

Dr. Roger Green, American Christianity, Session 13, Slavery and the Church, Civil War

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This is Dr. Roger Green in his teaching on American Christianity. This is session 13, Slavery and the Churches, Civil War.

We are Slavery and the Churches. We're still on the background here. We haven't quite finished the background, and then when we finish the background, we'll move on to the reaction of churches to slavery. So, okay, so let's just remind ourselves what we're doing here in terms of this part of the lecture.

What I'm trying to do is give a chronology of how anti-slavery sentiments and abolitionist sentiments got institutionalized in American life and culture. So, we worked on chronology, and we started with the Quakers, and then we moved to 1774. Remember with the Quakers, we said 1775? Then we moved to 1784 with the Methodists, and at the Christmas conference, the Methodists decided, you know, we're going to set up things with no people who claim to be Methodists can own slaves.

Then we came into the 1770s, and we talked about the Edwardsians, and we mentioned that even though Jonathan Edwards himself did actually own slaves, the Edwardsians are starting to think this through. And the Edwardsians are pretty powerful preachers, part of an intellectual life in American public life. So the Edwardsians were starting to speak out against slavery.

We then mentioned 1817 and the colonization society and how important that colonization society was as a transitional society. I mean, it ultimately failed, but it was transitional. It kind of awakened people to part of the problem.

And also, the final thing we mentioned, I think, the other day before we did mention, yeah, the founding of Oberlin College 1835. We're going to see this again with Charles Grandison Finney because he was a professor of theology and then president, but Oberlin College was founded as an abolitionist college. That was part of its charter, part of its mission to teach abolitionism.

It was also founded as the first co-educational college in America. We mentioned that the other day. So, Oberlin does have a pretty important place in American Christianity for those two reasons as well as other reasons, which we'll see more about when we get to Finney.

I think that's where I stopped. I think so we still need to just finish this off. Now, I'm going to finish this off with a person, and his name is William Lloyd Garrison.

William Lloyd Garrison becomes very important to the abolitionist story. Long story short on William Lloyd Garrison. William Lloyd Garrison was trained in New Jersey as a printer.

He was a printer's apprentice. It so happens that the fellow under whom he was trained is, and by the way, the fact that he was trained as a printer is going to be important later on in his story, but the person under whom he was trained was a Quaker. He was a Quaker dedicated to anti-slavery to the abolitionist cause, and so William Lloyd Garrison, while living in New Jersey while being apprenticed as a printer, learned about the cause from his boss, and he became convicted of the abolition of slavery.

Now, he moves to Boston. So, Boston once again plays an important story in the story of American Christianity, but he moves to Boston. After he moved to Boston, he was very much taken with the abolitionist cause.

He began a journal called the Public Liberator and Journal of the Times. He begins it on January 1st, 1831. This was an abolitionist journal and newspaper supporting the abolitionist cause.

In the newspaper and in his public speaking and when we're at the African Meeting House in our first field trip, for anyone going to that field trip, but when we're in the African Meeting House, which by the way is the oldest African Meeting House in the country, and so but when we're there, we'll see that William Lloyd Garrison used to speak there among other places. But the cause that he propagated was the abolition of slavery immediately, with no discussion. The slaves must be immediately, slavery must be immediately abolished, slaves must be immediately freed, and that's his cause, that's his battle cry.

What happened with William Lloyd Garrison was very important. William Lloyd Garrison caused divisiveness among people, and either people were for him, or they were against him. There was no middle ground when it came to William Lloyd Garrison because he was so determined for the immediacy and immediate liberation of the blacks, and he would hear nothing else.

Now, other people were also abolitionists, but they wanted to go about abolition in a different and more measured way that they thought would be more effective. But some people were on the side of William Lloyd Garrison and were absolutely unbendable about this immediacy issue while others weren't. So, William Lloyd Garrison was a guy who caused some kind of divisiveness in the abolitionist ranks.

Now, however, there is a question I'll ask about William Lloyd Garrison. Sometimes, in order to move a cause forward, you need this kind of personality. Sometimes, in order to really get a cause moved, you need a personality like William Lloyd Garrison.

