Dr. Roger Green, Reformation to the Present, Lecture 16, The Response to Liberalism

This is Dr. Roger Green in his Church History course, Reformation to the Present. This is session number 16, The Response to Liberalism.

Let's just remind ourselves where we were. I hope you had a good break. Here we are. Does it seem like the second half of the semester? It does seem the first half went pretty fast.

It did to me, anyway. But anyways, we are now seeing the pendulum swing back again, a little bit of a reaction to the evangelical strength of the 19th century, 18th, 19th century. We also talked about the three important evangelical resurgence movements.

Now we're getting a little bit of a pushback as it were on that. And we're talking about liberal theology. Now, I wouldn't have chosen to talk about liberal theology when we had a GE day, but that's the way it was.

So, so I hope they understood that I was just explaining liberal theology. I wasn't identifying it with Gordon College or anything, but I hope they understood that. Let's pray that that is the case.

So, we gave background, and then we gave some basic theological conclusions of liberalism. And the last thing we said, if I'm correct on this, the last thing we said was that, ironically, liberalism influenced both the right and the left of Christianity. It had an influence on the right in terms of Christian experience, and certainly, evangelism and revivalism, and Protestantism, maybe in general, accentuates the personal religious experience of Christ and the believer, and so forth.

Part of that influence was classical Protestant liberalism. Now, that's a connection that a lot of people would never make. Certainly, people in the evangelical tradition or in the more fundamentalist tradition would never think that part of the reason for their emphasis on experience comes from classical Protestant liberalism.

They would never make that connection. On the left, it made a connection with the social gospel movement through Rauschenbusch. And we talked about Schleiermacher, but we also mentioned Walter Rauschenbusch.

So, on the left, the social gospel movement, but we said, we're trying to note this carefully. The most recent biography of Rauschenbusch identifies Rauschenbusch as an evangelical because, historically, evangelicals have been concerned for the poor.

They are concerned for the outcasts, the helpless, the homeless, the marginalized, and certainly the social gospel movement.

And Walter Rauschenbusch himself was concerned about that. So we wouldn't say, when we say it influenced on the left, we wouldn't say that that's necessarily bad. It did have an influence on the left with its concern for the social aspect of the gospel.

But again, a lot of people don't make those connections between the social gospel and liberalism. So liberalism cuts both ways. Now, let's see the evaluation of liberalism, some strengths, and the evaluation of classical Protestant liberalism, some weaknesses.

So, let's look at the movement that was begun by Schleiermacher. And by the way, I also tried to emphasize how important Schleiermacher is. I hope I got that across to you.

He was a critical person because he kind of reshaped and rethought Protestant thinking, Protestant doctrine, and so forth, and placed emphasis on experience. So, I'm a pretty critical person. Okay, some basic... Oh, did we get... No, we didn't get to the basic theological conclusions.

We didn't get to B. I'm sorry. We didn't get to B, and then we do C and D. So let me get to B first, some basic theological conclusions of classical Protestant liberalism. So, okay.

First of all, classical Protestant liberalism was a form of idealism. It was a kind of belief that all reality is shaped by the divine mind. So, there was an idealistic kind of theological center for classical Protestant liberalism.

And because of this kind of idealism, classical Protestant liberalism saw a real continuity between the divine and the human rather than a break between the divine and the human. They see a continuity between the divine and the human. And this continuity between the divine and the human, they saw as a good thing.

Now, we're going to talk about some strengths and some weaknesses later on, but they see this as a good thing. Actually, some of the classical Protestant liberals following Schleiermacher and following people like Rauschenbusch said that because of the continuity between the divine and the human, we are speaking against the materialism of our age. We're speaking against the greed of our age, where human life revolves around the self rather than around an understanding of the self in relationship to the divine.

So, these people wanted to see this kind of continuity of the divine and the human rather than a break. So, we should also take note of the basic theological conclusion

of these people; they were very optimistic about the future. These people, and we're going to see some strengths and weaknesses in a minute, how this played out, but they were very optimistic about the future.

They thought of this world as ultimately a very rational world moved and motivated by divine concerns and a rational mind. Now, I'm just trying to figure out how things worked out theologically, starting with Schleiermacher. When we say a rational world, we're seeing it from the other side.

We're seeing it from a 21st-century perspective. We're trying to understand how this worked out with Schleiermacher into the 19th century and early 20th century. So they were very optimistic.

