

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1. Two Traditions in American Presbyterianism

In the colonial period, American Presbyterianism was the product of the mingling of English Puritanism and Scottish or Scotch-Irish Presbyterianism. These two form the two traditions within American Presbyterianism.

In accordance with Presbyterian polity, Francis Makemie and seven other ministers formed the first American presbytery in 1706, which promptly named Makemie as moderator. Fed by the continued influx of immigrants, American Presbyterianism grew sufficiently to support seventeen ministers by 1716 and to establish a synod that same year.

Early in the eighteenth century a rift developed among American Presbyterians that roughly paralleled the differences between the New England and the Scotch-Irish strains of Presbyterianism. By 1729, the coalition of competing ideologies stood in danger of being torn asunder. Would American Presbyterianism define itself according to a bare intellectual assent to dogmatic and creedal definitions as set forth in the Westminster Standards?¹ Or would Presbyterians rely more on religious

¹ The Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger Catechism and the Shorter Catechism are frequently referred to collectively as the "Westminster Standards." See Herbert D. Morton, "Origins of the Twentieth Century Reformation Movement" (Th.M. thesis, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1967), 61. Morton shows that Machen favored the subscription to the Westminster Standards only as it contained "the system of doctrine" of the Scriptures. In fact, the crux of the controversy within the PCUSA that led Machen to the organizing of Westminster Theological Seminary and the Independent Board and the formation of the PCA was the liberals' lack of subscription to the Westminster Standards.

piety, the spiritual and ethical dimensions of the religious life? The New England Presbyterians generally supported Jonathan Dickinson's less rigorous position and the preponderance of the Scotch-Irish favored subscription.

By the time the synod met in 1729 to resolve the issue, both sides had sharpened their arguments in an exchange of pamphlets. Two very different notions of orthodoxy lay at the heart of this dispute. The subscriptionists, dominated by the Scotch-Irish, believed that creedal affirmation would ensure the perpetuation of correct theology. Dickinson and his party, on the other hand, dominated by Presbyterians from England and New England, thought of creeds as mere interpretations of Scripture, subject both to human fallibility and cultural influences.

In the end, compromise prevailed over ideology and partisanship.² The Adopting Act of 1729, crafted primarily by Dickinson, distinguished between the essential and nonessential components of the Westminster Standards. Any minister or ministerial candidate who had reservations about the Westminster articles was required to state his scruples at the time of his subscription. The presbytery would then judge whether or not the scruple could be resolved within the broader outlines of Westminster theology. Leonard J. Trinterud wrote concerning the Adopting Act:

The compromise in this Adopting Act involved several points. For one thing, the meaning of subscription to the Confession was

² Leonard J. Trinterud, *The Forming of an American Tradition: A Re-examination of Colonial Presbyterianism* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1970), 42-49.

stated carefully and at great length. The Church claimed no more than administrative power. The need for a standard was confessed, but two concessions were made. First, that in these Westminster Standards there were some doctrines that were necessary and essential to the whole, and others that were not. Secondly, it was granted that these essentials might be understood and stated differently by some. The judicature asking subscription was therefore to hear patiently the scruples of the entering brother. If his trouble was due to a misunderstanding, or involved a view of doctrine, worship, or government that was not incompatible with a fair interpretation of these symbols, he was to be admitted to the judicature without official censure or social ostracism.³

At the time of the Great Awakening, much more contention came. Presbyterians were divided into Old Side and New Side. William Tennent, Sr., began preparing a small group of clerical candidates, including his three sons, for the ministry in his home in Neshaminy, Pennsylvania, in 1727. The senior Tennent's academy came to be known as the Log College, originally a term of derision. Of the early students, Gilbert Tennent quickly emerged as the most energetic and insistent preacher. At New Brunswick, Tennent fell under the influence of Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen who, himself a product of Reformed pietism in the Old World, had come to the Raritan Valley in 1720. Frelinghuysen's itinerancy in New Jersey had both awakened many souls to the delights of

³ Ibid., 49.



“experimental” piety and engendered considerable acrimony in his churches. He had insisted that prospective communicants demonstrate some outward sign of regeneration.