So even though he did cause divisiveness and some of his language was not really controlled, sometimes he spoke out against the church and spoke out against preachers and spoke out against other abolitionists. But sometimes you need that kind of a person to get things going, and that's the kind of a person William Lloyd Garrison is. So, we end our chronological story with William Lloyd Garrison, and now the battle is on for the anti-slavery cause, the abolitionist cause.

Okay, now what we're going to look at is the reaction of the churches to slavery. We're going to look at those churches that were divided over the issue of slavery. Okay, and we're going to look at the Methodists, the Baptists, and the Presbyterians.

So, there were churches that were divided over the issue. Let's start with the Methodists. Okay, with the Methodists, we kind of remind ourselves about John Wesley's own understanding of anti-slavery abolitionist sentiments.

So, John Wesley, we've already talked about this, but he called slavery that villainy of villainies. So, Wesley and his immediate followers, of course, were determined that Methodists would never own slaves. And remember, we've already given the date 1784; that's a date you may see again in your lifetime, so the date 1784.

Remember, at the Christmas Conference of 1784, it was declared that Methodists could not own slaves. So that is kind of the Methodist story, and people were abiding by the Methodist story, so we thought, Well, what happens is that some Methodists begin to own slaves, and there was kind of a gradual creep within Methodism.

Some Methodists started to own slaves, and other Methodists were unhappy with this. So, we've got a name at the bottom of this list of names here. One person who was unhappy was a person by name, whose name is unforgettable; his name was Orange Scott.

Now, who would name their kid Orange? I have never figured this out. I've tried to research it. Maybe it was a family name; that's all I can figure out because you would name your kid Orange.

I mean, who would ever do that? It could be a banana, apple, tangerine, or something, but his name is unforgettable. It is Orange Scott. Orange Scott was so incensed that Methodists were beginning to own slaves that he begins his own denomination in 1843.

So, this is a break with the Methodist Episcopal Church and he called the church the Wesleyan Methodist Church, which is still in existence today. Some of you may be from the background of Wesleyan Methodist Church. I don't know, but he called his church the Wesleyan Methodist Church. But, with church membership in the Wesleyan Methodist Church, you could not own slaves.

It was forbidden. So, he was so incensed that Methodism was allowing Methodists to start owning slaves that he got out of the Methodist Episcopal Church and started things rolling. So that's where a split starts between the Methodists and the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

Now, 1844 becomes 1843, so you've already got another denomination. You've got the Wesleyan Methodist Church. Now we come among the Methodists to 1844.

1844 was an important date, and the issue was that one of the bishops of the Methodist Church was a slaveholder, and there were still Methodist people in the Methodist Episcopal Church who were abolitionists and anti-slavery. Now you've got a bishop, you've got a leader of the church who holds slaves. And so coming together in a conference there was a lot of debate and a lot of argument about this.

Should this be allowed? And what happened was that over the issue of owning slaves, the Methodist Episcopal Church split in half, and the Northern Church remained the Methodist Episcopal Church, and membership in the Northern Church meant that you could not own slaves. The Southern Church became known as the Methodist Episcopal Church South. And the Methodist Episcopal Church, actually there's a comma there, Methodist Episcopal Church comma South, and membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church comma South meant that you could be a Methodist and you could own slaves.

So, what happened with Methodism is it divided over, it divided over geographically. And so, you end up with the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church South. If you travel a lot in the South and if you come across a Methodist church, depending upon when it was built, but if you travel a lot in the South and you look carefully, you're going to see a lot of churches that were built in the 1850s, 60s, 70s, and it will say Methodist Episcopal Church, maybe on a cornerstone or maybe above the doorway, but it'll say Methodist Episcopal Church comma South.

So if you watch, you see a Methodist church in some Southern town, and you might find that used for them when that church was built. Okay, so the Methodists definitely split over the issue of slavery as much as any denomination, no doubt. The Baptists also split over the issue of slavery.

Okay, the issue among the Baptists, now remember the Baptists are a lot of different denominations here, but we're talking mainly here about the main Baptist denomination in the North and South, so and we know we've got a lot of different other denominations arising among the Baptists and so forth, but we're talking generally about the basic Baptists here. Okay, they came together for a convention in 1844, notice the same date as the Methodists, 1844. The Baptists come together in convention.

