

Dr. Roger Green, American Christianity, Session 24, The Rise of Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism

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This is Dr. Roger Green in his teaching on American Christianity. This is session 24, The Rise of Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism.

We're starting a new lecture here, and I'm on page 16 of your syllabus. Just a word about where we are going with this. This is lecture number 17, The Rise of Fundamentalism in the Modern Evangelical Movement.

So, we've put aside lots of time to talk about this material. Just a word about when we get down to dispensational premillennialism: I've asked my friend Dr. Ted Hildebrandt to talk a bit about that because he knows a lot more about that than I do, and for reasons which you'll see when he talks about that. And then he'll have time for questions from you about what's called dispensational premillennialism.

It's not likely we're going to get to that today. We may, but I don't think we will. We'll see how we do.

So, you can see A, fundamentalism, right on your outline here, and number one, background. Now, background: if I ever taught this course again in my lifetime, which I may not, but if I ever did, I probably need to break the background up a bit because there is a long lot of material on this background stuff. So, before we get into the three movements and then the other groups and then the results, we go down into evangelicalism.

So, if you'll kind of bear with me, we'll talk about this background material here. Okay. The first thing we want to kind of remind ourselves is the end of the Civil War in 1865, and World War I began in 1914.

Okay, that period, in that period of time, there really was a revival emphasis in Protestantism. Protestantism was coming alive again and largely, as you already know, but largely through the ministry of Dwight L. Moody. And remember that Dwight L. Moody kind of stood on the shoulders of Charles Grandison Finney.

So, you had the Finneyite revivals. And then after Finney goes to be with the Lord, then you had the Moodyite revivals coming in. So, between the Civil War and the First World War, we have this kind of wonderful Protestant revivalism coming.

You remember that Moody was remembered for a lot of things, but he was remembered for his organizational abilities. That's why you have a Moody Bible Institute today. He had tremendous organizational abilities.

He's remembered for his pulpit ministry, which was very kind of down home, very different from Finney. As we mentioned, Finney argued like a lawyer. Moody didn't.

Moody was more down home telling the great stories and so forth. And he's remembered for his supporting missions. Moody is remembered for a lot of things, but those three things helped to bring a new lease on life to Protestantism through Moody.

Another thing in terms of background, there is a however to that. However, at the very same time that we see this kind of revival going on and this renewal of Protestantism, there is a real intellectual challenge to Christianity. Christianity is being seriously challenged by the broader culture, and it's being challenged in a lot of ways, but I'll mention four of these kinds of intellectual challenges to Christianity.

The first three we've already seen. The first one, of course, would be scientific thought. There's a challenge from the scientific community regarding the teachings of Christianity, scientific methods, and so forth.

Number two, there's a challenge of historical thought, and the historicity of Jesus is being called into question. The historicity of the beginning of the church is being called into question. The historicity of the gospels is being called into question.

So, there's a kind of historical thought that is really challenging, intellectually challenging, the church. Number three, of course, is biblical criticism is now pretty well entrenched in or getting entrenched into a lot of seminaries and, therefore, into pulpits. So biblical criticism is rising up here.

Number four, the fourth challenge, is both intellectual and denominational. It is a mixture of this fourth challenge and the challenge of the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church is becoming very strong in America.

It is growing in numbers in America. During the second half of the 19th century, it proclaimed some doctrines that the Protestants found confusing and didn't know how to respond to. However, the two doctrines that were proclaimed at this time were the doctrine of the immaculate conception of Mary.

So, the Roman Catholic Church pronounced that Mary was immaculately conceived. When she was conceived in the womb of her mother, she was kept from her original sin and then lived a sinless life. So, the doctrine of the immaculate conception of Mary now has nothing to do, by the way, with the virgin birth.

So, if you're Protestant, sometimes there's confusion about this within the Protestant language. I've heard people lecturing on the virgin birth, and they've used the terms immaculate conception and virgin birth as though they were synonyms, and they're not. This is the immaculate conception of Mary.