There's no doubt about that. So, they did tend to emphasize the imminence of God. God is imminent.

He is with us. He is here among us. Rather than emphasizing the transcendence of God, God is the holy other.

For the classical Protestant liberals, their emphasis was on God is here. Now, when they talk about God being here, God being among us, God being with us, they mean that in two ways. First of all, they meant that in terms of the natural world.

So, they saw God through God's creation, through the natural world, and so that's through nature. However, the second way was through society and the working of social groups. When society was working for the betterment of humankind, they saw that as a kind of the divine imminent God working through society to make better what he had created originally.

So, the imminence of God. God is breaking through in our world, in nature, breaking through in society, and so forth. Another thing that theological conclusion is that they placed a heavy emphasis upon the natural law of God, natural theology.

So natural theology is a kind of God working out his purposes through the natural world, through our life together, in a sense. They saw the natural law as a law to be followed, and they thought that that law was a very progressive law. We were going to be moving into a very good time.

There's kind of a good time coming, in a sense, for these people. So, they were very optimistic, again, about the future. So, another theological conclusion is that they did deny the doctrine of original sin.

They didn't see the doctrine of original sin. They were too rationalistic and too optimistic, and they were too optimistic about the relationship of God and

humankind to believe in any kind of original sin. They did believe in sinful actions, of course.

I mean, you couldn't just look around, and you're going to see sinful actions. But original sin, a sinful nature, which has moved all humanity, separated all humanity from God, they don't see that. They don't buy that.

So, original sin is kind of out for them. And then, finally, what becomes central for these people is ethics. The true kind of mark of any religion, Christianity included, is whether you are leading an ethical life. Are you leading a moral life? So, ethics become central.

Theology and doctrine have become peripheral, as far as these people are concerned. So, ethics becomes the kind of the heart of the matter and the matter by which you judge Christianity and all other religions. So, there is a very ethical mandate here.

So, there are those basic theological conclusions of liberalism, and these people are stating those pretty seriously in their books. People like Schleiermacher in his book on speeches to the culture despise religion. So now let's go on to where I thought we were.

So now I know where we are. C, evaluation of liberalism's strengths, and evaluation of liberalism's weaknesses. So, we'll deal with the strengths first.

Now, unfortunately, for classical Protestant liberalism, I have more weaknesses than strengths. I think there were some strengths in the movement, and there were certainly things we could learn from classical Protestant liberalism, but there were some weaknesses in the movement as well. Okay, first strength.

What do I learn when I read Schleiermacher? So, when I pick up Schleiermacher, what does he give to me? What does he contribute to my interest in theology? So the first strength is an openness to truth. I appreciate that from people like Schleiermacher. There's an openness to truth, and wanting to be faithful to truth, a commitment to truth, not being afraid of truth, wherever it comes from, whether it's scientific truth, philosophical truth, or mathematical truth, not to be afraid of it, but to embrace it because God is the author of all truth.

So classical Protestant liberalism, I think, is pretty good about that. I mean, starting with people like Schleiermacher. So, we should want to. That's one strength.

Another strength I see as a real strength is being willing to criticize from within. Classical Protestant liberalism was willing to be self-critical. Where are we right? Where are we wrong? Let's be critical from within.

Let's be open. Let's be honest. Let's be transparent here about what we believe to be true, and let's work on those things.

So, it is a kind of self-criticism, and that, to me, is a virtue to be self-critical. A third strength of classical Protestant liberalism, and this, I'll just keep Rauschenbusch's picture up here, but a third strength is a very committed social concern that the movement, in general, had, a concern for the poor, a concern for the outcast, a concern for the helpless, the homeless, the marginalized in life. And no one better exemplifies that than Walter Rauschenbusch and his movement, the social gospel movement.

But as I've said now, Walter Rauschenbusch is somewhat of an evangelical, too, though. So, Walter Rauschenbusch was not a person who threw out the personal aspects of the gospel, personal conversion, ministry of the Holy Spirit with the individual, and so forth. But he was very concerned for social construction after the manner of the kingdom of God. So, I appreciate that.

So, there were a lot of strengths of liberalism, but there are, I think, overwhelming weaknesses that really finally did in the movement. And you can't ignore those weaknesses.

And even today, among classical Protestant liberals, I think they have to face these weaknesses. So, okay. So let me take some time to do that.

But first of all, I would say classical Protestant liberalism, in general, now did not have a biblical view of God. I think that with their understanding of the relationship between the divine and the human, they brought God down to our level. So, they weren't able to embrace a biblical view of God.