Now, what happened was that there was a state, and generally, the Baptists are organized by state conventions, so there was a state convention in Alabama. So, the Baptists came together in the state of Alabama. What happened was in that convention, there were people who believed that Baptist missionaries should still be able to hold, should still be able to hold slaves.

So even though they were appointed as missionaries, if they were slaveholders, they still should be able to hold their slaves, but other Baptists disagreed with that. So again, it was the issue; it was the issue of, it was the issue of should a member of the church, who's an important member of the church, in this case, missionaries, should they own slaves? Okay, basically, what happens with the Baptists is they also break North and South. So, there was a denomination formed that you'd be familiar with in 1845, and it was, and it was, and they called themselves the Southern Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention.

So, they were formed in 1845, and they were formed on the principle that it's all right for Baptists to hold slaves. Now, not too long ago, I'm going to say, I'm, I'd have to check on this to be sure, but I'm saying four or five, six years ago, the Southern Baptist Convention began to ask, it's, it's the largest Protestant denomination in, in America, the Southern Baptist Convention began to ask themselves, should we change the name? Maybe it's time to change the name because there are a lot of Southern Baptists in the North, and there are a lot of Southern Baptists on the mission field, so does the term Southern Baptist Convention mean anything anymore? Some people felt the name should be changed because it allowed slavery, too. Now, they agreed not to change the name, so they still go by the name Southern Baptist Convention, but, initially, they were a, the Southern Baptist Convention allowed slave owners to be part of the Southern Baptist Convention, so.

So, the Baptists split. Okay, and number three are the Presbyterians. The Presbyterians also split over the issue of slavery.

Let me just mention that they didn't split until a bit later; they split right in the middle to the end of the Civil War. The Northern Presbyterians, and some of you may be Presbyterians, so you may be familiar with these names, but the Northern Presbyterians took on the term, the type, and the denominational title of Presbyterian Church in the USA, in the United States of America, Presbyterian Church

in the USA. The Southern Presbyterian Church took on the term Presbyterian Church in the United States.

And now, so Presbyterians split right near the end of the war, 64. The split took a while, but they split by North and South basically. So you got Northern Presbyterians and Southern Presbyterians. Southern Presbyterians held slaves; Northern Presbyterians forbade slaveholding.

The North and the Southern Presbyterian were Presbyterian Churches. Did I get this right? The Southern, the Northern, was the Presbyterian Church in the USA, and the Southern, the Southern, was the Presbyterian Church in the United States. Now, Presbyterianism has gone through a lot of changes since then. If any of you are Presbyterians, you would know there have been mergers since then and so forth, but this split took over slavery.

Okay, those are reactions to slavery, those churches that divided. Okay, number C is reactions to slavery, those churches that did not divide. What churches didn't divide over the issue of slavery, and why didn't they divide? Why, you know, why did the Presbyterians, Baptists, and Presbyterians divide while these other groups did not divide? Okay, we've got four here on your outline.

Okay, first of all, the Congregationalists. There was no division over the issue of slavery among the Congregationalists. Now, why was that so? It was largely so because of their location.

The Congregationalists were pretty much exclusively Northern and heavily New England. So, those living in the North and part of the anti-slavery movement in places like Boston were run by the Congregationalists. So, the Congregationalists felt no need to divide.

There was a unity of spirit about abolitionism and anti-slavery sentiments, and they were all in the North. So, there was no division for that reason. Okay, now the Lutherans.

Some of you may be from a Lutheran background. How did the Lutherans come to terms with this? Well, in order to understand how they came to terms with it, we need to understand a little bit of Lutheran theology. Martin Luther taught that human beings live under two governments.

There is the government of the church that governs our spiritual lives, and there's the government of the state that governs our civic lives, our political life, our social life. Okay, now every Christian has an allegiance to both governments. You have an allegiance to the government of the church because the church is concerned with your spiritual life.

You have an allegiance to the government of the state because the state controls your civic life, your social life, and your cultural life. Alright, but one does not get tangled up with the other. So, Lutherans, just by virtue of their kind of theological vision, just by virtue of their theological makeup, the Lutheran church has decided not to get involved in the issue of slavery.

That is a political issue. That's an issue for the politicians. That's an issue for the state to decide.

So, we're going to allow that to kind of run its course. Therefore, the Lutherans basically, the way they came out was basically that each territorial Lutheran group made its own decision. If you were in the North and you decided on abolition, that's fine.