This has nothing to do with the virgin birth. This is Mary being preserved from original sin at the moment of her conception. So, the Catholic Church pronounces that as doctrine.

Protestants found that challenging biblically and intellectually. The second doctrine was the infallibility of the Pope, which was pronounced as a result of the First Vatican Council. And the Pope is infallible.

So, the church said the Pope is infallible when he speaks from his chair on matters of doctrine. So, it's not that the Pope can't make mistakes. The Pope might call today, Thursday, when it's Wednesday.

Well, that's a mistake. But when the Pope speaks from his chair on doctrinal matters, he speaks infallibly. He speaks without error.

And the Protestants found that kind of hard to take. They just didn't see how that could be. So, there are those four challenges.

But the last one is kind of a new challenge, in a sense, to the Protestant hegemony. It is the challenge of the Roman Catholic Church and growing in numbers, of course. What happens as a result of these kinds of challenges is that the Protestants begin to firm up their doctrine of the Bible.

Especially the infallibility, not of the Pope, but of the biblical word and the inerrancy of the biblical word. So, Protestants started to really shape up the whole nature of the authority of scripture against increasing biblical criticism and against an increasing Roman Catholic understanding of shaping doctrine from tradition as well as from the Bible. So, these Protestants made a tremendous move here.

And what they do that kind of emphasizes this is that they begin to create summer Bible conferences. We mentioned this when we lectured on Moody. The summer Bible conferences become very, very important.

Moody's Bible conferences were held at Northfield, Northfield, Massachusetts, his own home. But there were lots of other Bible conferences around the country. Now, there was a conference in Niagara Falls in 1895.

And that 1895 conference became a pretty critical conference in the history of fundamentalism. It was during that conference that the Bible was taken seriously, obviously, and the Bible was infallible, inerrant, and so forth. But during that conference, five points were established, and they became known as the five points of fundamentalism or the five defensible doctrines of fundamentalism.

And so, the word fundamentalism is starting to get into usage. We'll see how it came into usage later on. But it's starting to come into usage.

So, they go to Niagara Falls, and they have that Niagara conference. And we'll see, oops, no, sorry. We'll come back there later.

Okay, summer Bible conferences. Following the summer Bible conferences, there finally was a journal that began in 1915, and it was called *The Fundamentals*. So between the Bible conferences and then finally starting a journal called *The Fundamentals*, that's where the word comes into a kind of more common usage, the word fundamentalism.

Okay, here are the five points of fundamentalism at the Niagara conference, other Bible conferences, and also the *Journal of Fundamentals*. Number one is the inerrancy of the scriptures. God bless you.

The inerrancy of the scriptures. And the inerrancy of the scriptures means that the Bible is without error in what it teaches. There were some fundamentalists, but not all.

I happen to hear one speak. This was many, many, many years ago now. But there were some fundamentalists who taught a dictation theory of the Bible, that God actually, God spoke to the writer, and as God spoke to the writer, the writer wrote down exactly what God was speaking, so known as the dictation theory.

Now, the inerrancy, the doctrine of the inerrancy of the Bible, didn't have to include an absolutely strict dictation theory, but that the Bible has been preserved to be without error, even though human agency is being used to write down the scriptures. So, the inerrancy of the Bible becomes very, very important. Number two is the virgin birth of Jesus.

Because, of course, in higher biblical criticism, the virgin birth of Jesus is denied. And in classical Protestant liberalism, Jesus is a good man, born of Mary and Joseph. He's a good model.

We should follow his example. The virgin birth of Jesus, however, is reaffirmed by the fundamentalists because the Bible teaches the virgin birth of Jesus. And even in passages that don't actually teach the virgin birth, it assumes the virgin birth.

So, the virgin birth of Jesus becomes doctrine number two. Number three is a supernatural atonement. When the fundamentalists were talking about the doctrine of atonement, they tended to focus on what we call substitutionary atonement.

And so, it's substitutionary atonement, pretty self-evident. Christ is my substitute. I'm a sinner.

I should die for my sins. I don't have to do that because Christ died for my sins on the cross. He took my sins upon him.

