

## **THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY SPLIT BETWEEN THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST & THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST**

1859 - Dr. (M.D.) L. L. Pinkerton, the preaching minister of the Midway (KY) Christian Church, (who was also an ardent abolitionist & a “northerner”) decided, on his own, to install a melodeon into the church building as an aide to correct what he perceived as the poor quality of congregational singing. One night shortly thereafter, Adam Hibler, one of the elders of the congregation, (who just happened to be a slave owner & a “southerner”), covertly removed & destroyed the melodeon. He then removed & hid its replacement (which was discovered in his barn many years later & is now on display at Midway College). The installation of a third instrument pretty much split the congregation, with the non-instrumentalists departing.

The 1860's & 1870's were marked by debates within the various religious journals of the Christian Church/Churches of Christ/Disciples of Christ movement regarding the use of a mechanical instrument in worship, sparked by the incident at Midway. The treatment of the opposition was not always kind.

But the debate was not really about the instrument, but rather about the handling of Scripture.

- One side believed that the silence of Scripture regarding the use of mechanical instruments in the worship of the New Testament Church should be viewed a “prohibitive,” since God had not specifically authorized their use.
- The other side believed that the silence of Scripture regarding the use of mechanical instruments should be viewed as “permissive,” since God had not specifically condemned their use.

Eventually there was an official split between the two groups. In 1906, at the request of David Lipscomb (founder of the Nashville Bible School, which is now Lipscomb University), the U.S. Census of Religious Bodies collated information about the “churches of Christ” separate from that of the “Disciples of Christ.” Some of that info reveals cultural differences between the two groups as well.

### **Disciples of Christ in 1906**

- Total of 982,701 members, which represented just under 5 % of all Protestants
- 40 % vs. 60 % male/female ratio
- Only 14 % of the Disciples lived in states of the former Confederacy
- They tended to be more “northern,” more urban, more open to integration and more committed to cooperative organizations such as missionary societies & colleges. On average they paid their ministers (who were more “highly” educated) twice as much as the “Churches of Christ.” They also had more members per congregation & had larger, more elaborate/expensive buildings.

### **Churches of Christ in 1906**

- Total of 159,698 members, which represented just under 1 % of all Protestants
- 41 % vs. 59 % male/female ratio
- 64 % of churches of Christ were located in the states of the Confederacy, with another 19 % in the former border states (KY, WV, MO, OK) & only 17 % in the “Union North.”
- They tended to be more “southern,” more rural, segregated, and openly hostile to cooperative organizations. Their ministers were more modestly paid & educated. They tended to have less members per congregation & built smaller, more utilitarian buildings.

## **THE FUNDAMENTALIST RESPONSE TO THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY INVASION OF GERMAN “HIGHER CRITICISM”**

During the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, U.S. cities were overwhelmed with young, poorly-educated, working-class, European immigrants, most of whom were Catholic, and with many of the men among them tending to drink to excess, interacting with their wives & children roughly. There were several understandable responses to this: continued attempts to limit/control immigration,<sup>1</sup> a rise in Christian social efforts<sup>2</sup> and a revival of temperance societies<sup>3</sup> & women’s suffrage movements.<sup>4</sup> Much of the leadership within American Christianity seemed to be more interested in “social change” than in Biblical salvation via the atoning death & resurrection of Christ.

FYI:

- “Lower Criticism” is concerned with discovering the original text of a document (such as a book of the Bible) after it has been hand-copied so many times, when transcription errors tend to occur. This is done through comparing all the various manuscripts available. [The King James Version (“Textus Receptus”) debate arises within this arena.]
- “Higher Criticism” is concerned with the authenticity and validity of the document’s content. When was it written? By whom? Using what sources? For what purpose? [Debates regarding Biblical “inspiration” & “authority” arise from within this arena.]

Germany was the primary source of the “higher critical” infection of American Christianity.

