

Dr. Roger Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 21, Twentieth Century, Fundamentalism Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 21, Twentieth Century, Fundamentalism, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Roger Green's lecture from his church history course, "Reformation to the Present," session 21, focuses on the origins and characteristics of 20th-century American fundamentalism. The lecture traces the movement's roots back to figures like Dwight L. Moody and Adoniram Judson Gordon, highlighting their key influences. **Several cultural and theological challenges facing the church in the 19th and early 20th centuries are presented as contributing factors to fundamentalism's rise.** The lecture also examines the Scopes Trial as a pivotal event that shaped public perception of the movement, despite its continued growth through various means like Bible schools and media. **Ultimately, the lecture sets the stage for exploring specific theological movements within fundamentalism and its eventual divergence into evangelicalism.**

**2. 23 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 21 – Double
click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link
there (Church History → Reformation to the Present).**



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3. Briefing Document: Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 21, Twentieth Century, Fundamentalism

Briefing Document: The Emergence of 20th Century American Fundamentalism

This briefing document summarizes the main themes and important ideas presented in Dr. Roger Green's Lecture 21, "The 20th Century Fundamentalism," part of his church history course, "Reformation to the Present." The lecture focuses on the historical background and shaping forces behind the rise of American fundamentalism in the early 20th century.

I. Introduction and Course Context:

- The lecture marks a transition in the course, moving into the 20th century and specifically focusing on American fundamentalism.
- Dr. Green outlines the upcoming topics, including American evangelicalism as a breakaway movement and other 20th and 21st-century movements.
- Lecture 11 (within the course's numbering) specifically addresses "the emergence of fundamentalism," aiming to understand its origins and formative influences.
- The lecture encourages an informal and interactive learning environment.

II. Key Figures Shaping Fundamentalism:

- **Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899):** A significant 19th-century evangelist considered a key shaper of fundamentalism, despite his life primarily falling outside the 20th century.
- **Tireless Organizer:** Moody's exceptional organizational skills were crucial to the success of his evangelistic crusades, leading to the establishment of churches and educational institutions. As Dr. Green notes, he was "brilliant in his ability to organize."
- **Great Pulpit Person:** Moody was a powerful and popular preacher with a "very homey kind of delivery that appealed to the common person," resulting in a broad appeal and numerous conversions.
- **Supporter of Foreign Missions:** Moody strongly supported the 19th-century missionary movement, a defining characteristic of the era.

- **Adoniram Judson Gordon (1836-1895):** Founder of Gordon College (originally the Boston Missionary Training School), considered equally important in establishing American fundamentalism and a contemporary and friend of Moody.
- **Historical Premillennialism:** Gordon was associated with this theological movement, which will be discussed separately in the course.
- **Holiness:** Gordon emphasized the ongoing growth and development in the Christian life, a "pilgrimage" towards conformity to Christ.
- **Worship:** Public worship held significant importance in Gordon's ministry.
- **Healing:** He believed in the ministry of healing, though not that all would be healed.
- **Ethics:** Gordon stressed the importance of an ethical life as a demonstration of Christian faith. As one of Dr. Green's professors stated, "all good theology ends in ethics."
- **Missions:** Gordon's deep interest in missions led to the founding of Gordon College as a missionary training school, primarily focused on the Congo. Dr. Green highlights that "this institution was founded as a missionary training school... primarily to train missionaries to go to the Congo, Africa, and the Belgian Congo."

III. Socio-Cultural Background Influencing Fundamentalism:

Dr. Green identifies four key cultural shifts in the 19th and early 20th centuries that impacted the church and contributed to the formation of fundamentalism:

1. **Scientific Investigation (particularly Darwinism):** The rise of scientific inquiry, exemplified by Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), challenged traditional religious beliefs. This external challenge forced the church to respond and define its core tenets.
2. **Historical Thinking and Challenges to Historical Truths:** Questioning of the historicity of Jesus and Christianity itself created significant challenges for many Christians.
3. **Biblical Criticism:** The emergence of biblical criticism, with questions regarding the authorship and dating of biblical books, impacted the understanding and authority of scripture within the church.
4. **The Challenge of Roman Catholicism in America:** The significant immigration of Roman Catholics in the mid-19th century shifted the religious landscape of

American cities, challenging the existing Protestant hegemony. Furthermore, Roman Catholic doctrines like papal infallibility and the Immaculate Conception of Mary were seen as challenges to Protestant theology, which emphasized the Bible as the ultimate authority. Dr. Green notes that Protestants would "push back and say, I don't see those doctrines embedded in the Bible. And if it's not in the Bible, you can't claim it as a doctrine." This challenge spurred Protestants to define their own foundational beliefs. The example of John F. Kennedy's presidential run illustrates the lingering impact of these historical tensions.