He died for my sins on the cross, and I am forgiven. It's called substitutionary atonement. Now, those of you who lived through BCM 308 or are living through it now in one form or another will know that atonement can be a broader doctrine than only this.

Atonement can include not just the death of Christ but the life and the ministry of Christ, the death of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, and so forth. But the fundamentalists tended to zero in right here on the substitutionary atonement. And I expect the reason for that is because the liberal critics weren't placing any emphasis on the cross of Christ.

Jesus died at the hands of some Romans, but that was a political act, and that's the end of that story. There was no meaning to the story beyond that. But fundamentalism said, yes, there is definitely a meaning to the story because Christ took our sins on himself as he died on the cross.

Number four, of course, is the physical resurrection of Jesus from the dead. So, they did not; the fundamentalists were reacting against a belief that the resurrection of Jesus didn't actually physically rise from the dead. The disciples received an Easter faith after the life and ministry and the death of Christ.

They received an Easter faith. They came alive to the ministry that God was giving them to proclaim the good news of the gospel. And so there was no physical resurrection of Jesus.

There was only an Easter faith. Well, the fundamentalists respond to that by saying, no, there was a physical resurrection of Jesus from the dead. So that became the fourth.

And of course, the fifth became the authenticity of the gospel narratives. The gospel narratives are authentic in what they teach and what they believe. So, there's no; the biblical criticism had pretty much, pretty much done in the authenticity of the

gospels because the gospels were written so much later; they couldn't possibly be reflecting the life and ministry of Jesus in any accurate kind of way.

So, the authenticity of the gospel narrative is very, very important. Okay. Now, those are the five doctrines that they defended.

Those became known as the fundamentals of the faith. And that becomes worth it. This is a system that becomes worth defending, propagating, preaching about, and so forth. Now, there were also some kind of tenets by which they lived, by which fundamentalists lived.

Some kind of emphases, maybe you might say, by which they lived out their doctrines. So, let me mention some of these tenets that kind of describe what these people believed in. So, okay.

Number one of the tenets would be belief systems or, let me think of another word, characteristics. Maybe that'd be a better word. The characteristics of fundamentalists who believe these five things were committed to this are their characteristics.

So, number one, they were very evangelistic and had a really intense focus on evangelism. And that, to the fundamentalists, is the priority of the church. That is the basic ministry of the church: to win the whole world for Jesus.

And so, they were committed to that, to evangelism, no doubt about that, as a movement. So, in other words, get these doctrines out to whosoever. Get this message out to the whosoever.

That's very important. A second thing that they would begin to really emphasize is the work of the Holy Spirit. Salvation begins at the moment of justification, but the Holy Spirit is at work in the life of the believer.

Now Finney taught that Moody taught that, and so forth, so we're not surprised by that. But God, the Holy Spirit, works in the life of the believer so the believer can live a holy life, so the believer can live a life pleasing unto God. So, in various shapes and forms, these people will emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit.

Another thing that they talked about, and we're going to talk a lot about this, but they really believed in the second coming of Christ. They preached about the second coming of Christ. They taught about the second coming of Christ.

And many of them believed it was imminent. The second coming of Christ is about to happen. It is upon us.

And so, the imminent return of Christ and that kind of message became very characteristic of the fundamentalists and what they were teaching. Now, eventually, this evolved into a movement called dispensational premillennialism. That spelling is on your syllabus, but we don't have to worry about that right now.

But eventually, this evolved into a pretty strong movement called dispensational premillennialism, and what is all that about? But the fundamentalists, many of them in a sense, were standing on tiptoes because they expected the second coming of Christ to take place imminently, right away, as soon as possible. They felt that all of the signs that the Bible talked about in terms of the second coming were coming to fulfillment in their day and in their age.

Okay. Number four, for me, in terms of a characteristic that goes along with these five things, is the absolute defense of the biblical Bible. The Bible is authoritative.

It can be defended. That is a characteristic of fundamentalists. The question is, did they defend it beyond what they needed to do? Well, we'll talk about that later.