Not allowing slaveholders to be members of your congregation that's fine. If you're a Lutheran church in the South and you wanted to own slaves and the Lutheran church allowed the owner of slaves, that was fine as well. But slavery and the abolition of slavery and anti-slavery, that's a political matter.

We've got to allow the political life to eventually take care of that. So, Lutheranism basically meant you make your own decisions if you're Lutheran. Okay, number three are the Episcopalians.

Remember, it's the Episcopalian Church after the Revolution. It's not the Anglican Church after the Revolutionary War. It's the Episcopal Church.

Now, the Episcopalians did the same thing as the Lutherans. They didn't have the same theology, kind of undergirding it, but they did the same thing as the Lutherans. The Episcopalians were pretty much all over the map in terms of where they were located.

So, the Episcopalians allowed people in various locations to make their own decisions, but there was no division in the Episcopal Church for this. So, it was status quo as far as the Episcopal Church was concerned. And if you're Northern and you want to be, you know, if your church decides not to have slaves, that's fine.

If you're Southern, your church decides to have slaves, that's fine as well. Now, there's one other small issue that is working at this that we don't talk about much in American Christianity, but it did have a little bit of an influence during this time. And the issue was called the Oxford Movement.

There was a movement in England called the Oxford Movement. Okay, long story short on the Oxford Movement. The Oxford Movement in England was an Anglican movement that sought to see how close they were to the Roman Catholic Church.

In another course, I have to lecture for a long time on the Oxford Movement, but for our purposes, to make the long story short, many, many Anglicans became Roman Catholics in the 1840s, 50s, '60s, and so forth. A lot of Anglicans became Roman Catholics and very famous Roman Catholics like John Henry Newman, for example, because they felt there was no distinction between the Episcopal Church and the Roman Catholic Church. So, it was easy for them to make the transition into the Roman Catholic Church.

This was called the Oxford Movement because all of the thinking, preaching, and writing began at Oxford University. So, it was what we call kind of a high church movement into Roman Catholicism. Now, this does affect American Episcopalians a bit, too, because some of them were taken up with the Oxford Movement.

And are we like the Roman Catholics? Are we not like the Roman Catholics? Should we become Roman Catholic? That, in a sense, the considerations of the Oxford Movement took their eyes off of abolition and anti-slavery and so forth. So, the Oxford Movement is having a bit of an impact on American Episcopalians. Just as an example of the Oxford Movement having that impact, have any of you been to the Church of the Advent in Boston by any chance? Anybody? Church of the Advent in Boston? If you get a chance, you should go to Church of the Advent.

It is an Anglo-Catholic Church. Now, it's not Roman Catholic. It's still Anglican Episcopalian, but it is Anglo-Catholic.

And so, you think you're in a Roman Catholic Church. They have a high mass. You're going to mass.

There's lots of liturgy involved in the church. My friend calls it smells and bells. There are a lot of smells and bells in the church service.

So, a lot of incense, you know, for everything. And so, it's fascinating to see that, though, because it's not Roman Catholic, but it is Anglo-Catholic. So, it hasn't kind of crossed the line.

But prayers to Mary, I mean, you don't expect that in a Protestant Church. So, it's a fascinating church to go to. Occasionally, I taught a course in comparative Christianity and Catholic-Protestant Orthodox.

So, we've gone to the Church of the Advent, which is a real experience. And Orthodox Church, we've gone to Newburyport, to the Greek Orthodox Church in Newburyport. So, you ought to do it.

Anyway, so, among the Episcopalians. So, they did not divide, and Episcopalians could do pretty much what they pleased, depending on their location and what the church decided. And some Episcopalians were so involved in the Oxford movement that it kind of took their attention.

Their attention was somewhere else, other than the issues of slavery. Okay. Okay, the Roman Catholic Church.

Number four is the Roman Catholic Church. Okay, there, the Pope that, what, you know, was the Pope during this time as things were kind of heating up, and the slavery issue was heating up, was a Pope by the name of Gregory XVI. Now, what Gregory XVI did, which I think is good, was reiterate what he believed was a Roman Catholic position of anti-slavery.