Under Frelinghuysen’s influence, Tennent became convinced of his own spiritual apathy, and he resolved to exercise “greater earnestness in ministerial labours.”⁴ For Tennent, that meant rousing his congregations from their religious complacency. He preached that mere affirmation of belief in orthodox doctrine or even in the Bible itself was no longer sufficient. Tennent demanded instead an experience of God brought about by a spiritual conversion that included three stages: conviction of sin under the divine law; an experience of spiritual rebirth; and a reformed life that gave evidence of the work of the Spirit in practical piety. He repeated this demand countless times in emotional preaching as he itinerated throughout the Middle Colonies and undertook an ambitious program of home visitations. To the unconverted and self-righteous he preached the terrors of the law; to those under conviction, he preached grace and mercy; to the converted, he offered admonitions to piety and godly living. By the close of the 1720s Tennent’s congregations, like Frelinghuysen’s, were convulsed with religious revival. Gilbert’s brother John witnessed a considerable awakening among his congregation at Freehold, New Jersey, a work continued after his death in 1732 by still another brother, William, Jr.⁵

Soon, however, and predictably enough, the revival’s success

⁴ Ibid., 57.

⁵ Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 269-70.



among the Presbyterians engendered a reaction from those suspicious of all the enthusiasm that attended these awakenings. The opponents of the revival charged that the evangelicals were destroying the foundations of orthodoxy by belittling rational religion and emphasizing the religious affections.

While some battles over Presbyterian policy were being waged annually in the synod, Gilbert Tennent and other graduates of his father's Log College continued their work on behalf of the revival. Whatever the success or failure of the evangelicals' initiatives in the councils of the synod, they were making remarkable headway in the field. The Presbyterians' success in the Middle Colonies, together with the revival of piety among the Dutch, matched and even exceeded the religious fervor that Jonathan Edwards was witnessing in Northampton, Massachusetts. The Great Awakening was gathering force.

But the opposition gained momentum nearly as fast. For some reason – because of their itinerancy or because they anticipated controversy – those Presbyterians who supported the Awakening stayed away from the 1736 synod. At that meeting the subscriptionist-antirevival coalition effectively rescinded the Adopting Act of 1729 and, over token opposition, imposed strict, unqualified subscription onto all members of the synod. That action, however, together with subsequent attempts to restrict the movement of the revivalists, galvanized the revival faction – now derisively called “New Lights” by their opponents – into a cohesive party.

At the 1738 synod, the New Lights, headed by Gilbert Tennent,



won approval for the establishment of a new presbytery, called the New Brunswick Presbytery, with a large territory extending from Cape May to the Delaware Water Gap.

The arrival of George Whitefield, the Anglican itinerant, both convulsed the Middle Colonies in revival and hardened Presbyterian rivalries.⁶ Thus invigorated by Whitefield's example, Presbyterian revivalists preached with redoubled fervor, calling their congregations to repentance and castigating the "Old Lights" for their opposition to what was undeniably, from the New Light perspective, a work of God. Gilbert Tennent led the charge. Tennent's most famous sermon was delivered at Nottingham, Pennsylvania, on 8 March 1740. In that sermon, later published and widely circulated as *The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry*, Tennent argued passionately that the opponents of revival were unregenerate themselves and had no divine call to the ministry. He said that these pastors might technically be orthodox in theology, but they were spiritually dead, and, what was worse, they were leading their congregations astray. Mixing law and grace into a jumble of theological confusion, these unconverted ministers failed to lead their auditors from self-righteousness to conviction and on to conversion.⁷

The revival's opponents resorted once again to subscription in an attempt to thwart the influence of the New Lights. In 1741 John Thomson proposed upholding the powers of presbytery and synod by requiring all

⁶ Ibid., 270-71.

⁷ Ibid., 271.

communicants both to acknowledge those authorities and to subscribe to the Westminster Standards. At the meeting of the Synod of Philadelphia that same year, Robert Cross produced a document called the *Protestation*, which declared the New Brunswick revivalists to have forfeited their membership in synod by asserting their powers of ordination. The *Protestation* demanded that the revivalists abjure those powers as a condition for reinstatement into the synod. A majority of the synod hastily signed the *Protestation* on 1 June 1741, thereby, in their words, expelling “some of our members from our communion, on account of irregularity and misconduct in the following of Rev. George Whitefield, one of the English Methodists.”⁸

At this time, in the synod there were three groups – the Scotch-Irish clergy who were the subscriptionist-antirevival party, the New England group who opposed strict subscription and were moderate toward revivals, and the Tennent group or the Log College men who were staunchly pro-revivalists.⁹ The controversy of the two groups of them – the Scotch-Irish clergy and the Log College men – over revivalism resulted in a division of the church from 1741-1758.