Maybe they did at times, but that becomes pretty characteristic of these fundamentalists. Okay. Now, the question is, how did all of this take place? How did all of these doctrines take place? How were all these doctrines and all this work supported? Well, let me just skip over here.

It was supported institutionally in a number of ways. The movement called fundamentalism was supported institutionally in a lot of different ways. And that gave it really, really life and real meaning.

Let me come down for just a minute. Yeah. Okay.

So, I should have done this better. Okay. The first way it is supported is through Bible schools, colleges, and seminaries.

So, there would arise on the scene a lot of Bible schools, a lot of colleges, and a lot of seminaries that would support the movement called fundamentalism. Now, I've got that on another screen. So, just bear with me.

You can do this. So, okay. For example, some of you have recently seen Moody Bible Institute.

Well, 1886. As we've mentioned before in class, I have a great respect for Moody Bible Institute because what they do, they do exceedingly well. And they're not trying to be something that they weren't called to be.

But Moody founded this Bible Institute to teach and preach the scriptures for evangelistic purposes, and so forth. Another one you might be familiar with is the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, now known as Biola, of course. And Biola began pretty much as a Bible training school.

There was a time in Biola's history. I'm not sure if that's true today, so I have to confess. And you don't need to look it up while I'm lecturing.

But there was a time in Biola's history when every student was a Bible major, as well as another major. But whether that's true today or not. Do you know about that? Okay.

A Bible minor. Everyone's a Bible minor, no matter what. Right.

This, of course, should be true at Gordon College, which we all know. But you should all be Bible minors, theology minors, and then take whatever major you're taking. Or you should all be Bible majors and just leave it at that.

That's a good thing. So, the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Biola. Very important.

1907. Notice the date. Philadelphia College of the Bible was founded in 1914.

Now, we're going to talk later about Philadelphia College of the Bible, dispensational premillennialism, Schofield, and so forth. So this was a very important fundamentalist institution, right, in downtown Philadelphia, if any of you are from the Philadelphia area. It has since moved out of Philadelphia.

And it does have another name, which I can't think of right now. But yeah. Give it to me once more.

K-A-R. Okay. Right.

Yeah. K-A-R-I-N. Okay.

And they've moved out of Philadelphia. They're in the suburbs somewhere now, aren't they? I'm not sure. We'll check on that on our computers.

After class, we'll check on our computers, and we'll see. We'll look up, Karen, our computers. Could it be a C? We can look this up after class.

We will check on the spelling after class. Okay. Fourth.

I hope that you know this. Boston Missionary Training Institute, 1889. So I hope that you know this.

This is Gordon College. Bless your hearts, of course. This is how he trained in the basement of the Clarendon Street Church.

It was founded to train people to do what? Thank you. Okay. Boston Missionary Training School.

Now, I hope that you will know this one. If you don't, I'm here to educate you. So that's my job.

So, I hope you know this. Providence Bible Institute was founded in 1900. Now, the Providence Bible Institute has evolved into Barrington College.

Thank you very much. And Barrington College merged with Gordon College in what year? 1985. What is the official name of this institution? The official name, the legal name.

The United College of Gordon and Barrington. That's the official legal name of the institution from which you're going to get a degree someday. But in order to get that degree, you need to know Providence Bible Institute.

Very important. And then I'm just going to mention this now, 1947. This we'll talk about much later.

But probably the most important seminary or one of the most important seminaries that was founded during the time of fundamentalism evangelicalism would be Fuller Theological Seminary, founded in 1947. Now, that wasn't founded as a fundamentalist institution. That was founded as an evangelical institution.

But we'll see the reasons for that. But you do want to take note of Fuller Theological Seminary. That is really important.

So now let me go back to my previous. Okay. Oh, no, sorry.

No, forget all that. Don't even worry about that. Let me go right back here.

Okay. So, the first things that supported the whole enterprise were Bible schools, colleges, and seminaries. So that becomes very important.