So, as the Pope, he took the official Roman Catholic position of anti-slavery, and he, you know, really encouraged the Roman Catholic Church around the world to condemn the slave trade. So, that's kind of the official story. All right, but the question is, how are Roman Catholics in America going to handle this? The most prominent bishop and leader during the Civil War, not quite halfway through the Civil War, was Francis Kenrick.

So, Francis Kenrick, and he, of course, was the Archbishop in Baltimore. Francis Kenrick knew that he had to try to keep the Roman Catholic Church together, and he was living in an almost southern state here. So, Francis Kenrick, as the Archbishop of Baltimore, was a very influential person who basically allowed the status quo to remain as it was.

If there are Roman Catholics who are abolitionists, that's fine. If there are Roman Catholics who are holding slaves, so be it. So, basically, the Roman Catholic Church was, was kind of divided over the issue of slavery.

Now, because Roman Catholics are so, now, you have this kind of divided opinion among Roman Catholics in America. Because Roman Catholics are so careful about a biblical, theological understanding of the social process and have such a long tradition, there were Roman Catholics who really did feel that during the passage of time, there's going to be a due process of law that finally is going to abolish slavery. So, in other words, don't worry if we're in the midst of this turmoil right now.

Things are going to be kind of worked out by social legislation, by proper social legislation. So, okay. So, what happened was that after the war came to an end, there was reconciliation between the North and the South among Roman Catholics.

They reconciled with each other, and they wanted a unified Roman Catholic Church. They want, didn't want to hold grudges, and so forth. So, the Roman Catholic Church came together pretty well, actually, after the war.

So, churches that did not divide were the Congregationalists, Lutherans, the Episcopalians, and the Roman Catholics. So, okay. Now, let me stop there for just a minute.

That's lecture number nine. Slavery in the churches. Anything at all about slavery and the churches.

People, denominations, and the events themselves. We're going to see, we're going to relive this in our first field trip because we're going to go to the African-American historical area. We're going to do the African-American trail.

We're going to see abolitionists, and we're going to see underground. We're going to see the Underground Railroad homes and churches that were part of the Underground Railroad. So, we're going to see this a lot in the first field trip.

What made churches theologically choose to allow slaves? Right. The basic reason for that was they opened the New Testament, and they didn't find an outright abolition of slavery in the New Testament. We, they find Paul, they find, it's just, it's just recognized that Paul says, talks to the masters how they should treat slaves.

So, the slaves, how they should obey their masters, and so forth. So, they don't find an outright abolition in the New Testament. While the people, while the abolitionists said, if you read Paul carefully, you're going to see that he, that this is his ultimate, this is ultimate for Paul.

And so, so there's a difference in how they're interpreting the Bible. Right. Right.

That's a good point, and we're going to see this when we actually get to talk about the black church in America. But there were churches that were abolitionists. We're going to see the Charles Street Church.

It was an abolitionist church, but blacks had to sit up in the balcony. So, there, blacks could not sit on the main floor, and blacks could not purchase a pew in the church, and so forth. So, here's a church that is an abolitionist church, an anti-slavery church, but treated the blacks as second-class citizens.

So, a group of blacks left that church, and they formed their own church. And, but they didn't form it as a black church. They formed it as an integrated church.

First integrated church in America, and that's called Tremont Temple Baptist Church. So, Tremont Temple Baptist Church that you pass every day, if you walk the Freedom Trail anyways, and we'll walk by Freedom, Tremont Temple Baptist Church, but the first integrated church in America. So, just because a church was abolitionist didn't mean that it still held full equality.

So, that's got to come in the passage of time as well. Something else about slavery in the churches. Here, anything? No, bless your hearts, we're doing okay.

Okay, maybe I'll give you a little break, just a little five-second break here on Wednesday, and then, and the churches. And I'm going to talk first about religious allegiance, and then, we're going to talk about interpretations of the war. So, religious allegiance.

So, okay, what about religious allegiance? Oh, let me get my next, be right with you here. I'll be right with you. Okay, civil war in the church, okay.

Okay, what about religious allegiance here? Generally, religious allegiance was dependent on geography. So, when you, when the, when the Civil War starts to warm up, the Civil War, remember, is 1861 to 1865. So, when the Civil War started to warm up, ministers in the North encouraged young men to fight for the freedom of the slaves.

