

Dr. Roger Green, American Christianity, Session 27, Evangelicalism, Part 1 Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Green, American Christianity, Session 27, Evangelicalism, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This session by Dr. Roger Green on American Christianity explores **Evangelicalism**, tracing its emergence as a breakaway movement from Fundamentalism and examining its key historical developments. The lecture identifies **five formative movements** influencing its rise: the Reformation, Pietism, Wesleyanism, Fundamentalism, and a progressive engagement with the modern world. It further discusses **20th-century cultural forces** that shaped evangelicalism and highlights **four significant figures** – Billy Graham, Harold John Ockenga, Carl F. H. Henry, and Edward J. Carnell – instrumental in its formation. Finally, the session touches upon the **establishment of evangelical institutions** like the National Association of Evangelicals, *Christianity Today*, and various colleges and seminaries, as well as the **notable presence of evangelicals in academia**.

**2. 23 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Green, American Christianity, Session 27 – 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, Session 27, Evangelicalism, Part 1

Briefing Document: Dr. Roger Green on American Evangelicalism

This lecture by Dr. Roger Green provides an overview of the rise and shaping of American Evangelicalism, tracing its development from Fundamentalism and highlighting key figures, influential movements, and the cultural forces it confronted in the 20th century.

1. Evangelicalism as a Breakaway from Fundamentalism:

- Dr. Green clarifies that Evangelicalism emerged as a "breakaway group called Evangelicalism" from Fundamentalism.
- This split occurred because individuals within Fundamentalism had "too many critical things about, too many things they were critical about." While they initially identified as Fundamentalists and valued aspects like a high view of the Bible, they sought a different path.
- The lecture will delve deeper into the specifics of this breakaway in subsequent sections.

2. The Liberal Reaction to Fundamentalism:

- Alongside the rise of Evangelicalism, Dr. Green identifies a "liberal reaction to Fundamentalism" as another significant result.
- **Harry Emerson Fosdick** is presented as a key figure in this liberal pushback. He was a popular preacher who served at Riverside Church in New York City.
- Fosdick famously challenged Fundamentalism with his sermon, "**Shall the Fundamentalists Win?**" His answer was no, arguing that Fundamentalism was "not in accordance with classical Orthodox Christianity."
- Dr. Green emphasizes the importance of Fosdick's challenge as a "pretty important pushback to fundamentalism."

3. Five Movements Shaping Evangelicalism:

Dr. Green outlines five key movements that "forged and shaped evangelicalism and what we know today as evangelicalism":

- **Classical Movement:** This refers to the "Reformation tradition, especially the Reformed tradition of John Calvin." Evangelicalism finds its roots in the Reformation, with a significant influence from the Reformed perspective.
- **Pietism:** This 17th-century renewal movement within Lutheranism emphasized a "marriage of the mind and the heart." Pietism brought renewal by moving beyond purely intellectual faith to touch the lives and emotions of people, a characteristic seen in Evangelicalism.
- "Pietism was a beautiful movement that married the mind and the heart and the whole gospel for the whole person in a sense. Well, that you see in evangelicalism."
- **Wesleyanism:** The movement associated with John Wesley and the Wesleyan revival has also significantly impacted modern Evangelicalism.
- **Fundamentalism:** While Evangelicalism broke away, it was still shaped by its Fundamentalist roots, particularly the "high view of the Bible, preaching from the Bible, teaching from the Bible, memorizing biblical texts, and so forth." Evangelicals appreciated this emphasis on Scripture.
- **Progressive:** This category encompasses two groups with a "conscious sense of the modern world":
 - Those within Fundamentalism who wanted to "reform fundamentalism and reshape fundamentalism from within." While many eventually left to join Evangelicalism, their initial desire for reform was a shaping force.
 - "Conservative Christians in mainline denominations who wouldn't call themselves fundamentalists" and wouldn't use the label "evangelical" either. They held a high view of the Bible, disliked biblical criticism, and were "very ecumenical-minded," seeking common ground with other conservative Protestants. They were concerned with the church's relevance to modernity.

4. Common Ground Among Shaping Movements:

Despite their differences, these five movements shared two key characteristics:

- **A set of theological convictions:** They were committed to "historical theology and historical orthodoxy," including beliefs in the Trinity, Christology, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the importance of Scripture.

- **An ethos of renewal:** They shared a "spirit of renewal and conversion of individuals' churches in the world, a movement of spiritual renewal." They believed in the Holy Spirit's work in bringing renewal to individuals, the church, and the world.

5. 20th-Century Cultural Forces Facing the Church (Especially Evangelicalism):

Dr. Green identifies several significant cultural shifts that Evangelicalism had to address:

- **Age of Affluence:** The post-World War II era brought increased material prosperity, and evangelicals had to determine how to minister in this context.
- **Urbanization:** The shift from agrarian to urban culture presented challenges related to the "clash of cultures" and the rise of "vices."
- **Suburban Flight:** The movement to the suburbs led to the development of a middle class with its own "anxieties over status," requiring a specific approach to ministry.
- **Crisis of Confidence:** This stemmed from disillusionment with both the "bankrupt" liberal left and the problematic "fundamentalist right." Evangelicalism, like New Orthodoxy before it, aimed to appeal to the "broad middle." However, Evangelicals sometimes criticized New Orthodoxy for not having a strong enough view of scriptural authority.
- **Crisis of Confidence due to Post-modernity:** The emerging postmodern worldview, with its "loss of authority" and questioning of overarching narratives ("mega-story"), challenged the church's relevance. Evangelicals responded by asserting the existence of a "mega-story" from Genesis to Revelation, centered on Christ, as the ultimate authority transcending cultures and times.
- "Evangelicals come along and address that crisis of confidence, saying, yes, there is a mega-story. There is a great story that is above all cultures and all ages and all times, and that's the story from Genesis to Revelation."

6. Forces Shaping 20th and 21st Century Evangelicalism (Key Individuals):

Dr. Green highlights four prominent individuals who significantly shaped Evangelicalism:

- **Billy Graham (William Franklin Graham) (1918-):** Reared as a Fundamentalist, Graham became a key figure in the rise of Evangelicalism. He labeled himself an evangelical early on and helped shape evangelical institutions. He faced criticism

from staunch Fundamentalists who viewed his ecumenical approach as problematic.

- "Billy Graham was reared in fundamentalism... but he got to a place in his own life, in his own ministry, where he couldn't really associate with fundamentalism, and the people he associated with and the ideas he associated with were called evangelicals, and that's pretty early on a term that he took on himself."
- **Harold John Ockenga (1905-1985):** A brilliant theologian with a PhD, Ockenga was a "leader among leaders of evangelicals." He was instrumental in:
 - Founding and leading the **National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) in 1942**, a deliberate move away from the "Fundamentalist" label.
 - Co-founding **Christianity Today in 1956**, a highly influential publication that aimed to articulate the theological foundations of Evangelicalism.
 - Serving as the minister of **Park Street Church in Boston**.
 - Being a founder and the first president of **Fuller Theological Seminary**, a crucial institution for evangelical intellectual life.
 - Orchestrating the merger between Gordon Divinity School and Conwell Seminary to form **Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary**.
- **Carl F. H. Henry (1913-2003):** A theologian and journalist, Henry became known as "the theologian for evangelicalism" through his extensive theological writings. He served as the first editor of **Christianity Today** and was on the faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary.
- **Edward J. Carnell (1919-1967):** A brilliant theologian who taught at Fuller Theological Seminary and briefly served as its president. His book "**What is Orthodoxy?**" was a significant work championing the evangelical cause. His untimely death was considered a "real tragedy for evangelicalism."

7. Key Evangelical Organizations and Institutions:

Dr. Green reiterates the importance of:

- **National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) (founded 1942):** Representing a deliberate break from the Fundamentalist identity.
- **Christianity Today (founded 1956):** A pivotal publication for shaping evangelical thought and identity.

- **Evangelical Colleges and Seminaries:** The founding of institutions like **Gordon College (originally Boston Missionary Training School, 1889)**, **Barrington College (originally Providence Bible Institute, 1900)**, and **Fuller Theological Seminary (1947)** was crucial for the development and propagation of evangelicalism.

8. Leadership in the Academic Community:

Dr. Green notes the significant rise of evangelical leadership within academia, mentioning several prominent scholars:

- **George Marsden:** Historian of Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism, taught at Calvin College and Notre Dame.
- **Alistair McGrath:** Evangelical theologian and Anglican priest at Oxford University.
- **Nicholas Waltersdorf:** Evangelical philosopher who taught at Yale.
- **Mark Noll:** Theologian specializing in American church history, taught at Wheaton College and currently at Notre Dame.
- **Christian Smith:** Gordon College graduate and sociologist at Notre Dame (later became Roman Catholic).

Dr. Green emphasizes that these individuals, among others, demonstrate the intellectual contributions of evangelicals to various academic disciplines.

Key Takeaways:

- Evangelicalism emerged as a distinct movement from Fundamentalism, driven by a desire for broader engagement with the modern world and a less confrontational approach.
- The movement was shaped by a confluence of historical and theological traditions, including the Reformation, Pietism, Wesleyanism, and even aspects of Fundamentalism itself.
- Evangelicalism confronted significant cultural shifts in the 20th century, offering its own responses to affluence, urbanization, suburbanization, and the crises of confidence brought about by liberalism, fundamentalism, and the rise of postmodern thought.
- Key leaders like Billy Graham, Harold John Ockenga, Carl F. H. Henry, and Edward J. Carnell were instrumental in defining and shaping the movement through their ministries, writings, and institutional leadership.

- The establishment of key organizations like the NAE and Christianity Today, along with the founding of evangelical colleges and seminaries, provided crucial infrastructure for the growth and intellectual development of Evangelicalism.
- Evangelicals have increasingly made significant contributions to the academic community, demonstrating intellectual rigor and engaging with diverse fields of study.

4. Study Guide: Green, American Christianity, Session 27, Evangelicalism, Part 1

Understanding American Evangelicalism: A Study Guide

Key Concepts and Figures

- **Fundamentalism:** A 20th-century conservative Protestant movement reacting against liberal theology and higher criticism of the Bible, emphasizing biblical inerrancy and specific doctrines.
- **Evangelicalism:** A post-World War II movement that diverged from fundamentalism, seeking broader cultural engagement while maintaining core conservative Protestant beliefs.
- **Harry Emerson Fosdick:** A prominent liberal Baptist preacher who challenged fundamentalism with his famous sermon, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?"
- **Classical Movement (Roots of Evangelicalism):** The Reformation tradition, particularly the Reformed tradition of John Calvin, which provided foundational theological tenets.
- **Pietism (Roots of Evangelicalism):** A 17th-century renewal movement within Lutheranism emphasizing personal piety, experience, and the integration of mind and heart.
- **Wesleyanism (Roots of Evangelicalism):** The movement initiated by John Wesley, emphasizing personal conversion, sanctification, and social holiness.
- **Progressive Element (Roots of Evangelicalism):** Two groups: those within fundamentalism seeking reform and conservative Christians in mainline denominations with ecumenical leanings and a desire to engage the modern world.
- **Age of Affluence:** The post-World War II era in America characterized by increased prosperity and material well-being.
- **Urbanization:** The shift from agrarian to urban societies, bringing new social and cultural challenges.
- **Suburban Flight:** The migration of populations from urban centers to the suburbs, leading to the development of a new middle class with its own concerns.

- **Crisis of Confidence:** A sense of uncertainty in both liberal and fundamentalist approaches to Protestantism in the mid-20th century.
- **Post-modernity:** A cultural and intellectual movement characterized by a loss of overarching narratives and questioning of universal truths and authorities.
- **Mega-Story:** The overarching narrative of the Christian faith, from creation to redemption, which evangelicals affirm as a source of authority and meaning.
- **Billy Graham:** A highly influential 20th-century evangelist who helped shape modern evangelicalism through his widespread crusades and broad appeal.
- **Harold John Ockenga:** A key figure in the formation of evangelicalism, known for his leadership in the National Association of Evangelicals, the founding of *Christianity Today*, and his role in institutions like Fuller Theological Seminary and Gordon-Conwell.
- **National Association of Evangelicals (NAE):** Founded in 1942, a significant organization representing the interests and uniting various evangelical denominations and groups.
- **Christianity Today:** An influential evangelical magazine founded in 1956, aiming to provide a theological voice for the movement.
- **Fuller Theological Seminary:** A prominent evangelical seminary founded in 1947, intended to be a center for intellectual and theological development within evangelicalism.
- **Carl F. H. Henry:** A significant theologian and the first editor of *Christianity Today*, considered a key intellectual voice of the evangelical movement.
- **Edward J. Carnell:** A brilliant theologian who taught and briefly served as president of Fuller Theological Seminary, known for his book *What is Orthodoxy?*
- **George Marsden:** A renowned historian of fundamentalism and evangelicalism who has taught at Calvin College and Notre Dame.
- **Alistair McGrath:** An evangelical Anglican priest and theologian at Oxford University.
- **Nicholas Wolterstorff:** A prominent evangelical philosopher who taught at Yale University.

- **Mark Noll:** A distinguished historian of American theology and evangelicalism, currently teaching at Notre Dame.
- **Christian Smith:** A sociologist and Gordon College graduate who has studied evangelicalism and religious trends.

Short-Answer Quiz

1. What were the two primary results of fundamentalism mentioned in the lecture that directly led to the rise of evangelicalism? Fundamentalism led to criticisms of itself and the emergence of a breakaway group called Evangelicalism. Additionally, it spurred a liberal reaction against its tenets.
2. Who was Harry Emerson Fosdick, and why is he significant in the context of fundamentalism and its aftermath? Harry Emerson Fosdick was a well-known liberal preacher who challenged American fundamentalism with his famous sermon, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?". His pushback represented a significant liberal reaction against fundamentalist theology.
3. Describe two of the five movements that, according to the lecture, forged and shaped evangelicalism. The Reformation tradition, especially Calvinism, provided a classical theological foundation for evangelicalism. Pietism, a 17th-century renewal movement, emphasized personal experience and the integration of faith and life, influencing the evangelical ethos.
4. What were two of the 20th-century cultural forces that evangelicalism had to confront and minister to? Evangelicalism had to address the age of affluence following World War II, as well as the challenges and opportunities presented by increasing urbanization and suburban flight.
5. Why was Billy Graham a significant figure in shaping evangelicalism, and how did fundamentalists view him? Billy Graham was a prominent evangelist whose widespread ministry and willingness to work with broader Christian groups helped define and popularize evangelicalism. Many strict fundamentalists viewed him with suspicion and even hostility for his perceived compromises.
6. What were two key contributions of Harold John Ockenga to the development of evangelicalism as a distinct movement? Harold John Ockenga was instrumental in founding the National Association of Evangelicals, signifying a clear break from fundamentalism. He also played a key role in establishing *Christianity Today*, providing a unifying publication for evangelicals.

7. How did Carl F. H. Henry contribute to the intellectual standing and communication of evangelicalism? Carl F. H. Henry, trained as both a theologian and a journalist, served as the first editor of *Christianity Today*, providing theological depth and journalistic reach to the burgeoning evangelical movement. He also contributed significantly through his theological writings.
8. What was the significance of Fuller Theological Seminary in the landscape of American evangelicalism? Fuller Theological Seminary was founded to be a premier evangelical institution for theological training and scholarship, aiming to provide an intellectual foundation and reputation for the movement, often envisioned as a "Princeton of the West."
9. Name two prominent academics mentioned in the lecture who identify as evangelicals and their respective fields. George Marsden is a distinguished historian of fundamentalism and evangelicalism, and Alistair McGrath is an evangelical Anglican priest and theologian at Oxford University.
10. What was the historical connection between Barrington College and Gordon College that was discussed in the lecture? Barrington College and Gordon College had a history of both competition and eventual merger in 1985. At one point, Barrington was considered a stronger institution, but the leadership of Harold Ockenga at Gordon shifted the dynamic, leading to the merger.

Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze the reasons why evangelicalism emerged as a distinct movement from fundamentalism in the mid-20th century. Consider the criticisms of fundamentalism and the key characteristics that defined early evangelicalism.
2. Discuss the impact of 20th-century cultural forces, such as affluence, urbanization, and post-modernity, on the development and self-understanding of American evangelicalism.
3. Evaluate the contributions of two of the following individuals – Billy Graham, Harold John Ockenga, Carl F. H. Henry, or Edward J. Carnell – to the shaping of the evangelical movement in America.
4. Examine the significance of institutions like the National Association of Evangelicals, *Christianity Today*, and Fuller Theological Seminary in fostering the identity and growth of American evangelicalism.
5. Explore the relationship between evangelicalism and the academic community, referencing specific scholars mentioned in the lecture. What does the engagement of evangelicals in academia suggest about the movement's aims and intellectual character?

5. FAQs Green, American Christianity, Session 27, Evangelicalism, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: Understanding Evangelicalism

1. **How did Evangelicalism emerge in relation to Fundamentalism?** Evangelicalism arose as a breakaway movement from Fundamentalism. While many early evangelicals were raised in Fundamentalist circles and shared some core beliefs, they became critical of certain aspects of Fundamentalism. They perceived Fundamentalism as having too many negative or overly critical stances and sought to create a distinct movement. This contrasted with a separate "liberal reaction to Fundamentalism," exemplified by figures like Harry Emerson Fosdick, who directly challenged Fundamentalist tenets.
2. **What are the five key historical movements that shaped the development of Evangelicalism?** According to the lecture, five movements significantly forged and shaped what is known today as Evangelicalism:
 - **The Classical Movement:** This refers to the Reformation tradition, particularly the Reformed tradition of John Calvin, emphasizing the historical roots of Evangelicalism in Protestant theology.
 - **Pietism:** This 17th-century renewal movement within Lutheranism stressed a "marriage of the mind and the heart," focusing on both intellectual understanding and personal, heartfelt faith.
 - **Wesleyanism:** The movement initiated by John Wesley emphasized revival, personal piety, and had a lasting impact on Evangelical theology and practice.
 - **Fundamentalism:** Despite eventually differentiating itself, Evangelicalism was significantly shaped by Fundamentalism, particularly in its high view of biblical authority and emphasis on scripture.
 - **The Progressive Movement:** This encompasses two groups: those within Fundamentalism who sought to reform it from within (though many eventually left to join Evangelicalism) and conservative Christians in mainline denominations who, while holding a high view of the Bible and disagreeing with liberal biblical criticism, did not identify as Fundamentalists and had ecumenical leanings, engaging with the modern world.

1. **What core theological convictions and shared ethos characterized these diverse movements that contributed to Evangelicalism?** Despite their differences, the five movements shared two key characteristics:
 - **A set of theological convictions:** They were all committed to historical theology and historical Christian orthodoxy, encompassing doctrines such as the Trinity, Christology, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the importance of Scripture.
 - **An ethos of renewal:** They shared a spirit of renewal and a belief in the necessity of conversion for individuals, the revitalization of churches, and spiritual transformation in the world. This emphasized the active work of God and the Holy Spirit in bringing about change.

1. **What major 20th-century cultural forces did the emerging Evangelical movement confront?** Evangelicals in the mid-20th century faced several significant cultural shifts and challenges:
 - **An age of affluence:** The post-World War II era brought increased material prosperity, requiring evangelicals to address the spiritual implications of wealth and consumerism.
 - **Urbanization:** The shift from rural to urban living presented challenges related to diverse cultures and social issues, demanding new approaches to ministry.
 - **Suburban flight:** The growth of suburbs and the emergence of a middle class brought new anxieties about status and identity, requiring relevant engagement from the church.
 - **A crisis of confidence:** Disillusionment with both liberal theology and the perceived shortcomings of Fundamentalism created a void that Evangelicalism sought to fill by appealing to a broad Protestant middle.
 - **The rise of pre- and post-modern thought:** The erosion of overarching narratives and the emphasis on individual authority posed a challenge to traditional sources of authority, which evangelicals addressed by reasserting the authority of the Bible and the Christian meta-narrative centered on Christ.

1. **Who were some of the key individuals who significantly shaped 20th-century Evangelicalism, and what were their primary contributions?** Four prominent figures played crucial roles:
 - **Billy Graham (William Franklin Graham):** A widely influential evangelist who transcended denominational lines, built evangelical institutions, and became a

prominent public theologian. He moved away from strict Fundamentalism and embraced the "evangelical" label.

- **Harold John Ockenga:** A key leader and intellectual figure. He was instrumental in founding the National Association of Evangelicals (a deliberate move away from the term "Fundamentalist"), co-founded *Christianity Today* magazine, served as minister of Park Street Church, and was the first president of Fuller Theological Seminary. He also orchestrated the merger of Gordon Divinity School and Conwell Seminary to form Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.
 - **Carl F. H. Henry:** Considered the theologian of the emerging evangelical movement. A trained theologian and journalist, he served as the first editor of *Christianity Today* and taught at Fuller Theological Seminary, providing intellectual depth and theological grounding for Evangelicalism.
 - **Edward J. Carnell:** A brilliant theologian who taught and briefly served as president of Fuller Theological Seminary. His book, *What is Orthodoxy?*, was influential in defining and championing the evangelical cause.
1. **What were some of the key organizations and institutions that played a vital role in the development and spread of Evangelicalism?** Several organizations and institutions were foundational:
 - **The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) (founded 1942):** This organization represented a deliberate break from Fundamentalism in name and sought to provide a unified voice and platform for the burgeoning evangelical movement.
 - **Christianity Today (founded 1956):** This influential magazine provided a widely read publication that articulated evangelical theology, engaged with contemporary issues from an evangelical perspective, and fostered a sense of shared identity among evangelicals.
 - **Colleges and Seminaries:** Institutions like Gordon College (originally Boston Missionary Training School), Barrington College (originally Providence Bible Institute), and especially Fuller Theological Seminary played a crucial role in educating evangelical leaders, fostering intellectual engagement, and shaping evangelical thought. Fuller Seminary, in particular, aimed to be a leading center for evangelical theological scholarship.
 1. **How did the merger between Barrington College and Gordon College in 1985 reflect the evolving landscape of Evangelical higher education?** The merger of Barrington and Gordon College in 1985 illustrated shifts in the strength and

influence of evangelical institutions. In the early 1960s, Barrington was a stronger institution, with some considering it might absorb Gordon. However, the presidency of Harold Ockenga at Gordon, a highly respected figure in the national evangelical community, significantly elevated Gordon's profile and attracted more students. By the mid-1980s, Gordon was in a more stable position, leading to the merger where Barrington's campus was sold, and students and some faculty moved to Gordon. This event highlighted the dynamic nature of evangelical institutions and the impact of leadership and broader trends within the movement.

2. **How has Evangelicalism fostered leadership within the broader academic community?** Despite its theological distinctiveness, Evangelicalism has produced numerous individuals who have become respected leaders and scholars in diverse academic fields. Figures like historian George Marsden (formerly of Calvin College and Notre Dame), theologian Alistair McGrath (Oxford University), philosopher Nicholas Waltersdorf (formerly of Yale), and historian Mark Noll (currently at Notre Dame) are examples of self-identified or historically connected evangelicals who have made significant contributions to their disciplines in secular and non-evangelical academic settings. Even those with a more complex journey, like sociologist Christian Smith (a Gordon College graduate who later became Roman Catholic), demonstrate the intellectual engagement fostered within an evangelical upbringing. This highlights the commitment within parts of Evangelicalism to serious intellectual inquiry and its impact beyond strictly religious spheres.