The second thing we've already mentioned, so we won't talk about that, is summer Bible conferences all over the country. Mostly, these were prophetic conferences. You study the prophecies of the Bible, and you try to see how they come to fulfillment in the days in which you lived.

So, summer Bible conferences like the ones that Moody held. Thirdly, very, very interesting and absolutely pretty critical here, the use of the media. Radio broadcasting.

Now, I know that none of you are going to, except Ted and I, none of you are going to know what radio broadcasting is all about because you live in a different world. So let me tell you what radio broadcasting is because you don't even know what it is, but radio broadcasting. I'm reaching back to my own youth now because when I grew up, there was a big radio in the living room, and what you did was what you did.

You sat around the radio. There was no such thing as television. So, you sat around the radio, and you heard religious broadcasting going on.

Now, very interesting, the fundamental, many, many, many fundamentalist preachers knew that radio broadcasting was the way to get the message out. And so, the broadcasting of the fundamentalist preachers had much larger audiences than the broadcasting of entertainment broadcasting, which was also part of it. But you have to take pictures because this is not ancient history for you.

This is like going back into the dark ages. This is like living in a cave. We didn't live in caves, but we did listen to the radio.

And now, eventually, a thing called television was invented. And I remember when we got our first television, I was maybe about eight years old, 10 years old, when we first got our first television, because when you got your television, the television only, why am I doing this? Anyway, so television, I'm reliving my past. But when you got your television, you turned on your television; there was only programming for maybe half an hour, an hour a day or so.

So, you looked at the screen, and there was nothing on the screen except the logo. Then, at 15 minutes, a news program would come on, followed by the logo, and then another 15 minutes. But there wasn't much there.

Then, as television progressed, you started to, of course, all this was black and white, and all this was massive television. So, there wasn't much there. But even in those early days, you started to get some preachers seeing boys; broadcasting is the way to reach the masses.

And so, the use of the media, boy, the fundamentalists and then the evangelicals, they figured this out pretty quickly. And they were pretty popular in the media. So, this is another thing that helped to form.

Now, there were fundamentalists, by the way, because Satan is called the prince of the air. There were fundamentalists who refused to go on the radio because the airwaves were controlled by Satan. And so, because the airwaves are controlled by Satan, it's wrong to go on the radio and so forth.

So, Wi-Fi, Wi-Fi. Thank you very much. Yes, Wi-Fi.

Yeah. Okay. We're talking about the dark ages here.

No such thing as a computer. Some of us in this room may remember typewriters. Do you know what a typewriter is? Probably not.

And I remember the first time I got my first electric typewriter. What a day that was. I mean, that was the greatest day of my life.

An electric typewriter that you don't have to just, you know, you do. Actually, it was in graduate school. I got my first electric typewriter.

Publishing has become very important for these people. And getting the word out in all kinds of publications, religious tracts, Bibles, and magazines. So, getting the word out and publishing becomes pretty critical.

Foreign missions become very important for these people. We began as a missionary training institute. So, foreign missions become pretty critical.

Eventually, they would develop parachurch networks that reach out to college, high school students, college students, and so forth. The parachurch networks would be supported by very wealthy business people. And they evolved into things like InterVarsity, Campus Crusade for Christ, and so forth.

But the parachurch networks were important. So, what happened with fundamentalism is that it was well supported. There was a real foundation upon which American fundamentalism was built.

It just wasn't built out of sand, you know. And these kinds of institute structures and so forth were part of the fundamentalist machinery in a sense. So that becomes really, really important.

Okay. Now, this is a good time to stop for just a minute here in terms of this background material. Is there anything here in the background material? The theology, the networking, the stuff that supported the foundational material? Is anything here in the background? We've got a couple of people we're going to talk about in the background.

And then we're going to move to the Scopes Trial and see if we have time for the Scopes Trial. Is anything in the background? Yeah. That was 1895.

Right. Yeah. Then, the other big one at the time was a Northfield conference that Moody started.

And then they began to go to other places. Something else? Yeah. Oh, yeah.