And by that, I mean the sovereign Lord, the sustainer of the universe. He does operate by natural law, but he also operates according to the miraculous at times. So I don't think they had a good, solidly biblical view of God, a holistic biblical view of God.

They emphasized just the imminence of God. They forgot the transcendence of God, the greatness of God, the glory of God. He is worthy of our worship because of who he is, and so forth.

So that's the first thing. I think the biblical view of God is lacking in general. Now, I'm not talking about people like Rauschenbusch, but in general, among classical Protestant liberals, I would say that's true. Okay, number two, you won't be surprised by this, but they lacked a biblical view of Christ because, for them, Christ

becomes the model, the example, our moral example, our moral influencer, the ethical man.

Well, Christ was that, but he was also God. He was also God in the flesh. So, they emphasized his humanity, but they neglected his divinity.

And if you're going to be true Christologically, you have to embrace both. He was fully God and fully human, but fully human and fully God as well. So, pretty much just by their writings, by their actions, they deny that he was fully God because a lot of them believed he was born in Mary and Joseph.

He came into this world as a good moral man, a good ethical man, and it's his ethics only that we want to embrace, like the Sermon on the Mount, for example. So I would say there were some who still probably embraced him as fully God, but the movement as a whole certainly denied a full divinity to Christ and the incarnation and salvation on the cross and everything that goes along with that. Okay, number three.

This is pretty important, I think. Well, I think they're all important. I think these are things that we need to think about when we think about classical Protestant liberalism.

But the third thing is important but kind of ironic. The third thing is that classical Protestant liberalism found itself in bondage to the culture in which they worked. And the reason they found themselves in bondage to the culture is that while they wanted to speak to the culture, they often did not speak to the culture in a prophetic way.

While they wanted to address the culture, they often didn't do it in a prophetic way. They often got connected with the culture. They often got kind of sucked into the culture.

And there's almost an uncritical view of the culture and a lack of ability to stand above the culture, almost an uncritical view of the culture, almost taking in everything the culture said. And let me use two examples of that. When did we have the Hermann lectures? I guess two weeks ago, maybe, when Owen Gingrich was here and did a masterful job at this.

But one was kind of an uncritical view of science, kind of just a welcoming of everything science said and taught without criticism of it, without standing back and saying, where is science right? And where is science wrong? Or where is science right? And where can religion speak to science? So, it's almost like they separated religion from science totally. And they weren't able to have a kind of prophetic and

critical view of scientific investigation. The second place is, of course, in historical investigation.

And that is, they got taken in with a kind of radical biblical criticism. So, as biblical criticism went kind of wild, in a sense, these people didn't seem to be able to step back and say what biblical criticism is truthful. Maybe there are some truthful things here I can embrace.

But are there things in biblical criticism that are not truthful and should be challenged? And I don't think they did a very good job at that. I think they just got taken in by biblical criticism wherever it went. And if you're taken in by these kinds of forces of culture, then you lack the ability to judge the culture, to prophetically speak to the culture, and to criticize the culture.

So they became, it's ironic that they became in bondage to the culture. Because sometimes it was the culture they wanted to speak to, especially when it came to social concerns. But they often became in bondage to the culture.

They became so much, they became shaped by the culture. Okay, that's the third. Number four.

A fourth is everything has to be weighed and measured by experience for them. And I think that becomes problematic. There is some truth that is objective truth that doesn't have to be weighed or measured through experience and God becoming flesh, for example.

I see that as an objective truth that doesn't have to be weighed or measured by my experience. But for classical Protestant liberalism, everything had to pass through the bar of experience. And remember, I'll just go back to the Schleiermacher picture here.

Whoops. I mean, just to the names here. Whoops.

Remember the word gefühl. Gefühl. Remember we said that's absolute dependence of the finite upon the infinite.

Well, that's experience. Gefühl is experience. So, everything has to be measured by experience.

Everything has to come through the bar of experience for these people. So, an emphasis on experience, on feeling, and things like that becomes problematic. Okay, number five on my list anyways is the evaluation of the weakness of criticism.

And that is because of their low view of sin, and they were overly optimistic about the future. So, they had a low view of sin. They didn't believe in original sin.

They believe in sinful actions, but they don't believe in original sin. And they had a, because they had a low view of sin, they had a high view of the future and of what human beings were able to accomplish in the future. Okay.