IV. The Rise of Fundamentalist Doctrines:

- Summer Bible conferences in the 19th and early 20th centuries played a crucial role in defining the core doctrines of fundamentalism. These "prophetic conferences" focused on interpreting Old Testament prophecies.
- Five key doctrines emerged as central to fundamentalism, considered absolute beliefs:
 1. **Inerrancy of the Bible:** The belief that the Bible is without error in its intended teachings. This was a direct response to biblical criticism and a counterpoint to the Roman Catholic doctrine of papal infallibility. Protestants aimed to ensure "that the authority of the Bible was recognized."
 2. **Virgin Birth of Jesus:** Affirmation of the miraculous conception of Jesus, directly opposing those who viewed him as merely a good man.
 3. **Substitutionary Atonement:** The belief that Christ's death on the cross served as a substitute for humanity's sins. This became "basically the atonement theory of the fundamentalists."
 4. **Physical Resurrection of Jesus from the Dead:** Emphasis on the literal, bodily resurrection of Jesus, countering claims of a natural death being the end.
 5. **Authenticity of the Gospel Narratives:** Belief in the historical accuracy, authorship, and dating of the Gospel accounts, in response to criticisms of these texts.
- These doctrines were not just theoretical; they became central to preaching, evangelism, and missionary efforts, forming the "core" and "heart" of the fundamentalist movement.

V. Characteristics and Strategies of the Fundamentalist Movement:

Beyond core doctrines, Dr. Green highlights several characteristics that strengthened the fundamentalist movement:

- **Founding of Bible Schools, Colleges, and Seminaries:** Fundamentalists felt that established universities had strayed from their Christian foundations and were no longer adequately training Christian leaders. They actively established their own institutions, such as Moody Bible Institute, Biola (Bible Institute of Los Angeles), Philadelphia College of the Bible, and the Boston Missionary Training Institute (Gordon College). Dr. Green emphasizes this activity: "So, they are very, very active in doing that. That becomes really, really important for them." He also provides a historical overview of Gordon College and its merger with Barrington College.
- **Summer Bible Conferences:** These continued to be vital for disseminating fundamentalist theology and fostering community.
- **Use of Media and Radio Broadcasting:** Fundamentalists effectively utilized emerging media like radio to spread their message. They were "very, very adept at using the media in that way and spreading the message."
- **Publishing:** Extensive publishing of books and Sunday school materials further solidified their reach.
- **Foreign Missions and Parachurch Networks:** Continued strong emphasis on foreign missions, alongside the growth of interdenominational "parachurch networks" like Youth for Christ and InterVarsity, which crossed denominational lines and united fundamentalists around common causes.

VI. The Scopes Trial (1925): A Dramatic Center:

- The Scopes Trial in Dayton, Tennessee, is presented as a pivotal event for understanding fundamentalism's public perception. The trial centered on the legality of teaching evolution in tax-supported schools, which Tennessee law forbade if it denied the biblical account of divine creation.
- **Key Figures: William Jennings Bryan:** A prominent national figure, former Secretary of State and presidential candidate, who defended the Tennessee law. Dr. Green underscores his importance: "William Jennings Bryan is a really, really, really important person."

- **Clarence Darrow:** A famous lawyer who represented John Scopes, the teacher who taught evolution.
- **Media Circus:** The trial became a major national media event, akin to the O.J. Simpson trial in its public fascination due to the clash of these two well-known figures and the controversial topic.
- **Outcome: A Paradoxical Win and Loss: Technical Win:** Scopes was found guilty, and the Tennessee Supreme Court upheld the ban on teaching evolution (though later overturned on a technicality).
- **Loss in Public Perception:** The trial led to fundamentalism being widely portrayed in the media as "backward, loco-loco, backward movement that had no brains." William Jennings Bryan was often depicted negatively. This negative portrayal led some other conservative Christians to distance themselves from the fundamentalist label due to theological disagreements within the broader Christian community regarding collaboration on moral issues.
- **Long-Term Impact: Building an Empire Despite Public Perception:** Despite the negative media portrayal and the perception that fundamentalism was declining, the movement continued to grow and strengthen through its established networks of schools, publications, and media outreach. By the 1930s-1960s, it was recognized as a "pretty expansive movement."
- **The Paradox:** Fundamentalism, despite its intention to separate from the broader culture, ironically used the tools of that culture (print media, radio, television) to build its movement and flourish within it.