You get ministers in the South encouraging young men to defend, really, a political agenda, not only an agenda of the allowance to own slaves. But, you get ministers, people, it's, Kiki asked the question, but people who open the gospel, read the gospel, read the Bible, and you get ministers in both north and south believing that they've got a biblical justification for the gospel that they're preaching from the pulpits, either to be anti-slavery or to hold slaves. No doubt about that.

So, so it gets, it gets pretty sticky here. So, okay, now, in terms of religious allegiance, both sides, north and south, both sides pray for and sing about victory. No doubt about that.

So, here's a prayer from the South during that time. I'll just mention the first two lines of the prayer. So, here's a prayer from the south.

Lay thou their legions low, roll back the ruthless foe, and let the proud spoiler know God's on our side. So, that's a prayer from the south. So, a pretty strong prayer from the south, you know.

So, who are those spoilers? They're the northern troops. So, lay thou their legions low, roll back the ruthless foe, and let the proud spoiler know God's on our side. But there are also people in the north who were praying and singing the opposite, and the most famous, of course, is Julia Ward Howe, and she wrote a song.

I have no idea what it means, but it's the Battle Hymn of the Republic. So, you'd be familiar with Julia Ward Howe, the Battle Hymn, the Battle Hymn of the Republic. Basically, the Battle Hymn of the Republic, of course, was a song about God taking the northern cause.

I confess, so, Battle Hymn of the Republic, but it's hard to sing the Battle Hymn of the Republic. I have no idea what this means. One of the verses says, just listen to this. This is Romanticism gone mad.

It says, in the beauty of the You know this verse, right? Christ was born across the sea with glory in his bosom; I don't know what that means, that transfigures you and me. As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free. Our God, our God is marching on.

So that's, boy, that is, when you figure out what all that means, let me know. The beauty of the lilies, Christ was born, glory in his bosom, transfigures you and me, and so forth. So, I don't know what that means.

But anyway, both sides did pray for victory, so there is no doubt about that. Now, after the war, there was a very difficult time of reconciliation between the North and the South, after the war. So, after the war, it was a tough time of reconciliation between North and South.

And why was there a hard time between the North and the South? That's because the North looked upon the South as a place of needed evangelization. The North viewed the South as a place for evangelism because there were all these pagans in the South who believed in the wrong things. And so, what we've got to do is evangelize these people.

What we've got to do is make these people really Christians here, no doubt about that. So, they need evangelization. And also, because the slaves are now free, the slaves need to be evangelized as well.

So, the North looked to the South as a place of evangelization, and the South really took exception to that. On the other hand, the South really took exception to the Northern kind of federalist cause. The South looked upon the North as trying to take away states' rights, trying to have this kind of federalist cause, and trying to take away our states' rights over our freedom to own slaves.

So, the South not only, in a sense, hated the North for winning the war, but the South hated the North for not allowing states' rights in the South to do what the South felt was proper to do. So, there was a really difficult time of reconciliation, no doubt about that. So, the religious affiliation of the North and South is pretty important.

Now, in all of this religious allegiance, what happens to the black church and black Christians is very important. So, because it is so important, we're going to put that into another lecture. We're not going to deal with that now, but we'll see in another lecture what happens to black Christians in the midst of all of this.

Okay, now, if you're looking at the interpretations of the war, that's what we need to get to 1, 2, and 3. How should we interpret the Civil War? How should the Civil War be interpreted? Okay, well, first of all, how did the South interpret the war? The South interpreted the war as malicious interference by the North. That's how the South understood the war. The Northerners are maliciously interfering with our rights, and they're using violence to do that, and so we have a right to defend ourselves.

In the meantime, what we're praying for in the South is divine retribution. So, what we're hoping for is divine retribution. We're hoping that God will get those people and shape them up for their wrongs because they are infringing on our rights.

So, that's kind of the Southern interpretation of the war. That's kind of how Southerners understood the war. The Northern interpretation of the war, of course, was different.

The Northern interpretation was that the war was caused by plotting political renegades in the South. That there never would have been a war if those plotting political people in the South hadn't started this thing. What we're trying to do is preserve the freedom and dignity of all people.

So, what the North, the North, was concerned about, God won the war for the North. This was divine retribution for the North. So, we won, and we won because God was on our side.

