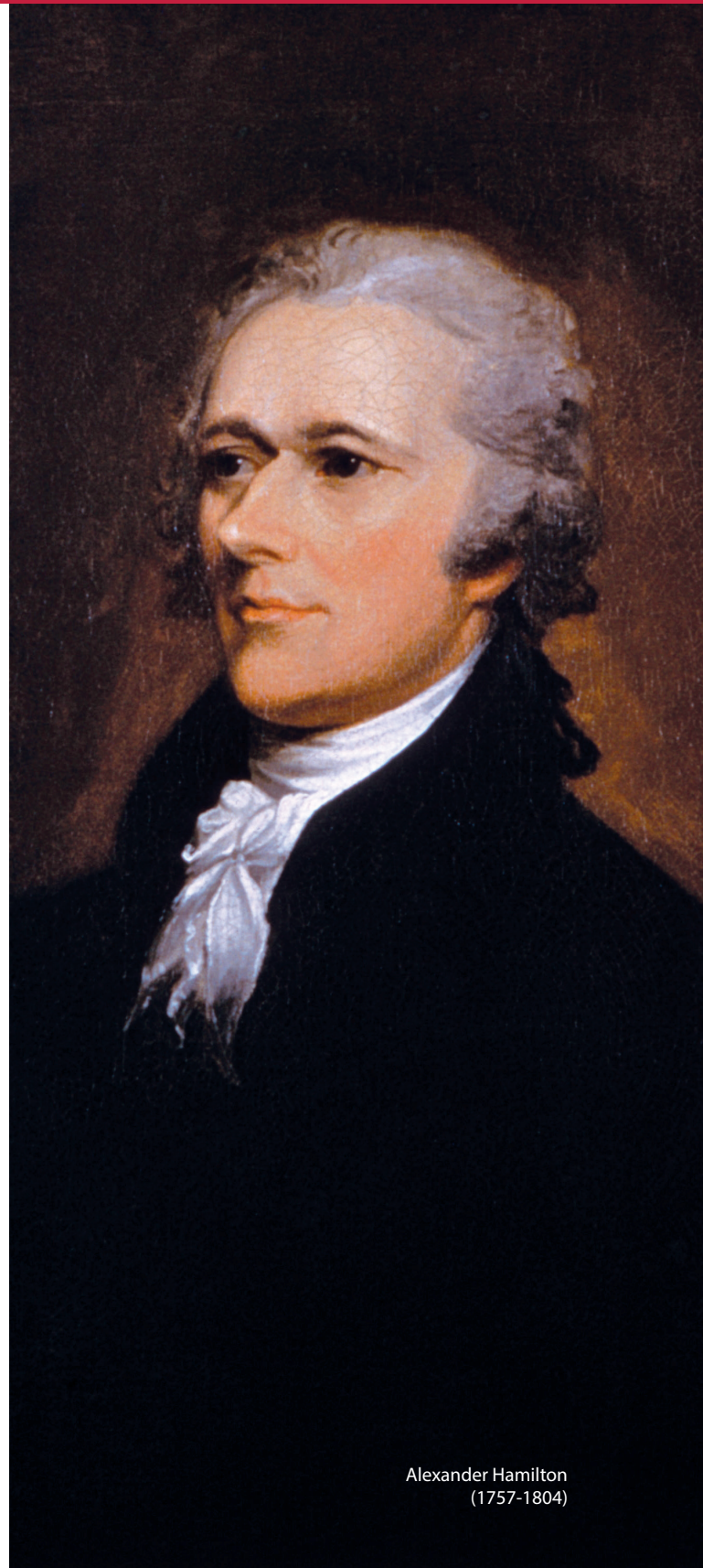
On July 11, 1804, Aaron Burr shot and killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel fought at Weehawken, New Jersey. Previously, Hamilton had fought ten “shotless” duels, and his son had been killed in a duel a few years earlier at the same spot. The argument was both political and personal. While Aaron Burr ran for governor of New York, Hamilton had assaulted his character calling him a “profligate in the extreme.” Hamilton had fought hard for a powerful, strong federal government and national bank, and Burr was more on the side of Jefferson (and preferred less tyranny).

Of all of America’s early leaders, Hamilton was a man of the worst character. He had committed adultery with another man’s wife in the 1790s. Sadly, his father was forced to divorce his mother, Rachel Fawcett Levine Hamilton for reasons of adultery (in which she gave birth to two illegitimate children, Alexander being one of them). She was jailed in 1745 for “adultery and whoring with everyone.”<sup>18</sup> Such sins were considered criminal at a time when America more respected God’s laws found in Deuteronomy.

*“If a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die. . .” (Deuteronomy 22:22)*



The Hamilton-Burr duel



Alexander Hamilton  
(1757-1804)

ADAMS & JEFFERSON DIE

1826

ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE VISITS AMERICA

1831

OLD & NEW SCHOOL PRESBYTERIANS SPLIT

1837

CHEROKEE TRAIL OF TEARS

1838

COMMUNIST MANIFESTO PUBLISHED

1848

1830

INDIAN REMOVAL ACT

1836

MCGUFFEY READER PUBLISHED

1836

BATTLE OF THE ALAMO

1845

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1ST COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW

the Bible by “what seemed right” according to their own thinking. This was the result of the Humanist Enlightenment of the 1700s.

By this time, most Americans (as all humanist men do) were looking for a theology where they could be in control of their own salvation. Instead of trusting the Holy Spirit to change men's hearts, preachers more and more wanted to take over this work for themselves.

**Charles Grandison Finney** (1792-1875) became the most famous Christian leader of the 19th century in America. Though educated in the Presbyterian tradition, Finney's theology strayed from these roots. He rejected the idea that Jesus imputes His righteousness to us (in the doctrine of justification). He also advocated a doctrine of perfectionism (that Christians can obtain sinless perfection in this life).