And so they really did believe, I think they really did believe, that the kingdom of God was going to be brought about by human action. That it was not, they didn't see the kingdom of God as an intervention breaking into history, but they saw the kingdom of God as something we could grow and develop with good social processes. This became problematic.

So let me give you an example of that. At the beginning of the 20th century, a classical Protestant, in fact, I just this morning, I was looking at this, the latest issue, but the beginning of the 20th century, classical Protestant liberalism began a magazine and it was called the Christian Century. And it was called the Christian Century because the 20th century was going to be the Christian Century.

And they still publish it under that title. And I read it, but it's so odd that they still use that title, the Christian Century, because I hate to tell classical Protestant liberals this, but the 20th century didn't turn out to be the Christian Century. You had World War I, you had World War II, you had the Holocaust, you had the Korean War, the war in Vietnam.

I mean, the Christian Century turned out to be a brutal and bloody century. It wasn't the Christian Century at all. So, this overly optimistic view that we can kind of build the kingdom by our social processes, how can you sustain that view when you look at what happened in the 20th century? Getting better and better, people were gassed; hundreds of thousands of people were gassed to death in the First World War, the Second World War, all the slaughtering, and the Holocaust.

How can you sustain a view of a Christian Century when you look at the 20th century realistically? So, it's because partly of their low view of sin that they had that. So, okay, another kind of criticism, and that is an overemphasis on kind of moralism, being a good moral person, being a good ethical person, because where this led them was, it led them to kind of salvation by works. It led them to kind of a, you're saved because you're a good person, you're doing good moral and ethical things.

So, with this kind of understanding, we're getting back to what Luther fought against. So, there is a de-emphasis on grace and an overemphasis on works. And finally, of course, a low view of revelation.

God has revealed himself. How? Well, first, he's revealed himself as a person through Christ, and Christ is revealed through the scripture, but he has a low view of revelation, no doubt. And that goes along with a high view of our own human resources. So now I want to mention another name here as a summary.

And his name is H. Richard Niebuhr. And I've got a picture of H. Richard, and I did the dates with H. Richard Niebuhr again, 1894 and 1962. Long story short on H. Richard Niebuhr, because we'll be looking at the Niebuhr brothers in a later lecture.

But H. Richard Niebuhr was a great, today we call him, we use the term public theologian. I don't think they used that term back then. I think that's a pretty new term.

But anyway, they use the term public theologian. He was a public theologian who taught at Yale. So, he was a very well-known person in the life of the church and in the broader culture, too.

People knew the name of H. Richard Niebuhr. Now, it's not important here; you don't need to know this, but his brother was probably even a little more famous. His brother was named Reinhold Niebuhr.

But we'll be talking about the Niebuhr brothers in another lecture as well. But H. Richard Niebuhr is a theologian as well as a sociologist and so forth. And he took a look at classical Protestant liberalism.

He also wrote a pretty scathing book called The Kingdom of God in America, which was about classical Protestant liberalism. Now, in The Kingdom of God in America, in one sentence, he kind of did in classical Protestant liberalism. He said, a God without wrath, because see they had a nice God, no wrath, brought man without sin, because they didn't believe in original sin, into the kingdom without judgment.

So, the kingdom was just a kind of social progress, with no judgment on the kingdom, through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross. Through the work of Christ, but no cross. The work of Christ that classical Protestant liberalism believed in was being a good man, a good moral influencer, and a pattern for how we should live our lives.

That is one sentence in the book The Kingdom of God in America. But you could wish for sentences like that to come across you when you're thinking of what to write about. You could hope you could think of a sentence like that.

In one sentence, he leveled classical Protestant liberalism. A God without wrath brought man without sin into the kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross. And that was his estimation of classical Protestant liberalism.

His brother had a similar estimation. Reinhold Niebuhr had a similar estimation. So, there it is.

That's the end of the story, in a sense, of classical Protestant liberalism. Okay. In order to show the end of the story, let me just give a quick illustration of my own personal life.

No, I did not grow up as a classical Protestant liberal and then got converted. But Brown University had a very famous professor there who had done a lot of work on fundamentalism and evangelicalism. And this was years ago.

He was also giving a paper on evangelicalism. But he didn't have anyone to respond to that paper at Brown. I mean, he was himself a liberal.

He was only interested in fundamentalism and evangelicalism academically. He had no heart interest in fundamentalism or evangelicalism, but he was a scholar of that period of time and on those movements. So, he was giving a paper at Brown on evangelicalism.