The New Lights, thus forced from the synod, were confronted with the task of organizing their churches while simultaneously encouraging the perpetuation of revival fervor and sustaining various missionary efforts on the frontier. After their ejection, they took the name “Conjunct

⁸ Trinterud, *American Tradition*, 107.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 64-65.

Presbyteries of New Brunswick and Londonderry,” while their antirevivalist opponents, led by Scotch-Irish subscriptionists, christened themselves the Synod of Philadelphia. Popularly, however, the members of the Synod of Philadelphia were known as Old Side Presbyterians, and members of the revival party as the New Side Presbyterians. After being rebuffed by the Old Side while trying to mediate a rapprochement between the two factions, Jonathan Dickinson and his New York Presbytery withdrew from the Synod of Philadelphia and eventually joined with the revivalists of the New Brunswick Presbytery to form the Synod of New York in 1745.¹⁰

The conflict of the Old Side and the New Side has survived within American Presbyterianism into the twentieth century. The tendencies of the two sides became the two traditions of American Presbyterianism.¹¹ Also the summarization of the character of these two traditions within American Presbyterianism is found in *American Christianity: An Historical Interpretation with Representative Documents*:

Representatives of the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition sometimes speak of their churches as occupying a median position

¹⁰ Ibid., 109-29.

¹¹ For the details of the explanation of this conception, see George M. Marsden, “Perspective on the Division of 1937,” *Pressing Toward the Mark*, ed. C. G. Dennison and R. C. Gamble (Philadelphia: The Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1986), 295-311, 321-23; Marsden, “The New School Heritage and Presbyterian Fundamentalism,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 32 (May 1970), 129-147; Marsden, “The New School Presbyterian Mind: A Study of Theology in Mid-Nineteenth Century America” (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1966), Chapters One and Two; and Marsden, *The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience: A Case Study of Thought and Theology in Nineteenth-Century America*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), Chapters Two and Three.

within Protestantism, as embodying characteristics of both the “sect” or more subjective type of church and the “churchly” or more objective type of church. In American Presbyterianism this ambivalence was accentuated by the fact that these two aspects of the Reformed heritage were respectively emphasized by two different national traditions. Presbyterians of English Puritan or New England Puritan background tended toward a “low Church” or more subjective, less authoritarian conception of Presbyterianism, which in the eighteenth century was called New Side and in the nineteenth century New School; while Presbyterians of Scottish and Scotch-Irish background tended toward a “high church” or more objective and authoritarian conception of the heritage, known in the eighteenth century as Old Side and in the nineteenth as Old School. In a sense the history, especially the theological history, of American Presbyterianism has revolved around these two poles.¹²

The new body adhered to the Adopting Act of 1729 and insisted that ministers “have a competent degree of ministerial knowledge, are orthodox in their doctrine, regular in their lives,” and diligent in “designs of vital godliness.”¹³ The Synod of New York, however, did not stipulate any educational requirements of ministerial candidates that might exclude Log College graduates. Indeed, the new synod explicitly endorsed the revival

¹² H. Shelton Smith, Robert T. Handy, and Lefferts A. Loetscher, *American Christianity: An Historical Interpretation with Representative Documents*, Vol. I, 1607-1820, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1960), 262. Also see, Hutchinson, *History*, 149-50; and Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 1-2.

¹³ Trinterud, *American Tradition*, 121.

as a work of God, even as it made overtures toward reunion with the Old Side Synod of Philadelphia.

Having thus wed orthodox doctrine and vital piety, the Synod of New York sought institutional means to perpetuate this elusive pairing. Despite the Old Side-New Side squabbles, American Presbyterianism was entering a period of rapid growth. In 1740 Presbyterians had established approximately ninety-five Presbyterian congregations in the colonies; by 1780, however, that number would grow to nearly five hundred.¹⁴

Throughout the period of division New Side Presbyterians continued their cooperation with other revivalists, especially the Dutch in the Middle Colonies and the Congregational New Lights in New England. This movement culminated in 1758 when the trustees of the College of New Jersey persuaded Jonathan Edwards to assume the presidency of the Presbyterian school. But within weeks of his arrival in Princeton, Edwards died from the complications of a small pox inoculation.

