

# A Study of Denominations

## 6. Trends in American Christianity

Our last class brought us to the basic divisions of Christian churches in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought many changes that transcend the traditional denominational lines. New church organizations and movements continue to evolve.



1. What kind of movements did the New Testament predict?

- 1 Timothy 4.1-3
- 2 Timothy 3.1-6
- 2 Timothy 4.3-4

2. Liberalism: The rationalism of the 1800s was given an extra boost with the introduction of Darwin's theory of evolution (*Origin of Species*, 1859). As the 1900s arrived every denomination was faced with the challenge of liberalism...

Scripture is no longer considered \_\_\_\_\_.  
The great miracles of the Bible as viewed as \_\_\_\_\_ that reveal a deeper meaning.  
The deeper meaning is that all religions are \_\_\_\_\_.  
Religion becomes a system of \_\_\_\_\_.  
Liberalism focused on the \_\_\_\_\_ Gospel.

3. Fundamentalism: Immediately the fight was on. J. Gresham Machen of Princeton University published *Christianity and Liberalism* in 1923. The LCMS approved *The Brief Statement* which opposed errors in liberalism and fundamentalism in 1932.

Fundamentalists stressed \_\_\_\_\_ of Scripture...  
... Biblical \_\_\_\_\_ over evolution.  
... The \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.  
... The \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ, especially the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.

4. Evangelicalism: Carl F. Henry founded \_\_\_\_\_ magazine in 1956 to offer an alternative perspective to *The Christian Century* (liberal protestant). This magazine helped to draw together fundamentalists who were ready to move on past the battles with liberals. Evangelicalism is Fundamentalism in \_\_\_\_\_. Notable activities of evangelicals...

A very strong emphasis on \_\_\_\_\_  
The \_\_\_\_\_ movement  
Involvement in \_\_\_\_\_

6. Pentecostalism: Alongside of intellectual fundamentalism there was \_\_\_\_\_, which tended to focus more on the personal experience of faith. Revivalists such as Charles Finney, Dwight Moody, Billy Sunday, and Billy Graham would draw large crowds. These crowds would stand solidly in the evangelical fold. But there were other revivals taking place. Along with the evangelical emphasis on the inspiration of Scripture and faith in Christ, some revivals emphasized \_\_\_\_\_ – especially the gift of tongues. At a prayer meeting in Topeka, Kansas, a pentecostal revival began that spread quickly to Missouri and Texas and would eventually lead to the organization of the Assemblies of God.

7. Nondenominationalism: Independent churches that developed from the previous revivals but \_\_\_\_\_ the doctrinal emphasis of the evangelicals and the exaggerated expressions of the pentecostals.

8. Megachurches: These are churches that have learned to apply the secular \_\_\_\_\_. They strive to be "seeker-friendly." They rely heavily on market research and polished advertising. Many critics claim they blur the line between Christian worship and Christian entertainment.