VII. Looking Ahead:

- Dr. Green concludes by outlining the next steps in the lecture series, which will focus on three broad movements identifying fundamentalism: dispensational pre-millennialism, the holiness movement, and Pentecostalism.
- The course will also cover criticisms and evaluations of fundamentalism.
- He clarifies that Gordon College is an evangelical institution, stemming from but distinct from fundamentalism.

This briefing document provides a comprehensive overview of Dr. Green's initial lecture on 20th-century American fundamentalism, emphasizing its historical roots, key figures, the socio-cultural context of its emergence, its core doctrines, its organizational strategies, and the significant impact of the Scopes Trial on its public image and internal dynamics.

4. Study Guide: Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 21, Twentieth Century, Fundamentalism

American Fundamentalism: A Study Guide

Quiz

1. Describe Dwight L. Moody's primary contributions that shaped early fundamentalism in the late 19th century.
2. Identify and briefly explain two of the six characteristics of Adoniram Judson Gordon's ministry that also became hallmarks of American fundamentalism.
3. What were two of the major social and cultural challenges from the 19th century that contributed to the rise of fundamentalism?
4. Explain the significance of the summer Bible conferences in the development of fundamentalist doctrine. What was a key outcome of these conferences?
5. Name three of the five core doctrines that emerged from the summer conferences and became central tenets of fundamentalism.
6. Describe one way in which fundamentalists actively built and sustained their movement despite facing negative public perception.
7. Summarize the central issue and the opposing sides of the Scopes Trial of 1925.
8. Explain the paradoxical way in which fundamentalism interacted with the broader culture it sought to separate from.
9. According to the lecture, how did the broader public initially view fundamentalism after the Scopes Trial? Was this view accurate in the long term?
10. What are the three broad theological movements that significantly shaped 20th-century fundamentalism, as mentioned at the end of the lecture?

Answer Key

1. Dwight L. Moody was a tireless organizer, demonstrating a remarkable ability to structure his evangelistic crusades and establish lasting institutions. He was also a powerful pulpit preacher with a homey delivery that appealed to a wide audience, leading to many conversions. Finally, Moody was a strong supporter of foreign missions, aligning with the significant missionary movement of the 19th century.

2. Two characteristics of Adoniram Judson Gordon's ministry that influenced fundamentalism were his belief in historical premillennialism (a specific view of Christ's return) and his emphasis on holiness as a process of growth and conformity to Christ after conversion. He also valued public worship and believed in a ministry of healing through God's providence.
3. Two major social and cultural challenges were the rise of scientific investigation, particularly Darwinism, which challenged biblical accounts of creation, and historical thinking that questioned the historicity of Jesus and the Bible. Additionally, the rise of biblical criticism scrutinized the authorship and dating of biblical texts.
4. The summer Bible conferences were crucial gatherings where Protestants discussed and defined what they considered the essential doctrines of the church. A key outcome of these conferences was the articulation of five core doctrines that became the doctrinal center of fundamentalism, intended as absolute beliefs for its adherents.
5. Three of the five core doctrines that emerged were the inerrancy of the Bible (without error in its intended teaching), the virgin birth of Jesus, and the substitutionary atonement (Christ died as a substitute for sinners). The other two were the physical resurrection of Jesus and the authenticity of the gospel narratives.
6. Despite negative public perception after the Scopes Trial, fundamentalists actively built their movement by founding their own Bible schools, colleges, and seminaries, feeling that mainstream universities had become too liberal. They also effectively utilized media like radio and engaged in extensive publishing to disseminate their message and build a lasting infrastructure.
7. The Scopes Trial centered on the legality of teaching evolution in Tennessee public schools, as a state law prohibited teaching anything that denied the biblical account of divine creation. The opposing sides were represented by William Jennings Bryan, defending the anti-evolution law, and Clarence Darrow, representing the teacher John Scopes and advocating for the freedom to teach scientific theories.
8. Fundamentalism paradoxically sought to separate itself from the broader culture due to its perceived negative influences. However, it ironically utilized the tools of that very culture, such as print media, radio, and later television, to propagate its

message, build its institutions, and ultimately flourish within the culture it aimed to distance itself from.