Within months of Edwards' demise, however, New Side and Old Side Presbyterians negotiated an ecclesiastical treaty and reunited. Despite the Old Side Synod of Philadelphia's languor and its dim prospects – the number of Old Side clergy decreased from twenty-seven to twenty-three during the schism, while New Side ministers increased to seventy-three from twenty-two – it was the New Side that had made overtures for reconciliation throughout the years of separation, 1741 to 1758. Finally in

¹⁴ For statistical data on the growth of Presbyterianism in America, see Edwin S. Gaustad, *Historical Atlas of Religion in America*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1976).

1758, after a long sequence of negotiations, the two synods agreed to meet simultaneously in Philadelphia, where on 29 May 1758, following several conciliatory sermons, both sides adopted the Plan of Union hammered out by representatives of the two parties. Thus was born the Synod of New York and Philadelphia. The compromise settlement endorsed the Awakening as a work of God, while acknowledging revival excesses; it allowed some latitude in the acceptance of the Westminster Standards; and it affirmed that the powers of ordination lay with the presbyteries.¹⁵

Vestigial loyalties and suspicions continued to plague American Presbyterianism in the years following the reunion of 1758. Erstwhile Old Side men still preferred doctrinal affirmations as the criteria by which ministers should be judged, while the New Side party looked for evidence of warm-hearted, experimental religion; the Old Side still believed that the fount of Presbyterian orthodoxy lay across the Atlantic, whereas the New Side held that American Presbyterianism possessed a genius all its own, a mixture of ethnic groups leavened by Awakening piety and energized by missionary zeal. Although the 1758 reunion held the disparate strands of American Presbyterianism together for more than half a century, residual animosities between the factions became evident as they struggled to place their respective theological imprimaturs on educational institutions.

After the 1758 reunion, New Side partisans continued their efforts to protect their interests in Princeton. New Light firebrand Samuel Davies became the college's fourth president. Like Edwards, Davies's tenure was

¹⁵ Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, 273-74.

cut short by his untimely death in 1761, at age thirty-eight. New Side friends of the College next turned to Samuel Finley, one of the early students at the Log College. But again their plans were foiled by death; Finley, the college's fifth president in twenty years, died in 1766.

Finley's death created, once again, a power vacuum in the college administration. The Board of Trustees scrambled to find and install yet another president who would be acceptable to the college's New Side constituency. The board met on November 19, 1766 and chose John Witherspoon of Scotland as their candidate for the presidency. Witherspoon declined the board's first offer to become the college's sixth president. So the board elected Samuel Blair to the presidency. Like many of his predecessors, Blair's presidency was unusually short, although his tenure did not end with his death. Through the effort of Benjamin Rush, a Princeton graduate, Witherspoon agreed to take charge of the college, and Samuel Blair dutifully yielded control of the school to his Scottish successor.¹⁶

Soon after his arrival in Princeton in 1768 Witherspoon became a moderating force between Presbyterianism's factions. His Scottish Presbyterian background and his comprehensive knowledge of continental Reformed theology plus his reputation for warm-hearted piety uniquely qualified Witherspoon to mitigate remaining Old Side-New Side animosities and to recast colonial Presbyterianism along traditional lines. Witherspoon's conciliatory role in the internecine squabbles among

¹⁶ Ibid., 272-74.

America's contentious colonials would in itself earn him a place in American history textbooks, but his efforts on two other fronts also established him as one of American Presbyterianism's most important leaders. First, given his Scottish roots, he willingly represented thousands of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who had recently emigrated to the colonies. These Americans, accustomed to the more traditional Presbyterianism of the kirk, rapidly became the dominant ethnic force in American Presbyterianism. Hence, with his election to the presidency of the college, Witherspoon became the most prominent Presbyterian educator in the nation, as well as the titular head of Presbyterianism's most powerful constituency. Second, by the mid-1770s, Witherspoon was one of the most prominent clerical apologists for American independence, and he eventually became the only clergyman to sign the Declaration of Independence.¹⁷

In May 1788, the synod held its final meeting. After lengthy consideration the assembled ministers and elders endorsed the reports of the committees and resolved that "the Form of Government and Discipline and the Confession of Faith, as now ratified, is to continue to be our constitution and the confession of our faith and practice unalterable, unless two thirds of the Presbyteries under the care of the General Assembly shall propose alterations or amendments, and such alterations or amendments shall be agreed to and enacted by the General Assembly."¹⁸ Accordingly,

¹⁷ Ibid., 274-75; William Warren Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975 [1950]), 178-80.