So, the Northern understanding was really, really quite different. So, oh, and along with that, the South is being punished for its sins. That's what God is doing with his divine retribution.

He's punishing these people for their sins. If they had not been such sinners and rebelling against God, they wouldn't be punished, but they are now punished. God is a God of judgment, and so his judgment comes upon them.

That's the Northern interpretation. Now, let's get to number three, which is the most important. Number three is the most important.

Okay, number three is a much more sophisticated interpretation of the war. You find that interpretation of the war with people like Abraham Lincoln. So, Abraham Lincoln tried to manage, of course, this whole thing, but Abraham Lincoln had a much more sophisticated, much more nuanced understanding of what went on in the Civil War.

Okay. In order to understand this more sophisticated, more profound kind of understanding of the war, there are three statements that need to be made here. So, here's someone like Abraham Lincoln trying to give a much more profound understanding of the war.

Three statements that need to be made. Statement number one: everybody should have a little less confidence that they know the purposes of God. Everybody should be a little less confident that they are absolutely sure that they know the purposes of God.

Maybe the purposes of God are more hidden than people are going to allow for. Maybe they're not; maybe the purposes of God are not quite as open as everybody allows for. So, everybody, North and South, should be a little less confident about the purposes of God.

That's principle number one. Okay. Principle number two is everybody should be aware of ambiguity in historical processes.

History is messy. There's a lot of ambiguity in historical processes. History is not as neat as everybody tries to make it out to be.

So, that's number two. Remember the ambiguity. Remember the messiness of history.

Remember how, remember the world of which we're living. It's a very, very messy world. So, let's all admit that.

Okay. Number three, everybody should be less assured of their, of the, of the moral purity of their side. Everybody should be, should question the moral purity of their side of the story.

They shouldn't be quiet, and they shouldn't be so assured of the moral purity of their side of the story. Okay. So, there are three principles.

Less confident in knowing God's purposes. Recognition that history is very, very messy. And also, don't be so sure that you know that you have the moral purity that you think you have.

Okay. Given those three things, then, the Civil War could be a meaningful experience for everybody. If everybody took those three principles seriously, the result would be that the Civil War could be a meaningful experience.

We could look back at the Civil War, which could have been a meaningful experience for the American people as a whole. Not North or South, but for the American people as a whole, there could be a meaningful experience here. And what should we learn as the American, that's what Abraham Lincoln, of course, wanted the people to do.

What are we as a people? What are we able to learn from what we have this devastating? Remember, we need to remember how awful the Civil War was. Tens of thousands of people would be slaughtered in a day, and so, it was just awful. Is there something to be learned from this? And Abraham Lincoln, for one, said, yes, there is something to be learned from this, so.

Now, what some ministers wanted Americans to do is to repent of their own sins, recognize their own sins, and seek reconciliation with their brothers and sisters. So some ministers who believed in the more sophisticated analysis of people, like Abraham Lincoln, said, okay, the message I'm going to start preaching is this. We need to recognize my own, I need to recognize my own sin.

Where have I sinned against my brother or sister? Confession of sin, and then seek reconciliation afterward. Seek reconciliation with my brothers and sisters who didn't see things quite the same way I did. So, a lot of ministers started to preach that sermon of penitence and reconciliation.

Okay, here's a quotation from Askew and Perard; those are the pages for it, but they say it so well, so I'm going to just go along with our textbook on this one. The war was a divine act of judgment for the collective guilt of the American people. The conflict was a sacrificial and cleansing tragedy with the potential for not only preserving the nation but regenerating it as well.

So, I like that; that's a good summary statement of interpreting the war in this way. So, it's a divine act of judgment for the collective guilt, sacrificial cleansing tragedy, and potential for not only preserving the nation but regenerating the nation, bringing it to life again. So that's a good quotation, Askew and Perard, pages 114 to 115.

Okay, so that's the Civil War in the churches. I don't deal with this very much, but are there any questions about that? We, that, that third position, that moderate position, and with some of the principles that were used to bring that moderate

position, that's, we tried to come out of the Civil War with some understanding of how, how can this help us as a nation, how can it help us as a people. It's not a bad thing to do when you're talking about civil strife in the world to look at those three principles. It's not a bad way to go to look at those kinds of principles.