He's remembered for three things. He's remembered for his organizational abilities. He was a great organizer of his revivals.

He then organized the Moody Bible Institute in the Moody Church. Secondly, he was remembered for his pulpit ministry. Different from Finney.

Finney was the lawyer arguing the case. Moody was the homespun kind of teller of stories. Thirdly, he was a supporter of foreign missions.

So, a missionary zeal, and so forth. Does that help? Okay. Something else here? Okay.

We're still on the background. So, if you have left the background, you're in the wrong place in the syllabus. So we're still there.

Now, there are many people who have helped support fundamentalism. And I'm going to mention two of them. Now, here are some names; by the way, I'll keep coming back to this because here are some names we'll come to as we work through this lecture.

But I'm going to mention two people who were important in shaping fundamentalism. Now, it would be wrong of me to teach American Christianity at Gordon College without talking about Adoniram, Judson, and Gordon. Who would ever think of doing that? Well, I would never think of doing that myself.

He certainly was one of the shapers of American fundamentalism and the movement that evolved into evangelicalism. There are the dates of A.J. Gordon. There's a picture of A.J. Gordon you're familiar with.

When I lecture on Gordon, there are five things that I mention about him that are pretty important. First of all, he believed in historic premillennialism. Now, we haven't talked about dispensational premillennialism yet.

But just to say, historic premillennialism is a belief that the world is getting worse and worse. The church is becoming apostate. And Christ is coming back again someday.

I mean, the sooner, the better, in a sense. But this is historic premillennialism, which means that it wasn't as tightly structured as dispensational premillennialism. It saw premillennialism through the lenses of history and so forth.

So, we'll talk about that more. So, we don't need to worry about that now. But he wouldn't be defined as a dispensational premillennialist.

He'd be defined as a historic premillennialist. Number two for him was holiness. He believed in holiness, not quite in the same way that Wesley did, but he believed in the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

So, the work of God did not stop when you were justified by faith. It continued through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. He had very considerable views on worship, what worship should be all about, and how people should worship.

So, he was pretty strong on that. He did believe in healing ministry. So he didn't think that healing stopped with the early church.

He did pray for people's healing and so forth. And, of course, he believed in what we would call theological ethics. How does all this theology translate into the ethical life of the believer and of the church? Now, when you look at these five things for Adenauer and Judson Gordon, let me just say that you'll understand this more when we get into some illustrations later on in other days that follow.

But when you look at these five things, let me say that A.J. Gordon was a fundamentalist, but he wasn't a fighting fundamentalist. There were fundamentalists who were fighting fundamentalists. There were fundamentalists who were out there ready to do battle with anyone who didn't agree with them on every single point.

A.J. Gordon wasn't like that. By every account that we know about A.J. Gordon, we see that he was a very ironic person, a very graceful person toward people, and so forth. And he really focused on the work that God gave him to do.

He didn't spend his time telling other denominations what they should be doing or telling other local churches how they should be doing it. He focused on the work that God gave him to do. So, he's a pretty remarkable person, A.J. Gordon, and the founding of your institution, Gordon College.

Let me also mention a fellow who was mentioned in the lecture. Was it last Thursday? Let me mention Francis Schaeffer and the importance of Francis Schaeffer in shaping and developing a fundamentalism that evolved and morphed into evangelicalism. The word, remember the speaker the other day kept referring to his place in Switzerland, Labrie, Switzerland. What Schaeffer did was a bit different from what A.J. Gordon did.

Schaeffer provided a refuge in Switzerland. He was a very clear fundamentalist, maybe slash evangelical thinker. He had a very broad knowledge of theology and philosophy and the history of philosophy, modern-day thinking, and so forth.

He had a very broad knowledge of those kinds of ideas. What happened is a lot of people went to Labrie, and a lot of Christians went to Labrie to help shape their faith. Because some of them went to Labrie with their faith, they were really in doubt.

And they needed someone who would be kind of their spokesman to help shape a Christian faith that really meant something in the 20th century. Schaeffer was also able to do that at Labrie. I've known many folks who went over to Labrie to study with Schaeffer.