9. After the Scopes Trial, the broader public, influenced by media portrayals, tended to view fundamentalism as a backward and intellectually weak movement that would likely fade away. However, this view proved inaccurate as fundamentalists continued to build their movement and institutions, becoming a significant and expansive force in American religious life in the following decades.
10. The three broad theological movements identified as significantly shaping 20th-century fundamentalism are dispensational pre-millennialism, the holiness movement, and Pentecostalism. These movements contributed distinct theological perspectives to the development of fundamentalist thought.

Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze the ways in which Dwight L. Moody and Adoniram Judson Gordon, though figures of the late 19th century, laid crucial groundwork for the emergence of 20th-century American fundamentalism. Consider their key characteristics and the institutions they influenced.
2. Discuss the social and cultural context of the late 19th and early 20th centuries that contributed to the rise of American fundamentalism. In what specific ways did scientific advancements, historical criticism, and the changing religious landscape shape this movement?
3. Evaluate the significance of the five core doctrines that emerged from the summer Bible conferences in defining the identity and boundaries of early 20th-century fundamentalism. How did these doctrines serve as both unifying principles and points of contention?
4. The Scopes Trial is often viewed as a pivotal moment in the history of fundamentalism. Analyze the immediate and long-term consequences of this trial for the fundamentalist movement's public image and its internal development.
5. Explore the inherent tensions and contradictions in fundamentalism's relationship with the broader culture, particularly its desire for separation alongside its strategic use of modern media and technology. How did this paradox shape the movement's growth and influence?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Fundamentalism:** A conservative religious movement that arose in the early 20th century, primarily in America, characterized by a strict adherence to what are perceived as fundamental or basic doctrines of Christianity and a resistance to modern theological and cultural trends.
- **Inerrancy of the Bible:** The belief that the Bible is without error in all that it intends to teach, including matters of faith, practice, history, and science.
- **Virgin Birth:** The Christian doctrine that Jesus Christ was conceived and born by his mother Mary without a human father, through the miraculous intervention of the Holy Spirit.
- **Substitutionary Atonement:** The theological doctrine that Jesus Christ died on the cross as a substitute for sinful humanity, taking the punishment that humans deserved for their sins.
- **Physical Resurrection:** The Christian belief that Jesus Christ rose bodily from the dead after his crucifixion, a central tenet of Christian faith.
- **Authenticity of the Gospel Narratives:** The belief that the accounts of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection in the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) are historically reliable and were written by their traditionally ascribed authors.
- **Historical Premillennialism:** A theological view that Christ will return visibly to earth before a literal thousand-year reign of peace and righteousness.
- **Holiness Movement:** A Protestant movement that emphasized the possibility of Christian perfection or entire sanctification after conversion, often associated with John Wesley and Methodism.
- **Biblical Criticism:** The scholarly study and analysis of the Bible, considering its historical context, authorship, literary forms, and textual integrity. It can involve questioning traditional views on these aspects.
- **Dispensationalism:** A theological system that divides biblical history into distinct periods or dispensations, each with its own way in which God governs humanity.
- **Evangelicalism:** A broad Protestant movement characterized by an emphasis on personal conversion, the authority of Scripture, the importance of evangelism (sharing the Gospel), and often social activism. While sharing some roots with

fundamentalism, it generally adopts a more engaged and less separatist approach to culture.

- **Parachurch Organizations:** Religious organizations that operate independently of traditional church structures and across denominational lines to fulfill specific ministries (e.g., youth ministry, missions, campus outreach).
- **Scopes Trial:** A highly publicized 1925 legal case in Tennessee where high school teacher John Scopes was tried for violating a state law that prohibited the teaching of evolution in public schools. It became a symbolic battle between fundamentalist and modernist views.

5. FAQs Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 21, Twentieth Century, Fundamentalism, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions about 20th Century American Fundamentalism

1. What historical period and geographical location are the primary focus when discussing the emergence of fundamentalism according to the source? The source primarily focuses on the emergence of American fundamentalism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. While acknowledging potential European connections, it emphasizes that fundamentalism, as discussed, was largely an American phenomenon that took shape on American soil.

2. Who were some key figures in the pre-history or shaping of American fundamentalism, and what were their significant contributions? Dwight L. Moody, an evangelist from the late 19th century (1837-1899), is identified as a transitional figure and a shaper of fundamentalism. His key contributions were his tireless organizational abilities, his effective pulpit preaching style with broad appeal, and his strong support for foreign missions. Adoniram Judson Gordon (1836-1895), the founder of Gordon College, is also highlighted as crucial in establishing fundamentalism. Six characteristics marked his ministry that also became characteristics of fundamentalism: historical premillennialism, a focus on holiness (growth in Christian life), a careful understanding of public worship, belief in divine healing, emphasis on Christian ethics, and a strong commitment to missions (leading to the founding of Gordon as a missionary training school).