Is anything there at all? Okay, we're going to journey on to page 15 of the syllabus, page 15 of the syllabus. I'm, I'm, we're using our time well here because there's, well, we'll see when we deal with calendar stuff on, on, yep, the next, the next time we meet on Friday. This is lecture number 11, The Black Church in America.

Lecture 11, The Black Church in America. Okay, okay, first of all, we're going to deal with Methodism and see what happens with the Methodists. And okay, let me just, I've got some names here I'm going to be giving you, and then I've got some churches I'm going to be giving you, so here we are.

Okay, The Black Church in America. Among the Methodists, the first black church in America was formed in Philadelphia, and the church's name was the African Methodist Episcopal Church. So, this is the first black church among the Methodists.

1814, the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Now, notice they've kept the title Episcopal because they came out of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but this is the African Methodist Episcopal Church formed in 1814 in Philadelphia. Okay, now what had happened was, unfortunately, we say, in Philadelphia, this is a northern city, but in Philadelphia, kind of comes back to the question that was asked earlier; in Philadelphia, there was tremendous friction between blacks and whites, Methodist blacks and whites in Philadelphia.

And so that's kind of a sad story that Methodists would have such, such friction between them after, you know, during this time, and some of it was over the issue of slavery, some of it was racially motivated, and so forth. So, there's a group of people who decided we're going to form, a group of blacks who decided we're going to form our own church, and we're going to call it the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Okay, a very important person has chosen to form the church, be the leader of the church, and be the first bishop of the church.

Here he is on the left-hand side; this is Richard Allen, one of the most important men in American Christianity. So if I, you know, someone asked me to give a list of the 10 or 12 most important people, he'd have to be on my list somewhere, Richard Allen. Okay, so Richard Allen is very, very critical here.

So, okay, now with Richard Allen, he actually is the person who founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church and became its first bishop. But he had previously; he had previously begun a church for Methodists, black Methodists called Bethel

Church. So, he had formed a, not a denomination, but he had formed a church in Philadelphia that he called the Bethel Church, and it was for black Methodists.

But it wasn't a denomination; it was just a separate, it was Methodist Episcopal Church, but it was for black Methodists. So, he had already had an experience of black Methodists coming together for church worship with the Bethel Church, which was really very important. So, okay, now when he founds this church, when he begins this church, who do you, and he's, he becomes a bishop in the church, the first bishop of the, of this church, who do you suppose ordained him? Anybody wants to take, and this ordination was very important because it shows that leadership is on the, you know, on the side of the black Methodists who are trying to form themselves into his own denomination.

So, who ordained him to the ministry? Just take one quick guess before we go. Francis Asbury. Francis Asbury was the person who ordained Richard Allen.

That is a very important act, and Asbury is showing the importance of this black church and black denomination; this is the importance of this black leader. So this is absolutely critical. So, the African Methodist Episcopal Church is formed.

So now, just a couple of numbers here. 1860, 1860, about 22,000 members. 1860.

Okay, so that's not too bad. It was formed in 1814. So, 1860, 22,000 members.

Okay, 1896, so about 1900, it has almost 500,000 members. So, 1860, 22,000. 1896, almost 1900, it's got almost 500,000 members.

So, the African Methodist Episcopal Church really grew, really developed. This is a picture, by the way, of the original church in Philadelphia. Yeah.

Oh, it's a denomination now, so it's a lot of churches. Yeah, it's a denomination, it's spreading, it's got missionary work, and so forth. Actually, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, this church, this denomination, this church was the first to develop the first black magazine in America, and it also developed the first university for blacks in America.

So, it really was kind of on the move here. So, Richard Allen and the African Methodist Episcopal Church are very, very important. That's how Methodism gets started here.

Okay, have a good day. Oh, Rachel, come on up. Do you have a quick question? Oh, it was a church like the Bethel Church.

It became a denomination in 1814, and it took on the title of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. I was just trying to make the point that previous to that, he had the Bethel Church in Philadelphia, which wasn't a new denomination. It was just his local church for black Methodists.

But now we've got a denomination after 1814. Okay, have a good day. We'll see you on Friday.

This is Dr. Roger Green in his teaching on American Christianity. This is session 13, Slavery and the Churches, Civil War.