¹⁸ Trinterud, *American Tradition*, 295.

the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America was held in May 1789 at the Second Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. The work of the Assembly was divided among 4 synods (New York and New Jersey, Philadelphia, Virginia, and the Carolinas), which were comprised of 16 presbyteries, 177 ministers, 111 probationers, and 419 congregations.¹⁹

For Presbyterians, as for other American Protestants, the nineteenth century got off to a rousing start with a series of revivals that, taken together, comprised what has been called the “Second Great Awakening.” These revivals eventually encompassed three geographical theaters of the new nation – New England, the Cumberland Valley, and western New York – and they had an enormous effect on both the religious and social life in the frontier areas, especially in the South. Missionaries distributed Bibles and religious tracts, evangelists proclaimed the salvific merits of faith in Christ, and new congregations were founded. Benevolent societies formed rapidly within religious communities, and a host of social ills were targeted for reform. Alcohol consumption, utterly prodigious by today’s standards, abated in the wake of revival as preachers emphasized the importance of personal holiness. Religious reformers also attacked dueling, prostitution, and chattel slavery.²⁰

The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 provided farmers in western New York access to eastern markets and set off an economic boom along

¹⁹ The statistical data are found in Lefferts A. Loetscher, *A Brief History of the Presbyterians*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978), 77.

²⁰ Randall Balmer and John R. Fitzmier, *The Presbyterians* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1994), 45-46.

the western reaches of the 341-mile waterway. Soon religion began to boom as well; revival fires erupted with such fervor and frequency in places like Auburn, Rome, and Utica that the region earned the sobriquet “the burned-over district.” No one stoked those fires more insistently and systematically than Charles Grandison Finney. The St. Lawrence Presbytery met at Adams on December 30, 1823, to consider the propriety of licensing him. Then he conceded that he had never even read the Westminster Confession of Faith. Keith J. Hardman, Finney’s biographer, writes:

It is utterly inconceivable, if there were indeed such discussions with [George] Gale, how the Westminster Confession would not often have come up, and it is difficult to understand under any conditions why a Princeton graduate like Gale would omit any study of it in preparing a candidate for the Presbyterian ministry.²¹

Also, he was ordained to the ministry by the same presbytery on July 1, 1824.

Finney, trained as an attorney, had little patience for the theological niceties of orthodox Calvinism. In contrast to Jonathan Edwards, whose account of the Northampton revival during the First Great Awakening was titled *A Faithful Narrative of a Surprising Work of God*, Finney believed that revivals were the work of people and that if an evangelist followed the proper procedures, which Finney outlined in *Lectures on Revivals of*

²¹ Keith J. Hardman, *Charles Grandison Finney, 1792-1875: Revivalist and Reformer* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, [1987] 1990), 54.

Religion in 1835, he could expect a revival. Finney insisted that harvesting souls was like harvesting grain. He declared that a spiritual awakening “is not a miracle, or dependent on a miracle, in any sense. It is a purely philosophical result of the right use of the constituted means – as much so as any other effect produced by the application of means.”²² Finney’s techniques, which he called “new measures,” included the use of media to publicize meetings, exhortations by women assistants, protracted nightly services, and the anxious bench, where auditors troubled about the state of their souls could seek counsel and wrestle with their eternal destinies.²³

The activities of Finney and likeminded evangelists, however, soon precipitated a schism among American Presbyterians. The exaltation of free will and self-determinism that marked Finney’s theology had an unmistakable appeal to a people that had just taken their political destiny into their own hands and who were now inebriated with Jacksonian democracy and the frontier spirit of rugged individualism. Traditional, old line Calvinistic notions about innate depravity and divine election were no longer popular, nor did they lend themselves easily to revivals. Those within the Presbyterian church who wished to brook no compromise on Calvinistic doctrines came to be known as Old School Presbyterians, and in the 1830s they plotted to take action against what became known as the New School faction. Finney himself chose to leave Presbyterianism

²² Charles G. Finney, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*, ed. William McLoughlin (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), 13.