And some of them will say their life was changed in this remarkable way. Now, the woman mentioned the other day, and for those of you at the lecture, the woman mentioned the other day Schaeffer also came over to America and had conferences and discussions and so forth here in America and was able to kind of defend Christianity against the onslaught of modernism in a sense. So Schaeffer becomes a very important figure because of his broad knowledge and because of his ability to speak theologically to the issues of the day, but also to speak theologically to other theologians and maybe agree with them or disagree with them or push back or whatever.

So, Francis Schaeffer was a pretty important person in the shaping of fundamentalism and then of evangelicalism. So, I do want to mention those two names. Okay, let me stop there for just a minute.

Anything about A.J. Gordon or anything about Francis Schaeffer? So, yeah. His dates, I'll go back to that just so we're accurate about that. And here it is, 1912-1984.

Francis Schaeffer received an honorary degree from Gordon College in 1971. So he spoke on campus occasionally. I'm not sure how often, but in 1971, we gave him an honorary degree.

So, Schaeffer was associated with Gordon College. Anything else while we stop for just a minute? I haven't given you your five seconds, so take your five seconds and take a crash. You're well rested.

Bless your heart. Okay, we're doing okay. We're still on the background.

We haven't left the background yet. Okay, all right. Let's go forward here.

Whoops. Okay, this leads us to a very important event that took place in 1925. All right, and H. Richard Niebuhr called this the center of the fundamentalist controversy, and it was the Scopes Trial.

Now, how many of you studied the Scopes Trial in other courses? What course, Matt? History course? Haley, what course was it for? History? Anybody else? Scopes Trial? So, for most of you, Youth Ministry, you mentioned it or talked about it a bit. Okay, so for some of you, though, this may be new: the Scopes Trial and what's going on here in the Scopes Trial. Okay, so let's set up the Scopes Trial and see why H. Richard Niebuhr called this the center of the fundamentalist controversy.

This was a very important event in American history, but also in American religious history. So, it wasn't just an important historical event; what happened in American Christianity was critical. Okay, it happens in Tennessee.

It happens in Dayton, Tennessee, and the legislature of the state of Tennessee, and here I'll quote, it made it unlawful to teach in any tax-supported school theory that denies the story of the divine creation of man as taught in the Bible and to teach instead that man has descended from the lower order of animals. So, in 1925, the Tennessee legislature said, virtually, if you're teaching in a tax-supported school, you cannot teach Darwinism. The only thing that you can teach in your science class is creation came about exactly as it's stated at the beginning of the book of Genesis.

So that was the law. Now, what happens is that a guy named Scopes, who actually wasn't really trained in this area anyway, but a guy named Scopes was teaching Darwinism, basically, in Dayton, Tennessee, and he and the issue were brought to trial in 1925. And we'll see what happens as a result of the trial.

Now, what happened is funny; it's a strange kind of phenomenon, but what happened is that William Jennings Bryan, there are his dates, and there's a picture of him. William Jennings Bryan became kind of the defender of that law. So as the Scopes trial, as Scopes is brought up for trial, or the issue is brought up for trial, he becomes a defender of that law, William Jennings Bryan.

Now, I don't know if you've heard about William Jennings Bryan before. William Jennings Bryan was a very, very important person in American public life. He had been a Secretary of State, and he had run for President of the United States.

This was no backwoods kind of person who ended up in Dayton, Tennessee, which is kind of in the backwoods, but this was no backwoods kind of person. This is a very important person in American public life, coming to Dayton, Tennessee, to try the case and defend the case. Now, the person on the other side who wanted to get the Scopes, who wanted to get the law demolished, was Clarence Darrow, and those are his dates, 1857-1938.

Clarence Darrow was one of the best-known lawyers in America. This was a person who was very famous, very well known. So, this also was not some kind of backwoods lawyer who decided to come to Dayton, Tennessee, to do this.

