

Dr. Roger Green, American Christianity, Session 11, The Second Great Awakening Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Green, American Christianity, Session 11, The Second Great Awakening, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Roger Green's lecture, part of a series on American Christianity, specifically addresses **the Second Great Awakening**. The session begins with logistical announcements regarding exams and assignments before focusing on the death of **Alexander Mack** and his founding of the Dunkers. The lecture then outlines the **results of the Awakening**, including increased revivalism, the expansion of voluntary societies, a stress on education, humanitarian crusades, and denominational growth. Finally, it examines **departures from the prevailing evangelical pattern** through the rise of Roman Catholicism and the emergence of groups like the Millerites, Mormons (with a detailed discussion including Joseph Smith and Brigham Young), and the Shakers (highlighting Mother Ann Lee and their communal practices in the "Burned Over District" of New York).

2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Green, American Christianity, Session 11 – 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 → American Christianity).



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3. Briefing Document: Green, American Christianity, Session 11, The Second Great Awakening

Briefing Document: The Second Great Awakening and the Rise of Roman Catholicism in 19th Century America

Overview: This briefing document summarizes the key themes and information presented by Dr. Roger Green in Session 11 of his American Christianity course, focusing on the results of the Second Great Awakening and the significant growth and challenges faced by Roman Catholicism in 19th-century America. The lecture also briefly touches upon three non-evangelical movements that emerged during this period: the Millerites, the Mormons, and the Shakers.

Main Themes and Important Ideas/Facts:

I. Results of the Second Great Awakening:

Dr. Green begins by reviewing the results of the Second Great Awakening, building upon previous discussions:

- **Increase in Revivalism:** Revivalism became a recurring feature of American life and culture, following patterns seen with the Puritans and the First Great Awakening. Dr. Green notes examples such as the Finite Revival and the later Billy Graham Revivals. He states, *"revivalism has really been part and parcel of American life and culture."*
- **Expanded Work of Voluntary Societies:** This period saw a rise in organizations dedicated to various causes, with missionary societies being a prime example. The founding of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions in 1810 is mentioned. Dr. Green also connects this to the history of Gordon College, founded in 1889 as a missionary training school for the Belgian Congo, emphasizing, *"we are part of that story."*
- **Stress on Education:** The Awakening spurred the promotion of religious education through Bibles, tracts, Sunday schools, and the establishment of new educational institutions. Dr. Green lists four key institutions founded during this time: Andover, Princeton, Divinity School at Harvard, and Divinity School at Yale.
- **Humanitarian Crusades:** The Second Great Awakening fueled significant social reform movements, with the abolitionist movement highlighted as the most prominent and a major focus of upcoming lectures.

- **Growth in Many Denominations:** The period witnessed an increase in the number and size of various religious denominations, alongside the founding of new colleges and seminaries.

II. Developments and Departures from the Evangelical Pattern:

Dr. Green emphasizes that the Second Great Awakening and its aftermath led to significant shifts in the religious landscape of America, moving away from a predominantly Protestant evangelical pattern. He identifies four key groups contributing to this change: Roman Catholicism, the Millerites, the Mormons, and the Shakers.

III. Roman Catholicism:

- **Significant Growth:** While a small group during the Revolutionary War (estimated at 35,000), Roman Catholicism experienced tremendous growth by the mid-19th century, reaching over three million adherents by around 1860. Dr. Green notes the dramatic increase, stating, *"Roman Catholicism became a large group in America, especially on the eastern coast, places like Boston, New York, Philadelphia. Roman Catholics literally came over in tremendous numbers, literally by the hundreds of thousands."*
- **Reasons for Growth:** Dr. Green identifies three primary drivers for this growth, all related to immigration:
- **Irish Potato Famine (1830s-1850s):** This devastating event led to a massive influx of Irish immigrants, many of whom were Catholic, seeking refuge in America, particularly in cities like Boston.
- **German Immigration:** The significant wave of German immigrants to Pennsylvania also included a substantial number of Roman Catholics.
- **Establishment of Religious Orders:** America became a favorable place for Roman Catholic religious orders (both men's and women's, such as the Jesuits) to establish their institutions and flourish.
- **Challenges Faced:** The rapid growth of the Catholic Church in America led to two significant problems:
- **The Problem of Trusteeship:** Due to a shortage of priests to serve the burgeoning Catholic population, lay trustees began taking control of local churches. These trustees increasingly sought authority over hiring and firing priests, which clashed with the hierarchical structure of the Roman Catholic Church. This created significant tension, eventually resolved by reasserting priestly authority over the

churches. Dr. Green points out the cultural appeal of trusteeship in America, asking, *"Why shouldn't we be free in church life to make decisions and so forth and to run the church, right? You know, this seems to be an American thing to do."*

- **Anti-Catholic Sentiment:** The growing presence of Roman Catholics sparked strong anti-Catholic feelings among the existing Protestant population in America. Dr. Green notes this as the chief external problem and indicates that the next lecture will explore the forms this anti-Catholicism took and how the Catholic Church responded.

IV. The Millerites:

- **William Miller (1782-1849):** A farmer and lay preacher from upstate New York who, through his reading of Daniel and Revelation, began to preach about the imminent end times and the second coming of Jesus.
- **Failed Predictions:** Miller twice predicted the specific date of Jesus' return (1843 and 1845), leading his followers, the Millerites, to prepare for the event. When these predictions failed, it was known as "the Great Disappointment."
- **Adventist Movement:** Despite the failed predictions, a movement followed Miller, generally known as the Adventist movement, which continued to emphasize the second advent of Jesus.
- **Seventh-Day Adventists:** The largest and most influential Adventist denomination emerged under the leadership of Ellen G. White. They distinguished themselves by observing the Sabbath on Saturday (Friday sunset to Saturday sunset) based on the Fourth Commandment. Dr. Green notes their significant global presence today (around 25 million). He also highlights their eschatological focus and their emphasis on health matters, often being a vegetarian community. He found them to be *"very orthodox in terms of basic Christian doctrine"* during interdenominational meetings.

V. The Mormons (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints):

- **Joseph Smith (1805-1844) and Brigham Young:** Smith is identified as the founder, who claimed to have discovered the Book of Mormon through divine revelation and special "glasses." Young led the Mormons after Smith's murder and guided their migration to Utah.
- **New Scripture and Revelation:** Mormons believe in the authority of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and subsequent revelations received by Joseph Smith,

compiled in the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. This setting up of *"other books as authoritative"* caused difficulty with other Christians.

- **Distinct Theology:** Mormon theology differs from traditional Christianity in its understanding of the Trinity (viewing God the Father and God the Son as having physical bodies) and the pre-mortal existence of human spirits.
- **Polygamy:** Joseph Smith received a revelation sanctioning polygamous marriages, and he himself had 49 wives.
- **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints:** This is the preferred name, highlighting their belief that the early church became apostate and that Joseph Smith restored the true church in the "latter days" in anticipation of the second coming of Jesus.
- **Practices:** Dr. Green discusses their missionary efforts (young members serving two-year missions), strong community and family emphasis, and the practice of baptism for the dead. He recounts personal experiences visiting a Mormon temple and hearing about the beliefs regarding the state in which one dies and their eternal existence. He also shares a story about a break-off group, the Reformed Latter-day Saints in Independence, Missouri, with a literal belief in Jesus' imminent return to their meeting place, complete with a retractable roof.

VI. The Shakers (The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearance/The Millennial Church):

- **Mother Anne Lee:** The most important leader, who brought the Shakers from England to America (Albany, New York area). She was considered by her followers to be the female principle of Christ, with her presence marking the beginning of the fulfillment of the second coming.
- **Eschatological Community:** Their name, "United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearance" or "Millennial Church," clearly indicates their focus on the second coming.
- **"Burned Over District":** Dr. Green highlights that the Millerites, Mormons, and Shakers all originated in upstate New York, which, along with the preaching of Charles Grandison Finney, led to the region being known as the "Burned Over District" due to the intense religious fervor and the emergence of numerous new religious movements.

- **Celibacy:** The Shakers practiced celibacy, leading to a unique social structure with separate living quarters for men and women. Dr. Green believes they are largely extinct today.
- **Simplicity and Hard Work:** Their lives were characterized by simplicity in all aspects, including their furniture design. They emphasized hard work as a form of worship, with chairs hung on pegs during the day to encourage constant labor.

VII. Role of Women:

Dr. Green notes that these non-traditional movements provided opportunities for women to work and minister in ways that were not yet accepted in more orthodox churches. He points out that *"women now are fiends feeling free to work and to minister, but they're not allowed to work and to minister in the traditional churches yet... They minister to this kind of outlying groups like the Millerites or the Shakers."* Their authority was often recognized within these communities.

Conclusion:

Dr. Green's lecture establishes the Second Great Awakening as a period of significant religious change in America. While it fostered revivals and reform within established Protestantism, it also created fertile ground for new religious movements that departed significantly from traditional evangelical patterns. The rapid growth and unique challenges faced by Roman Catholicism, alongside the emergence of groups like the Millerites, Mormons, and Shakers in the "Burned Over District," fundamentally altered the American religious landscape in the 19th century. The lecture sets the stage for further discussion on the conflicts arising from the growth of Catholicism and the specific characteristics of these new religious groups.

4. Study Guide: Green, American Christianity, Session 11, The Second Great Awakening

The Second Great Awakening: Developments and Departures

Study Guide

I. Review of Previous Lecture (Results of the Awakening) * Increase in revivalism as a recurring theme in American religious history (Puritans, First Great Awakening, Second Great Awakening, Finney Revival, Billy Graham). * Expansion of voluntary societies (e.g., missionary societies like the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions in 1810; connection to the founding of Gordon College in 1889 for missions to the Belgian Congo). * Stress on education (Bibles, tracts, Sunday schools, promotion of general education). * More humanitarian crusades, with the abolitionist movement as a primary focus for future lectures. * Growth in many denominations and the founding of new colleges and seminaries (Andover, Princeton, Divinity School at Harvard, Divinity School at Yale mentioned).

II. Departures from the Evangelical Pattern * Shift from a largely Protestant nation with a strong evangelical pattern (though with prior departures like Deism). * The Second Great Awakening and its aftermath led to significant changes.

III. Roman Catholicism * Relatively small during the Revolutionary War. * Experienced tremendous growth by the mid-19th century, especially in eastern cities (Boston, New York, Philadelphia) due to immigration. * Presented a challenge to the prevailing Protestant evangelical pattern. * Further discussion of strife and conflict will occur in the next lecture.

IV. The Millerites * Led by William Miller (1782-1849) in upper-state New York. * Miller, a lay preacher, interpreted Daniel and Revelation to suggest the imminent last days. * He predicted the second coming of Jesus in 1843 and 1845, neither of which occurred. * Despite the "Great Disappointment," the Adventist movement followed Miller.

V. The Adventists and Seventh-Day Adventists * The Adventist movement continued to emphasize the second advent of Jesus. * Ellen G. White became a prominent leader within this movement. * The Seventh-Day Adventists emerged as the largest Adventist denomination. * Key distinctions of Seventh-Day Adventists: * Observance of the Sabbath on Saturday (Friday sunset to Saturday sunset). * Eschatological focus, actively anticipating the second coming. * Emphasis on health matters, often promoting

vegetarianism. * The denomination is considered theologically orthodox (Trinitarian, Christ-centered, belief in atonement and resurrection).

VI. The Mormons (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) * Key figures: Joseph Smith (1805-1844) and Brigham Young. * Origins in upper-state New York. * Joseph Smith claimed to discover and translate the Book of Mormon from golden plates with the aid of special glasses. * The Book of Mormon is considered an authoritative scripture alongside the Bible. * Smith continued to receive revelations, compiled in the Doctrine and Covenants, which included the practice of polygamy (Smith had 49 wives). * Following Smith's murder in 1844, Brigham Young led the Mormons westward to Utah and founded Salt Lake City. * Distinctive beliefs: * Authority of Scripture extends beyond the Bible to include the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants. * View of God the Father and God the Son as distinct, physical beings, differing from the orthodox Trinity. * Belief in pre-mortal existence as spirit beings. * The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints views itself as the restored true church after a period of apostasy following the New Testament. * Eschatological community believing they are living in the "latter days" awaiting the second coming. * Practice of baptism for the dead. * Belief that the state in which one dies is the state in which one will live in eternity. * Known for missionary work and strong community and family emphasis. * Experienced persecution and viewed as a sectarian movement in its early years. * Currently a growing religion in America. * Break-off groups exist, such as the Reformed Latter-day Saints in Independence, Missouri, with unique interpretations (e.g., retractable roof for Jesus's return).

VII. The Shakers (The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearance or the Millennial Church) * Originated in England as a break-off from the Quakers (known as "Shaking Quakers"). * Emphasized dancing and shaking in religious services. * Led to America by Mother Anne Lee, who considered herself the female principle of Christ and the beginning of the fulfillment of the Second Coming. * First American Shaker community in the Albany, New York, area. * Eschatological community focused on Christ's Second Appearance. * Known for their celibate communal living with separate dormitories for men and women. * Characterized by a life of simplicity and hard work for the glory of God. * Famous for their simple yet beautiful furniture, often hung on pegs when not in use. * Likely no Shakers alive today. * Provided opportunities for women to minister and exercise authority in ways not yet accepted in traditional churches.

VIII. The "Burned Over District" * Term applied to upper-state New York by the mid-to-late 19th century. * Named due to the repeated emergence and growth of new religious

movements and revivals in the area (Millerites, Mormons, Shakers, and the future work of Charles Grandison Finney).

IX. Roman Catholicism in the 19th Century (Continued in next lecture) * Significant growth due to immigration (Irish potato famine in the 1830s-1850s, German immigration). * Establishment of religious orders (e.g., Jesuits). * Encountered internal problems like the "problem of trusteeship" (lay control of churches). * Faced external problems of strong anti-Catholic sentiment among American Protestants.

Quiz: The Second Great Awakening

1. What were three key results of the Awakening that were discussed in the previous lecture? Provide a brief example for one of these results.
2. Why were William Miller and his followers, the Millerites, significant in the context of the Second Great Awakening? What ultimately happened with their predictions?
3. Who was Ellen G. White, and what is one distinguishing characteristic of the religious group she helped to lead?
4. Identify the two key figures associated with the early development of Mormonism and briefly describe their roles.
5. What is the preferred name of the Mormon Church, and what two important aspects of their theology does this name highlight?
6. According to the lecture, what were two beliefs or practices of the Mormons that caused "real difficulty" or "a bit of a problem" with other Christians?
7. Who was Mother Anne Lee, and what was her significance to the Shaker movement in America?
8. Describe two defining characteristics of the Shaker communities and their way of life.
9. What geographical area became known as the "Burned Over District," and why did it receive this designation?
10. What were two primary reasons for the rapid growth of the Roman Catholic Church in America during the 19th century, as mentioned in the lecture?

Answer Key

1. Three key results were an increase in revivalism, the expanded work of voluntary societies (e.g., the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions), and a stress on education (e.g., the promotion of Sunday schools).
2. The Millerites represent a departure from the evangelical pattern with their specific predictions of the second coming of Jesus based on biblical interpretation. Their predictions did not come to pass, leading to the "Great Disappointment," but also the continuation of the Adventist movement.
3. Ellen G. White was a key leader in the Adventist movement, particularly in the formation of the Seventh-Day Adventists. A distinguishing characteristic of this group is their observance of the Sabbath on Saturday as a day of worship and rest.
4. Joseph Smith was the founder of Mormonism who claimed to have translated the Book of Mormon and received further revelations. Brigham Young was an early convert who became the leader after Smith's death and led the Mormons to Utah.
5. The preferred name is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. This name emphasizes their belief that they are the restored true church after a period of apostasy and that they are living in the "latter days" anticipating the second coming of Jesus.
6. Two problematic beliefs were the inclusion of the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants as authoritative scripture alongside the Bible, and their view of God the Father and God the Son as distinct, physical beings, which differs from the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.
7. Mother Anne Lee was the most important leader of the Shakers who brought the movement to America. Shakers believed she embodied the female principle of Christ and that her arrival was the beginning of the Second Coming's fulfillment.
8. Two defining characteristics of Shaker communities were their practice of celibate communal living, with men and women living separately, and their dedication to a simple life of hard work for the glory of God, reflected in their plain furniture and daily routines.
9. Upper-state New York became known as the "Burned Over District." This was because the area experienced a succession of intense religious revivals and the emergence of new religious movements like the Millerites, Mormons, and Shakers.

10. Two primary reasons for the growth of the Roman Catholic Church were the large-scale immigration of Irish Catholics due to the potato famine and the influx of German immigrants, many of whom were Catholic.

Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze the ways in which the Millerite and Mormon movements, as discussed in the lecture, represented significant departures from the prevailing evangelical pattern of American Christianity in the 19th century. Consider their theological innovations and their relationship with established Protestant denominations.
2. Compare and contrast the eschatological beliefs of the Millerites, the Seventh-Day Adventists, and the Mormons, as presented in the lecture. How did their understandings of the "last days" and the second coming of Christ shape their practices and identities?
3. Discuss the social and cultural factors that may have contributed to the rise and growth of the Shaker movement in America. How did their unique communal structure and beliefs challenge or reflect the broader societal trends of the time?
4. Evaluate the significance of upper-state New York as the "Burned Over District" during the Second Great Awakening and its aftermath. What made this region a fertile ground for the emergence of new religious movements, and what does this tell us about the religious landscape of 19th-century America?
5. Based on the lecture, describe the initial challenges faced by the Roman Catholic Church as it experienced rapid growth in 19th-century America. Consider both internal issues, such as the problem of trusteeship, and external pressures from the dominant Protestant culture.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Revivalism:** A religious movement characterized by emotional public gatherings for preaching and conversion, often with the goal of spiritual renewal.
- **Voluntary Societies:** Non-profit organizations often formed for religious, moral, or philanthropic purposes, supported by voluntary contributions.
- **Deism:** A religious and philosophical belief that posits a God who created the universe but does not intervene in its affairs.
- **Evangelical Pattern:** A dominant form of Protestant Christianity in America emphasizing personal conversion, the authority of the Bible, the importance of preaching, and the need for spreading the Christian message.
- **Millennialism/Eschatology:** Beliefs and doctrines concerning the "end times," the second coming of Christ, and the ultimate fate of humanity and the world.
- **Second Advent:** The anticipated return of Jesus Christ to Earth.
- **Sabbath:** The seventh day of the week (Saturday for Jews and some Christian denominations) observed as a day of rest and worship according to biblical commandment.
- **Orthodox Theology:** Doctrines and beliefs considered to be in accordance with the traditional and accepted teachings of a religious tradition.
- **Apostasy:** The abandonment or renunciation of a religious or political belief or principle.
- **Sectarian:** Relating to or characteristic of a sect, often used to describe a group that has broken away from a larger religious body and holds distinct doctrines.
- **Communitarian Movement:** A social movement or way of life in which members live together in a community, often sharing resources and responsibilities.
- **Celibate:** Abstaining from marriage and sexual relations, often for religious reasons.
- **Trusteeship:** In the context of the lecture, a system where lay members of a church held significant administrative and financial control.
- **Anti-Catholicism:** Prejudice, discrimination, or hostility directed towards the Catholic Church and its adherents.

5. FAQs Green, American Christianity, Session 11, The Second Great Awakening, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: The Second Great Awakening and Early 19th Century Religious Developments in America

1. What were some of the key results or impacts of the Second Great Awakening in American religious life? The Second Great Awakening led to a significant increase in revivalism, which became a recurring feature of American religious culture. It spurred the growth of voluntary societies, particularly missionary organizations like the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions. The movement also emphasized education through the promotion of Bible distribution, tracts, Sunday schools, and the founding of colleges and seminaries such as Andover, Princeton, and the divinity schools at Harvard and Yale. Furthermore, it fueled humanitarian crusades, most notably the abolitionist movement, and contributed to the growth of various denominations.

2. How did the Second Great Awakening challenge the established "evangelical pattern" in early America? While early American Christianity was predominantly Protestant with shared evangelical values, the Second Great Awakening witnessed the rise of new religious groups that departed significantly from this pattern. This period saw the growth of Roman Catholicism due to immigration, posing a challenge to the Protestant dominance. More notably, groups like the Millerites, Mormons, and Shakers emerged with beliefs and practices that diverged substantially from traditional evangelical Protestantism.

3. Who were the Millerites, and what were their core beliefs? The Millerites were followers of William Miller, a lay preacher who, based on his interpretation of the books of Daniel and Revelation, predicted the second coming of Jesus Christ in 1843 and again in 1845. When these predictions failed, the movement did not entirely disappear but evolved into the Adventist movement. The Millerites were characterized by their strong belief in the imminent return of Christ.

4. How did the Seventh-Day Adventist Church emerge from the Millerite movement, and what are some of its distinctive features? Following the failed predictions of William Miller, the Adventist movement continued, with Ellen G. White becoming a prominent leader. The Seventh-Day Adventists emerged as the largest denomination within this movement. They are distinguished by their belief in observing the Sabbath on Saturday (the seventh day), their eschatological focus on the second coming of Jesus, and their emphasis on health and a generally vegetarian lifestyle. Despite their unique practices, they hold largely orthodox Christian theological beliefs.

5. What are the origins and key tenets of Mormonism (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints)? Mormonism originated in upper-state New York with Joseph Smith, who claimed to have discovered and translated the Book of Mormon. Key figures include Smith and Brigham Young, who led the followers to Utah after Smith's murder. Mormonism holds the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and Doctrines and Covenants as authoritative scripture. Their theology differs from traditional Christianity in its view of the Trinity (believing God the Father and God the Son have physical bodies) and the belief that the church became apostate after the New Testament until its restoration through Joseph Smith. They also practice baptism for the dead and emphasize family life and missionary work.

6. Who were the Shakers, and what were the defining characteristics of their communities? The Shakers, or the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearance (also known as the Millennial Church), originated in England as a break-off from the Quakers and were led to America by Mother Ann Lee, whom they considered the female principle of Christ and the beginning of the Second Coming. They established communitarian settlements in America, notably in upper-state New York. The Shakers were known for their celibacy, communal living, simple lifestyle, emphasis on hard work as worship, and distinctive furniture design. Their religious services involved shaking and dancing.

7. What was the significance of "the Burned Over District" in the context of the Second Great Awakening? The "Burned Over District" refers to the western and central regions of upper-state New York during the Second Great Awakening. This area earned its name because it experienced a high number of intense religious revivals and the emergence of new religious movements like the Millerites, Mormons, and the early activities of Charles Grandison Finney, as well as the establishment of the first Shaker communities in America. The repeated waves of religious fervor were said to have "burned over" the spiritual landscape.

8. What were some of the challenges faced by the growing Roman Catholic Church in early 19th century America? As the Roman Catholic Church grew rapidly in America due to immigration, particularly from Ireland and Germany, it faced internal and external challenges. The "problem of trusteeship" arose due to a shortage of priests, leading lay trustees to take control of local churches, which conflicted with the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church. Externally, the Church encountered strong anti-Catholic sentiment from the predominantly Protestant population.