²³ Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, 459-61; Sweet, *Story*, 283-84.

altogether in 1835.²⁴

Ever since the General Assembly of 1831 the Old School had sought to enforce doctrinal conformity, but found itself outnumbered by New School forces.²⁵ In 1835, for instance, they circulated an “Act and Testimony” over the signatures of Old School men that warned of “the prevalence of unsound doctrine and laxity in discipline.”²⁶ Indeed, a large array of issues were involved in the Old School-New School controversies. In 1801 Presbyterians had joined with Congregationalists in an extraordinary act of cooperation known as the Plan of Union. Faced with the rapid growth of population in frontier areas to the West, Presbyterians and Congregationalists decided to pool their mission efforts in order to avoid unnecessary duplication. Such a plan seemed eminently sensible, but for the conservatives of the Old School it opened the door to theological laxity because the Congregationalists did not require formal subscription to the Westminster Standards, and the Plan of Union therefore admitted Congregationalist ministers who had never affirmed Westminster Standards. Moreover, the Old School became jealous of denominational prerogatives and grew suspicious of the Plan of Union because it compromised the distinctives of Presbyterian doctrine and polity. However, the most important factor in the growing tensions was that the

²⁴ Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, 464-66.

²⁵ For an excellent treatment of the New School-Old School schism, see George M. Marsden, *The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience: A Case Study of Thought and Theology in Nineteenth-Century America* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1970), chap. 3.

²⁶ Lefferts A. Loetscher, *A Brief History of the Presbyterians*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978), 97.

Old School looked suspiciously at the revivals in general and especially at the underlying doctrinal innovations of Finney and Nathaniel William Taylor, a Congregationalist minister, both of whom had moderated Calvinist views of utter depravity and inability to accommodate human volition in the salvation process.²⁷

In 1835 Albert Barnes, a minister at First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia and a graduate of Princeton Seminary, published a commentary on the book of Romans that denied the doctrine of original sin and taught that the unregenerate could keep the commandments and initiate their own conversions. Suspended from the ministry for a year by the synod, Barnes appealed to the General Assembly in 1836. After a two-week trial the Assembly, with a majority New School representation, acquitted Barnes. Incensed at this affront to orthodox Calvinism, Old School men organized a “Committee of Correspondence” and insisted upon separation. At the General Assembly of 1837 the Old School finally mustered a majority and formally abrogated the 1801 Plan of Union with the Congregationalists, the putative source of these doctrinal innovations. Moreover, the Old School men declared that those synods organized under the Plan of Union were illegal, and they thereby excinded the Synods of Western Reserve, Utica, Genessee, and Geneva because of their “Congregational” origins and New School sympathies.²⁸

The New School, stunned by this development, regrouped in

²⁷ Hardman, *Finney*, chapters 13 and 15.

²⁸ Loetscher, *Brief History*, 96-97.

Auburn, New York, at what became known as the Auburn Convention. They refused to accept the excisions, resolved to remain Presbyterian, and insisted that the disowning acts of the 1837 Assembly were null and void. During the meeting of the 1838 General Assembly at the Seventh Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, New School representatives sought recognition by the Old School moderator, who promptly denied it. Chaos ensued, and, amid the shouts and the tumult, the New School declared itself a “Constitutional Assembly” and voted to adjourn to a more hospitable location. Both groups held their meetings in Philadelphia, although at different venues, and both bodies claimed the name “The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.”²⁹

The New School-Old School schism rent the fabric of American Presbyterianism. While the majority of the New School group came from upstate New York and the Western Reserve, it also claimed the allegiance of the Synods of Michigan and Eastern Tennessee. In addition, the New School attracted substantial numbers in New Jersey, Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio. Many presbyteries and many congregations were bitterly divided by the New School-Old School acrimony. The New School, on the whole, lamented the schism. The Old School, however, insisted that such a purge was necessary in order to safeguard both denominational prerogatives and the essentials of Reformed doctrine, even though they lost about four-ninths of their membership.³⁰

²⁹ Ibid., 98.

³⁰ Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, 462-68; Sweet, *Story*, 259-63.

In the mid-nineteenth century, there were increasingly powerful forces in American life urging Old and New School Presbyterians towards reunion. Rapid westward expansion emphasized the need of cooperation among the scattered frontier churches. The great evangelists of the day, like D. L. Moody, encouraged unity, especially in the wake of the horrible war. Also, the Civil War itself produced social issues that caused the opposing schools to forget their theological differences. Consequently, in 1863-1864 the New School United Synod of the Presbyterian Church, South, and the Old School, South, merged to form the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., South. Then in 1870 the reunion of the Old and New Schools occurred in the northern-based PCUSA.³¹ However, it was in the north that doctrinal deviation took its most extreme forms.