- Professor Friedrich Schleiermacher introduced a new “hermeneutic” (means of interpretation) for the Bible which was more compatible with the recent European Enlightenment.
- Professor F. C. Baur used Hegel’s dialectic to explain how a Jewish Christian “thesis” by the original Apostles was confronted by the pro-Gentile “antithesis” of the Apostle Paul, producing the “synthesis” of 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Christianity. Baur therefore rejected traditional teachings regarding N.T. authorship & dating.
- Professor David Strauss distinguished between a “historical Jesus” & the “mythical” Jesus of the N.T.
- Professor Julius Wellhausen rejected the Mosaic authorship of the Torah, theorizing that it had been compiled over time by multiple editors.

In 1891, Charles Briggs (who had studied in Germany) became the very first “Professor of Theology” at Union Theological Seminary. His inaugural address was an outright assault upon the traditional concept of Biblical authority. Although the Presbyterians (who had founded Union) finally defrocked Briggs in 1893, he continued teaching at Union, since the seminary considered itself academically independent.

The response of certain Presbyterians to this controversy eventually resulted in the adoption of the “Five Fundamentals” around 1910 & the birth of the “Fundamentalist Movement,” as well as the publication of the twelve-volume The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth (1910-1915).<sup>5</sup>

- The inspiration of the Bible by the Holy Spirit and the inerrancy 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.

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<sup>1</sup> The famous “Holy Trinity” Supreme Court decision of 1892 (“...this is a Christian nation.”) came about when a church’s attempt to hire foreign-born minister was stymied by federal immigration law.

<sup>2</sup> The Salvation Army, which brought “soup, soap & salvation” to the poor of London in 1865, began doing the same thing in the United States in 1880.

<sup>3</sup> The Women’s Christian Temperance Union began with a national convention at Cleveland, Ohio in 1874.

<sup>4</sup> The famous suffragettes, Susan B. Anthony & Elizabeth Cady Stanton, opposed the proposed 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1869, because it would give the vote to black men, but not to women.

<sup>5</sup> See next sheet for the content of these volumes.

**Volume I:**

The Virgin Birth of Christ - James Orr  
The Deity of Christ - Benjamin B. Warfield  
The Purposes of the Incarnation - G. Campbell Morgan  
The Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit - R. A. Torrey  
The Proof of the Living God - Arthur T. Pierson  
History of the Higher Criticism - Dyson Hague  
A Personal Testimony - Howard A. Kelly

**Volume II:**

The Testimony of the Monuments to the Truth of the Scriptures - George Frederick Wright  
The Recent Testimony of Archaeology to the Scriptures - M. G. Kyle  
Fallacies of the Higher Criticism - Franklin Johnson  
Christ and Criticism - Robert Anderson  
Modern Philosophy - Philip Mauro  
Justification by Faith - H. C. G. Moule  
Tributes to Christ and the Bible by Brainy Men not Known as Active Christians

**Volume III:**

Inspiration of the Bible—Definition, Extent, and Proof - James M. Gray  
The Moral Glory of Jesus Christ a Proof of Inspiration - William G. Moorehead  
God in Christ the Only Revelation of the Fatherhood of God - Robert E. Speer  
The Testimony of Christian Experience - E. Y. Mullins  
Christianity No Fable - Thomas Whitelaw  
My Personal Experience with the Higher Criticism - J. J. Reeve  
The Personal Testimony of Charles T. Studd

**Volume IV:**

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness: Did it Exist? - David Heagle  
The Testimony of Christ to the Old Testament - William Caven  
The Bible and Modern Criticism - F. Bettex  
Science and Christian Faith - James Orr  
A Personal Testimony - Philip Mauro

**Volume V:**

Life in the Word - Philip Mauro  
The Scriptures - A. C. Dixon  
The Certainty and Importance of the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead - R. A. Torrey  
Observations of the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul - Lord Lyttleton (analyzed and condensed by J. L. Campbell)  
A Personal Testimony - H. W. Webb-Peploe