But he needed an evangelical to respond to the paper. And they couldn't find one at Brown. So, they looked around.

So, they found me. So, they asked me if I would go and respond to the paper. It was a lovely dinner and a very interesting evening.

Well, I didn't have to give much of a response in the paper because he, in his paper, was saying that the classical Protestant liberalism that we've known since Schleiermacher is now, and the word he used was bankrupt. It is bankrupt. There's nothing left to it.

Let's face it. Now, it's very interesting because he was saying that as a classical Protestant liberal who hardly ever went to church or even, you know, he didn't see the need for that. So, as a classical Protestant liberal, he found the vibrancy in Christianity that he was in evangelicalism.

That's vibrant. That's alive. These people actually believe something.

So, you know, I didn't have to give much of a response to the paper. I just agreed with what he said as an evangelical. I said, you're right, you know.

But, you know, bankrupt, to use that word, wow, as one himself who is in that tradition, but to use the word bankrupt, that's pretty tough, but it's true. Classical Protestant liberalism ended up that way. Now, there are still kind of classical

Protestant liberals around today, and the Christian century is still being published, but there's not much substance there.

I look through it because I, you know, just to see if there's anything I can use, but there's not much substance there. So, that is the emergence and development of liberal theology. Maybe I need to retitle this lecture, The Emergence and Development and Death of Liberal Theology, because it is dead.

It's gone. It's bankrupt. So there have to be other movements that take its place.

So, okay, let me stop there. From Schleiermacher on, the three big names that we mentioned are important. Schleiermacher, Rauschenbusch, how he fits into this, and H. Richard Niebuhr and what his criticism was of that.

But do you have other questions about this movement? As I say, you see remnants of it around today. It doesn't have nearly the strength that it had under people like Schleiermacher or some early shapers in the 19th century or early 20th century. But anything at all on this? Are you okay? Do you understand what we're doing here? So, the pendulum has swung a bit there in terms of theology.

Are you all set? Okay. Now, just let me stop here for a minute. So that's the end of the lecture notes for next Monday.

So, Monday covers up to and including Lecture 7. So, it covers four. I believe it's four through seven. Four through seven.

Four, five, six, seven. It covers those four lectures and all the attendant readings on those lectures. So, we're okay with that.

And then, on Wednesday, you bring me some questions from the readings. Friday, we'll have one more session to get you ready for the exam. And I'll have the exam with me on Friday.

So I'll be able to make sure you're on target with all your questions and everything. And then we're off and running. So, we're almost into November.

Okay. Well, let's start the next lecture anyway—and lecture number eight.

This is the Theology of Evangelicalism in the 19th Century. So, you've got your outline there on page 14, The Theology of Evangelicalism in the 19th Century. Now, I thought, how am I going to approach this lecture? How am I going to get at what's going on in evangelicalism in the 19th Century? And actually, I've decided in this course to approach it through what was going on in England.

There were two pretty major movements in England in the 19th Century that I'm going to be lecturing on. The first is called the Oxford Movement. So, we're going to be talking a lot about the Oxford Movement.

It is very important. It really focused on ecclesiology and the relationship of the church to the state. I also lectured on the Salvation Army in this lecture.

Now, so let me just say something about that, and then we'll get on to the Oxford Movement. I'm connected with the Salvation Army, as you may know, as a layperson. However, the Salvation Army was a very important movement in Britain in the 19th Century.

And so I've decided that even though I have a personal interest in this, I decide I should probably go ahead and lecture on it anyway. Mark Knoll, in the book Turning Points, remembers what we mentioned on Friday, but in the book Turning Points, he gave other turning points that he could have chosen but didn't. And one was the Salvation Army.

He could have chosen the Salvation Army as a turning point because it was. So, I hope you'll accept that. The reason I'm doing this is because of evangelicalism in the 19th Century. The Oxford Movement is a high-church movement, and the Salvation Army is a low-church movement.

So, I compared and contrasted the two movements. Now, by those terms, I don't use those terms. One doesn't have a privileged place.

I'm just using those terms in terms of ecclesiology, an understanding of the church, how the church should be organized, and so forth. Oxford Movement, very high church. Salvation Army, the low church in terms of its ecclesiology, also ministered to the poor.

So here's where we go there. So okay. Let's talk first, A, about the Oxford Movement, and let's give an introduction to the Oxford Movement and what the Oxford Movement is all about.

Let me change this so we'll have this for the Oxford Movement. Okay. Whoops.

Okay. Yep. All right.

Good. Okay. Introduction.

Oxford Movement. Okay. You can tell Oxford Movement, we're talking England.

This is something that began at Oxford, so Oxford University, that's why it was called the Oxford Movement. Here are three terms I use for the Oxford Movement whenever I'm lecturing on the Oxford Movement. All right.

Number one, it was a highly significant movement. I like that term. Very important movement.

No doubt about that. Number two, it was a deeply devout movement. Very devout.

People want to really understand the nature of Christianity and so forth. Deeply devout movement. Okay.

And number three, it was an intentional self; it was an intensely self-conscious movement. Very self-conscious about its own formation and shaping. So I like those terms.

Highly significant. Deeply devout. Intensely self-conscious was this movement.

Now, you may not know anything about the movement yet, but you will, I hope, as we lecture on it. But just keep those three terms in mind in terms of introduction. And as I mentioned, this movement began at Oxford University.

So that's where it all started, and that's why it was so important. Okay. Another thing by way of introduction.

This movement wanted to get back to an understanding of the Church. Now, Church, we use a capital C because they're talking about the Bride of Christ, the Body of Christ. They're not talking about a denomination necessarily, although it will have denominational leanings.

But they're not talking about denomination. Talking about the Church, the Body of Christ in the New Testament. Okay. This movement is a movement that wanted to see the Church in the Body of Christ as a divine movement only.

Okay. A divine movement only. A movement shaped only by God.

All right. And where did they see that? Now, remember, this movement, this Oxford movement, is a 19th-century movement. Okay.

Where do they see that? They see that in the New Testament. In the New Testament, they open their Bibles, and they see the New Testament Church, the Body of Christ, as a divine, only a divine movement. They also saw it in the early Church.

So, let's say the first 400 years of the Church. Now, since then, there have been, as far as they're concerned, we're kind of trying to see it through their glasses, but since then, there have been attempts by the state to control the Church. There have been attempts by the state to shape the Church, to run the Church, to organize the Church, and to control the Church.

And they saw that in Rome, but they also saw it since the Reformation. Oh, they saw it in the medieval Roman Catholic Church. They have seen it since the Reformation, even within Protestantism.

They have seen attempts of the state to shape the Church and, therefore, make the Church, in a sense, less of a divine institution and more of a human institution. They tried to kind of alter the Church by government action, you know? So, as far as they're concerned, this was not the New Testament Church. They're living in England.

These people are Anglicans. They're looking at their church, and they're saying, is this the New Testament Church, or is this the Church of the first four centuries? Their answer was, no, it's not because it's too much controlled by the state. It's too much of a kind of state church.

It's lacking its full divinity, in a sense, for these people. Okay? So, they start looking at the New Testament Church and at the early Church as their model. That's their example.

That's their model. That's what they're interested in. Okay, so now let's think through this for just a minute.

That's how they're thinking theologically. But in the 19th century, they're living in a movement, and they're helping to shape a movement, but they're also living in a movement. And what do we generally call the 19th century? The age of romanticism.

The age of romanticism. And what is one of the things that characterizes romanticism in a broader cultural way? One of the things that characterizes romanticism in a broader cultural way is looking back to the past and seeing the past as significant for the formation of culture and so forth. So, the romantics were often people, whether they were poets or writers or musicians, who looked back to the past and saw that we must embrace what we've learned from the past if we're going to be truly what we should be and so forth.

So, it seems like these people are products of their culture, the romantic age in which they're living, but you could also almost say they're shapers of that culture as well. They're shapers of that romanticism as well. So, you could see it, maybe see it both ways.

But a lot of things are happening both theologically and culturally to shape what we call this movement called the Oxford Movement. Okay, having said that, we're going to try to understand the low better now. We're going to do the beginning of the Oxford Movement, the move to the Roman Catholic Church, and the reaction of the Anglican Church.

So, two, three, and four. This was the beginning of the Oxford Movement. What happened was, remember we said, what is this course all about? It's about the right people at the right place with the right ideas.

And what happened was in the early 19th century, you had a group of clergymen all at Oxford University talking about what the nature of the church should be. So, really, ecclesiology was their kind of central focus. So, you had these people talking about this in the right place.

They supported each other with what they were writing, and what they were talking about, and eventually, something exploded, and you got called the Oxford Movement. So, okay. Now, the first person that we think about when we think about the Oxford Movement is a person at Oxford by the name of Richard Froude, F-R-O-U-D-E.

Notice the dates, interesting dates, 1803, 1836. The man died when he was only 33 years of age. And yet, he is one of the persons who gets this whole thing moving, gets this whole thing going with his thinking.

Now, to him, the church, the church, the ideal church is the primitive church, the early church, the New Testament church in the first four centuries or so. There's been a corruption of the church since the Reformation. The Reformation kind of corrupted the church.

The Reformation made the church something she had never intended to be. And what we've got to do is get back to that primitive church life. Okay.

So, he preaches, he teaches, he writes, and he wants a revival. But it's not the kind of revival that you think of when you think of someone like Charles Grandison Finney or George Whitefield. That's not the kind of revival he wants.

He wants a revival of the early church, and so he insists on three things. If we can embrace these three things in the church, we're going to be more like the early church. We're going to be more like the church that God intended it to be.

All right. Number one. Now, he talked about other things.

I'm just using these three as indicative. Okay. You understand? So, okay.

Number one, we've got to get back to the fasting. The early church fasted. We do not have the fasting discipline that the early church once had.

We've got to get back to that. Number two. Now, remember, he's talking as an Anglican now.

He's not a Roman Catholic. Number two, we've got to get back to clerical celibacy. All clergy should be celibate.

They should not be married. They should not have children and so forth. We've got to get back to clerical celibacy.

Now, here under this second point, he was a little off kilter here because clerical celibacy was really not part of that first four centuries. Clerical celibacy doesn't come to the 11th century or so, but that's how he imagines the early church clerical celibacy. And then, number three, we've got to get back to a reverence for the saints.

Not a worship of the saints but a reverence for the saints. So, we've got to get back to revering the saints of the early church. And if we could get back to these kinds of things, if we could get a revival in these kinds of ways, then the church would come alive again in a way it hasn't been since the Reformation.

So, what he does is look beyond the Reformation. He looks over the Reformation to that early church, and he says, boy, if we could become like that, we'd really be the church that God intended it to be. So, he's one of the spokesmen for what became known as the Oxford Movement.

Let me give you the second one. Now, I've got to give you a little break here. I haven't done that yet today.

But let me mention the second one. Yeah. So, Richard Frost.

Froude, I think. It's a good... Yeah, I'm not... Yeah. It kind of sounds like he was Catholic.

Right. You're aiming in the right direction. He's not quite Catholic yet.

He's still an Anglican priest, and he's still talking about this stuff with his friends. And the movement actually moved into Catholicism. That's going to be at the end of the story.

But he died before that transition was made into Catholicism. He died in 1836. So, he doesn't live to see the end results of this.

But it does sound Catholic to me and to everybody who heard him. That's true. But, yeah. Something else about Richard?

Let me mention John Keble, and then I have to give you a break. Keble, second one. Oh, did I put... Yeah, there he is.

John Keble. Lived until 1866. So, you might know him as a poet.

He was a great poet and preacher. If there's any single preacher associated with the Oxford Movement, it is Keble. Right? And Keble actually preached a sermon.

Let me give you... I didn't put the date of the sermon. Here's a date. July 14th, 1833.

July 14th, 1833. The title of the sermon was National Apostasy. National Apostasy.

July 14th, 1833. He preached it at... I think it was St. Mary's in Oxford, but he preached it at one of the churches at Oxford. And that sermon really was kind of a watershed sermon because in that sermon, what he wants to do is separate the Church, the Church with a capital C, the body of Christ, from any kind of state or national control.

We've got to get out from under this. You know, we've got to get more like the primitive church that was not under any national or state control. So, he preaches a sermon on national apostasy.

But as he formulates his principles, it's interesting that he talks a lot about the Eucharist. So, not in this sermon, but in other sermons and other ways, he talks about the Eucharist. Let me just mention two things that he says about the Eucharist.

See if this sounds Protestant, or see if it sounds Catholic. See if it sounds like Luther or Calvin, or does it sound more like St. Augustine or something like that from the first four centuries? Okay, let me mention two things.

Number one is the way you are saved. The way you are saved is through the reception of the body and blood of Christ at the Eucharist. So, as far as he's concerned, that's the way salvation comes to you because that is the body and blood of Christ. Now, does that sound more Catholic, or does it sound more Protestant? It sounds more Catholic, of course, because as far as he's concerned, that was the teaching of the early church, and we need to get back to that teaching.