3. What were the major social and cultural forces in the 19th and early 20th centuries that contributed to the rise of fundamentalism? Four key social and cultural factors are identified:

- **Scientific Investigation:** The rise of scientific inquiry, particularly Darwin's theory of evolution presented in "The Origin of Species" (1859), challenged traditional religious beliefs.
- **Historical Thinking and Criticism:** New historical perspectives questioned the historicity of Jesus and Christian origins, creating intellectual challenges for the church.

- **Biblical Criticism:** The development of higher biblical criticism led to scrutiny regarding the authorship, dating, and reliability of biblical texts.
- **The Challenge of Roman Catholicism:** Increased immigration of Roman Catholics to America, coupled with distinct Roman Catholic doctrines like papal infallibility and the immaculate conception, challenged the prevailing Protestant hegemony and theological viewpoints.

4. What were the five core doctrines that emerged from summer Bible conferences and became central to fundamentalism? These five doctrines were considered essential and foundational by fundamentalists:

- **The Inerrancy of the Bible:** The belief that the Bible is without error in its intended teachings and is trustworthy and authoritative.
- **The Virgin Birth of Jesus:** The conviction that Jesus was born of a virgin, denying alternative views of his origin.
- **The Substitutionary Atonement:** The understanding that Christ's death on the cross served as a substitute for the sins of humanity, taking their place and penalty.
- **The Physical Resurrection of Jesus:** The belief in the literal, bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead, rejecting interpretations that denied its physicality.
- **The Authenticity of the Gospel Narratives:** The assertion that the Gospel accounts are historically accurate, reliably authored, and trustworthy in their content, countering contemporary criticisms.

5. Beyond doctrine, what other characteristics or activities defined the fundamentalist movement? Fundamentalism was characterized by several key activities and developments:

- **Founding of Bible Schools, Colleges, and Seminaries:** Fundamentalists established their own educational institutions (like Moody Bible Institute, Biola, and Philadelphia College of the Bible/Cairn University) in response to a perceived failure of traditional universities to uphold Christian principles.
- **Summer Bible Conferences:** These conferences played a crucial role in disseminating fundamentalist doctrines and fostering a sense of community.

- **Use of Media and Technology:** Fundamentalists effectively utilized radio broadcasting and print media to spread their message and engage with the broader culture.
- **Emphasis on Foreign Missions:** A strong commitment to missionary work was a defining feature, exemplified by the founding of institutions like the Boston Missionary Training School (Gordon College).
- **Development of Parachurch Networks:** Organizations like Youth for Christ and InterVarsity, which crossed denominational lines, strengthened the fundamentalist movement by uniting individuals around shared evangelical goals.

6. What was the Scopes Trial, and why was it considered a pivotal moment for fundamentalism? The Scopes Trial, held in Dayton, Tennessee, in 1925, centered on the legality of teaching evolution in public schools, which Tennessee law prohibited as it contradicted the biblical account of divine creation. John Scopes, a teacher who taught Darwinism, was put on trial. William Jennings Bryan, a prominent figure and fundamentalist, defended the anti-evolution law, while Clarence Darrow, a well-known liberal lawyer, represented Scopes. The trial became a major media event, pitting fundamentalist religious beliefs against modern scientific thought.

7. What were the immediate and long-term consequences of the Scopes Trial for fundamentalism? The Scopes Trial had a paradoxical outcome for fundamentalism. Technically, fundamentalists won the case as Scopes was found guilty, and the anti-evolution law remained in place for a time. However, in the eyes of the broader public, fundamentalism was often portrayed by the media as backward and out of touch, leading to a perception that the movement was declining. Despite this public image setback, fundamentalists continued to build their own institutions and networks, utilizing modern media to strengthen and expand their movement. By the mid-20th century, it became clear that fundamentalism had not disappeared but had instead grown into a significant force within American Christianity.

8. What is the relationship between fundamentalism and evangelicalism as suggested by the source, and with which movement does Gordon College identify? The source indicates that American evangelicalism emerged as a breakaway movement from American fundamentalism. While both share conservative theological roots, evangelicalism sought to engage more with the broader culture, unlike the more separatist stance often associated with fundamentalism. The speaker explicitly states that Gordon College associates itself with evangelicalism, not fundamentalism, implying a distinction in their approach to faith and engagement with the world.