**Volume VI:**

The Testimony of Foreign Missions to the Superintending Providence of God - Arthur T. Pierson.  
Is There a God? - Thomas Whitelaw  
Sin and Judgment to Come - Robert Anderson  
The Atonement - Franklin Johnson  
The God-Man - John Stock  
The Early Narratives of Genesis - James Orr  
The Person and Work of Jesus Christ - John L. Nuelsen  
The Hope of the Church - John McNicol

**Volume VII:**

The Passing of Evolution - George Frederick Wright  
Inspiration - L. W. Munhall  
The Testimony of the Scriptures to Themselves - George S. Bishop  
Testimony of the Organic Unity of the Bible to its Inspiration - Arthur T. Pierson  
One Isaiah - George L. Robinson  
The Book of Daniel - Joseph D. Wilson  
Three Peculiarities of the Pentateuch - Andrew Craig Robinson  
Millennial Dawn: A Counterfeit of Christianity - William G. Moorehead

**Volume VIII:**

Old Testament Criticism and New Testament Christianity - W. H. Griffith Thomas  
Evolutionism in the Pulpit - Anonymous  
Decadence of Darwinism - Henry H. Beach  
Paul's Testimony to the Doctrine of Sin - Charles B. Williams  
The Science of Conversion - H. M. Sydenstricker  
The Doctrinal Value of the First Chapters of Genesis - Dyson Hague  
The Knowledge of God - James Burrell  
"Preach the Word" - Howard Crosby  
Mormonism: Its Origin, Characteristics, and Doctrines - R. G. McNiece

**Volume IX:**

The True Church - Bishop Ryle  
The Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch - George Frederick Wright  
The Wisdom of this World - A. W. Pitzer  
Holy Scripture and Modern Negations - James Orr  
Salvation by Grace - Thomas Spurgeon  
Divine Efficacy of Prayer - Arthur T. Pierson  
What Christ Teaches Concerning Future Retribution - William C. Procter  
A Message from Missions - Charles A. Bowen  
Eddyism: Commonly Called Christian Science - Maurice E. Wilson

**Volume X:**

Why Save the Lord's Day? - Daniel Hoffman Martin  
The Internal Evidence of the Fourth Gospel - Canon G. Osborne Troop  
The Nature of Regeneration - Thomas Boston  
Regeneration—Conversion—Reformation - George W. Lasher  
Our Lord's Teachings About Money - Arthur T. Pierson  
Satan and His Kingdom - Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis  
The Holy Spirit and the Sons of God - W. J. Erdman  
Consecration - Henry W. Frost  
The Apologetic Value of Paul's Epistles - E.J. Stobo  
What the Bible Contains for the Believer - George F. Pentecost  
Modern Spiritualism Briefly Tested by Scripture - Algernon J. Pollock

**Volume XI:**

The Biblical Conception of Sin - Thomas Whitelaw  
At-One-Ment by Propitiation - Dyson Hague  
The Grace of God - C. I. Scofield  
Fulfilled Prophecy A Potent Argument for the Bible - Arno C. Gaebelein  
The Coming of Christ - Charles R. Erdman  
Is Romanism Christianity? - T. W. Medhurst  
Rome, The Antagonist of the Nation - J. M. Foster

**Volume XII:**

Doctrines that Must be Emphasized in Successful Evangelism - L. W. Munhall  
Pastoral and Personal Evangelism, or Winning Men to Christ One-by-One - John Timothy Stone  
The Sunday School's True Evangelism - Charles Gallaudet Trumbull  
Foreign Missions or World-Wide Evangelism - Robert E. Speer  
What Missionary Motives Should Prevail? - Henry W. Frost  
The Place of Prayer in Evangelism - R. A. Torrey  
The Church and Socialism - Charles R. Erdman  
The Fifteen Books Most Indispensable for the Minister or the Christian Worker