So, salvation comes through the Eucharist, and the Eucharist is the body and blood of Christ for him. So that's number one. Number two, the Eucharist is validly administered only through priests who have been in apostolic succession since Peter.

So, there's an apostolic succession since Peter. Only the priests who are in that apostolic succession can give the Eucharist. Now, does that sound more Catholic, or does it sound more Protestant? It sounds pretty Catholic to me.

Anyways, especially if you're going back to Peter, you have this apostolic succession, and only those priests are allowed to give the Eucharist. So that doesn't sound like Reformation. That sounds pretty Catholic.

So Keble was a great preacher, great poet, great writer, and very influential person. Once he starts talking about this movement, he starts to talk really in Catholic terms, Catholic terminology. Eucharist, transubstantiation, body, blood, apostolic succession.

That's all talked about from the early church. So Keble is very, very important. So the first two guys are really important.

Third guy, infinitely, well, third guy, very important, but I got to give you a break. Take a little break. We haven't had a break today, have you? Bless your hearts.

It's Monday. It's the second half of the semester. We're moving on, aren't we, in life? We are.

So, do you have any questions while you're breaking here? Stretch, break, hope. Yes. He's not quite yet talking about Peter as pope.

He, they will eventually because they're going to become Catholic. But through Peter, he was the first bishop of the church. And as he appointed and anointed bishops, the apostolic succession is through the bishops of the church.

So, the only ones who can give communion are the bishops of the church. And as they then ordain ministers, they give, or ordain priests, I probably should say, but as they ordain priests, they give priests that power to give the Eucharist and everything. But it can't be given by lay people.

It can't be given by ministers in other denominations. There were Presbyterians, and there were Baptists all around him. There were Presbyterians around.

He didn't recognize that at all as there were Methodists around. He does not recognize that as legitimate, the legitimate Eucharist. It's only as people given an apostolic succession that it is truly the body and blood of Christ.

So, there was something else just while we stopped here for a minute. Okay. Let's look at number three then, and then I got to let you go.

Number three, the most important person in the whole movement. And his name is John Henry Newman. And here are his dates: 1801 to 1890.

There were lots of other people and others we could mention. I'm just choosing these three, but the other people are really, he's the most important of all of them. Okay.

John Henry Newman, an intellectual powerhouse. I think the others were, too, but an intellectual powerhouse, no doubt about that. Interestingly enough, in his early days as a priest in the Anglican church, he considered himself to be an evangelical.

So, he would have been, used the term evangelical just like the Wesleys used the term evangelicals in an earlier century. But he considered himself to be an evangelical. That's an important little fact.

Now, what Newman is going to do is, sorry, I thought I had that term here. I just got to find a term. Did I not? Okay.

Well, bless my heart. I didn't put the term down. Okay.

All right. I'm living and learning. So, we'll back up for just a minute.

Okay. What Newman began to do, he wanted to write. And in order to influence people, he wanted to influence them by preaching and by writing.

So, he starts a publication called Tracts for the Times, T-R-A-C-T-S. Tracts for the Times, T-R-A-C-T-S. I need to get that into a PowerPoint.

Tracts for the Times. He started that in 1833. That's kind of the beginning of the movement, 1833.

All right. Now, when you think of the word tract, what do you think of? Someone hands you a tract at the railroad station or something; what do you think of it? Two pages, three pages, pretty readable, and so forth. These were like treatises.

So, these were not tracts, just, you know, two pages or something. These were like treatises that were written down—tracts for the Times.

These were serious articles about theology. And in 1833, he started to publish these things called Tracts for the Times. So, okay.

What happens is that as he's publishing, and as you follow Tracts for the Times, Newman himself is becoming more and more and more Catholic. He's sounding less

Anglican, and he's certainly sounding less evangelical, and he's sounding more and more Catholic. And so he began to see the Christian church.

He began to see the Christian church. First of all, you know, I think I do have this. I do have this.

All right. Bless my heart. Here we are.

I just got to put this slide up. Okay. There are Tracts for the Times.

Okay. He began when he began writing. He saw the Anglican church as the great via media, as the great middle way. I didn't realize it was ten after.

I got to let you guys go. I'll pick this up on Wednesday.

This is Dr. Roger Green in his Church History course, Reformation to the Present. This is session number 16, The Response to Liberalism.