So, what happened is Bryan and Darrow showed up in Dayton, Tennessee, and the Scopes trial then went on in Dayton, Tennessee, in the summer of 25, and the Scopes trial became a national media trial. It becomes a major event in American life at that time. So, reporters, newspaper reporters, media people, and every radio person are there covering the trial, covering the Scopes trial.

So, it's really incredible. Okay, now, as the trial goes on, William Jennings Bryan could have received a lot of support from other religious groups. There were other religious groups, such as Lutheran groups, Roman Catholic groups, and more conservative mainline groups.

There were other religious groups that supported the cause of William Jennings Bryan and supported the cause of the law that was enacted by the state of Tennessee. Unfortunately, because these people weren't quite on the same theological page, their support was not well accepted because you're starting to get a mentality among some fundamentalists that if everybody doesn't cross the T and jot the I in the exact same way, then you can't have fellowship with them or you can't be supported by them. So, unfortunately, the support was not really accepted.

The other unfortunate thing that happened is that Bryan himself took the. Clarence Darrow questioned him, and the questioning did not go well. Now, have any of you seen *Inherit the Wind*? How many of you have seen *Inherit the Wind*? Probably in the same course, was it? *Inherit the Wind*. Anybody else? Well, there's a newer version of *Inherit the Wind*.

So, what you need to do this week when you have a couple of hours free, bless your hearts, free. Okay. Just go to the library, take out *Inherit the Wind*, and look at *Inherit the Wind*.

And it's all about the Scopes trial. And now there's an older version and a newer version of *Inherit the Wind*. But if it's not something you're able to do in the next few weeks, do it this summer.

So, it's really a very interesting film. It's all about this. Okay.

So, what's the result of the trial now? So, this goes on in the summer of 25. Everybody's dying of the heat, and they're all fanning themselves because it's terribly hot there in Dayton, Tennessee. And it's a media circus.

And so, but finally, the trial's over. What is the trial? What's the result of the trial? Okay. The result of the trial is a coin with two sides to it.

Fundamentalism, the movement of fundamentalism won. So let's talk about how they won. They won the trial because the Supreme Court of the state of Tennessee upheld the law that you cannot teach Darwinism in tax-supported schools.

So, fundamentalism won the case. They won the trial. So that's the first half of the coin.

And in 1927, the Supreme Court upheld the law. Okay. The other side of the coin is kind of the sadder side in a sense.

The other side of the coin is fundamentalism lost. Now, how did they lose? Fundamentalism is lost in the eyes of the public. The general public viewed fundamentalism as kind of out of step with the modern world.

So, the general public saw fundamentalism as a kind of Hicksville. And these people are Hicks and they teach stuff that nobody really believes. And they're not very intelligent people.

So, fundamentalism was lost in the eyes of the general public and even in the eyes of some conservative Christians who felt that fundamentalism was anti-intellectual. So fundamentalism is lost in that way in terms of people taking them seriously. Now, there's a funny thing about loss because many of the people who read the newspapers and heard the media on the radio and everything, many of the people felt that fundamentalism was lost.

And this is the last we're ever going to hear from these people. We'll never hear these groups of people who call themselves fundamentalists. We'll never hear from them again.

They're done in this trial and never heard from them again. They're off the scene.

Well, lo and behold, what these people didn't reckon with was that infrastructure of fundamentalism we talked about earlier. Because after this trial, even before, but also after the trial, that infrastructure is going to come into play and is going to build a very solid fundamentalism in American religious life. So, they were surprised by that because they thought this was the end of fundamentalism.

This is the funeral for fundamentalism. It was sad that only a few days after the trial, William Jennings Bryan himself died. See the date of his death, 1925.

So that was a sad thing about the trial that he died, and maybe as a result of the strain of the trial on him. But fundamentalism might have died, but fundamentalism did not die. Fundamentalism came alive, in fact, in ways that we'll see as we go on with the course.

So, when we start on Friday, we'll start with these three broad movements. So that's where we'll start. We'll start with dispensational premillennialism on Friday.

This is Dr. Roger Green in his teaching on American Christianity. This is session number 24, The Rise of Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism.