

Christianity and United States History

Week 3: The 2nd Great Awakening and Social Reform

"Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess.5:23)

Week 2 Review

- First Great Awakening (from Week 1)
- "Civic Texts"
- First Amendment
- Thomas Jefferson

Definitions

- **Deism** – The view that God created the universe but is not now directly involved in the creation.
- **Unitarianism** – A form of Christianity that denies the doctrine of the Trinity.
- **Universalism** – The doctrine that all people will ultimately be saved.
- **Millennialism** – The belief, expressed in the Book of Revelation, that Christ will establish a 1000-year reign of the saints on earth (the millennium) before the Last Judgment.

He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian King of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where Men should be bought & sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he has obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the Liberties of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.

Discussion: Politics of Slavery

- Declaration of Independence (editing!)
- 3/5 Compromise & Slave Trade Compromise
- *"I know not when to stop."*

A Second Great Awakening (1790-1840)

- Camp Meetings
 - Cane Ridge, KY
- Charles G. Finney
 - The 'Burned-Over District'

Millennialism & Reform

- Temperance
 - Lyman Beecher
- Abolitionism
 - Elijah P. Lovejoy
 - William Lloyd Garrison & “The Liberator”
 - Frederick Douglass & Sojourner Truth
 - Harriet Tubman & the “Underground Railroad”
- Ohio
 - “Freedomtown, USA”
 - John Rankin & John P. Parker
 - Oberlin College
 - Theodore Weld & the “Lane Rebels”
 - Oberlin-Wellington Rescue
 - Harriet Beecher Stowe (*Uncle Tom’s Cabin*)

Reflection/Application:

- In light of the social reform movement spawned by the Second Great Awakening, what role do you think the contemporary church should play in current social justice issues?
- Consider the concept of civic texts and nationalism. What do you think should be the relationship of these concepts to a Christian’s sense of identity and citizenship?