In July 1827, **Asahel Nettleton** confronted Charles Finney at the New Lebanon Conference in Upstate New York. As the Apostle Paul corrected Peter (Gal. 2:11), Nettleton brought Finney a list of concerns he had with Finney's revivals. These had to do with his emotional methods, such as praying for sinners by name in a public meeting, using overly familiar language with God in prayer, use of an “anxious seat” for emotionally overwrought congregants where they could be led to pray a prayer of conversion. Also on the list of concerns were forcing converts to give immediate public testimonies, extending the length of meetings to wear the congregation down, and scheduling meetings at abnormal times. These and other methods became popular in American evangelical churches for the next 180 years.

Towards the end of his life, Charles Finney had to admit that “The glory has been departing and revivals have been becoming less and less frequent—less powerful.”<sup>19</sup> He also came to realize that most of those he thought were converted, actually became what he called a “disgrace to religion.”<sup>20</sup>

## The Rise of the Methodists and the Cumberland Presbyterians

During the 1820s and 1830s, American religion became more dependent on man's work to save people. If preachers believe that salvation ultimately depends on the choices of individual persons, then this will affect their preaching and ministry approach. Revivalist preachers and pastors would appeal strongly to the will of their hearers, as if their salvation depended upon man. They would preach the Gospel, but they would

### A View of the Churches in the West in 1826

A historiographer named Timothy Flint made his way down the Mississippi River in 1826, chronicling the state of the people and the churches in Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama. Flint observed a spiritual restlessness:

*“The Baptists and Presbyterians seemed to be the prevailing sects, though the Methodists were labouring with their usual zeal and success. They find considerable impediment to their progress in their general and decided opposition to slavery.... This and the neighbouring state of Tennessee have given origin to a new sect called Cumberland Presbyterians... They describe themselves in point of speculation to agree with the Arminians in their manner of preaching and especially in their vociferousness they copy the Methodists but outdo their model... The people are eager to attend public worship, especially when performed by strangers. This insatiable curiosity, this eagerness for novelty which is so discouraging to the settled clergy and which so strongly marks the American people generally is a passion in this state.”<sup>21</sup>*



John Wesley (1703-1791)

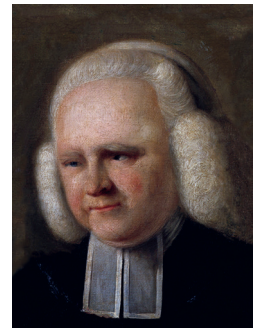
also use emotional manipulation. Their preaching went beyond authoritative statements and bold conviction, and crossed the line into browbeating and coercive force. Under such systems, men begin to trust more in the power of their own words than in the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit of God.

The temptation to ascribe sovereign control to man was overwhelming during the Second Great Awakening. The **Cumberland Presbyterians** of Kentucky and Tennessee broke away from the historical Presbyterians. They did not agree with the idea of God's control over man's salvation. In 1810, the first independent Cumberland

Presbytery formed in Burns, Tennessee. Sixteen years later, the Cumberland Presbyterians started a seminary in Princeton, Kentucky, including women in the first class. By 1889, they became the first denomination to ordain a woman to the role of pastor. Louisa Mariah Layman Woosley was an early Presbyterian feminist who wrote a book called *Shall Woman Preach?*. These formed the first steps away from conservative biblical orthodoxy for the Presbyterians.

The mindset of the American West was individualistic. Many pioneers felt that the idea that God is in control of everything threatened their concept of individual freedom. According to this way of thinking, each person makes his own choices completely independent of God, and of others. The wife also makes her own choices independent of her husband.

The Methodists fit well into this way of thinking. John Wesley, the founder of this denomination, did not agree with George Whitefield on God's sovereignty over salvation. Wesley taught that God extends grace to men, but they can resist God's grace. Each individual can decide whether they will receive God's grace, and God is not in control of this decision. As early as 1787, John Wesley approved of women preaching as long as they "proclaimed the doctrines and adhered to the disciplines that all Methodist preachers were expected to accept."<sup>22</sup> The Methodists ordained Anna Howard Shaw as their first female pastor in 1880.

George Whitefield  
(1714-1770)

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## In Review

The American church splintered into assorted denominations and heretical, false sects in the early 19th century. Although there were several revivals, there was nothing like the Great Awakening across the country experienced in the 1740s. Although some looked to Charles Finney as having achieved some good fruit, much of it turned out to be false (even according to his own admission). The source of America's religious downfall is seen mainly in the seminaries, like Harvard College. When the devil captured control of Harvard College and gave it over to the Unitarians, the faith of the nation began to sink fast.

### Key Terms

- ✦ Constitutional Republic
- ✦ Humanist Enlightenment
- ✦ Danbury Baptist Association
- ✦ Cumberland Presbyterians
- ✦ Arminians
- ✦ Old Light and New Light Reformed Presbyterians
- ✦ New School Presbyterians
- ✦ Justification
- ✦ Sanctification

### Key People

- ✦ Thomas Paine
- ✦ Henry Ware
- ✦ William Ellery Channing
- ✦ Timothy Dwight
- ✦ Lyman Beecher
- ✦ Asahel Nettleton
- ✦ Charles Grandison Finney



CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION  
1787

LOUISIANA PURCHASE  
1803

LEWIS & CLARK EXPEDITION  
1804-06

WAR OF 1812  
1812-15

CREEK & SEMINOLE WARS  
1813-19

1803  
MARBURY V. MADISON

1804  
HAMILTON-BURR DUEL

1810  
CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIANS FORM

1813  
BOSTON MANUFACTURING CO. FOUNDED

1821  
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