The northern reunion brought a wide range of theological thought under the same denominational umbrella and invited into the PCUSA, increasing toleration towards doctrinal diversity, a diversity that would change the denomination's entire theological posture by the first quarter of the twentieth century and ultimately capture the last bastion of conservative Old School theology, Princeton Theological Seminary.

³¹ *Presbyterian Reunion: A Memorial Volume, 1837-1871* (New York: Lent & Co., c. 1870), 316-460.

2. From Evangelical Empire to Marginalized Fundamentalism

Here, we need to turn to the relationship between religion and science in American religious history. Theodore Dwight Bozeman describes “science as a major and formative influence upon a central tradition in American religious thought” during the period stretching roughly from 1820 to 1860, the “supposedly antiscientific ‘age of romanticism.’”³²

It is difficult for today’s American religious historians to understand the intimate relationship between religion and science in this period, but a close historical study of this period is very necessary to get “the explanatory power of a contextual approach to the history of ideas.”³³ Throughout the period, “religion – at least in its Calvinist and Unitarian forms – was a great nurturing agent of the American intellect.”³⁴

According to Bozeman, Baconianism – “resting on the assumption that all scientific method was a simple operation upon sense data”³⁵ – is rooted in Scottish Realism, i.e., the Common Sense philosophy. And it is feasible to use “the Old School branch of American Presbyterianism as the subject of a detailed case study in Protestant Baconianism.”³⁶ The Old School, whose center was Princeton Theological Seminary, played the center role in combining religion and science in the antebellum period of

³² Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *Protestants in an Age of Science: The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1977), xi.

³³ *Ibid.*, xiv.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, xv.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, xiii.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, xii.

American religious history, and it assimilated the Baconian Philosophy to make the Baconian Theology, which applies Baconianism to the interpretation of the Bible. In addition to the Old School, Christianity as a whole exerted a great influence at that time on the society and culture in general. Thus Bozeman states that “antebellum America, marked by a lively and growing interest in natural science *and* evangelical Protestantism, widely nurtured the comfortable assumption that science *and* religion, Baconianism *and* the Bible, were harmonious enterprises cooperating toward the same ultimate ends.”³⁷

Also, Bozeman argues that conservative biblicism was initiated by the Old School in this period and that both the fundamentalist movement and conservative evangelicalism came from the Bible-centered ideas of the same period. Thus he states that a main foundation of both the fundamentalist movement of the early twentieth century and the powerfully resurgent conservative evangelicalism of more recent times was provided by the emphasis on the absolute factual veracity of the biblical text. Therefore, if, as Ernest R. Sandeen argued, the Presbyterian Princeton Theology provided a major root of fundamentalism, an additional stream of continuity in American thought will be clarified by “an analysis of the concepts of religious and biblical truth worked out by the early Princeton theologians and their colleagues within the conservative Old School church.” It will be made evident through analysis that primary attitudes nourishing later conservative view of Scripture were elaborated before the

³⁷ Ibid., xv.

Civil War and “under the impression of a positive coordination between Protestant religion and that heavily empiricist, factual style in scientific inquiry of which Bacon” was the important symbol.³⁸ And he further states that Presbyterians were effective in extending the reach of religion on the frontier of American thought, while they lost the battle of numbers. It should be noted by historians of science particularly that “many if not most of the men who in this time were rising to prominence in the American scientific community had received their basic orientation in concepts of the natural world and its scientific explication in the denominational colleges.” Therefore, he concludes that an important factor contributing to the great influence Protestant Christianity exerted on the American culture prior to the Civil War was the Christians’ theological adaptation of themes in natural science.³⁹

George Marsden speaks of the emerging fundamentalist movement: The belief that the facts and laws they were dealing with were matters of plain common sense was basic to the dynamics of the movement. Although fundamentalists emphasized that it was scientific, they never regarded their scheme of Biblical interpretation as esoteric. Esoteric, complicated, mystical, allegorical, and other fantastical interpretations were the characteristic productions of theology professors, especially Germans. Their own scheme was by contrast presented as simple

³⁸ Ibid., xiv.

³⁹ Ibid., 174-75.

and straightforward interpretation of fact according to plain laws available to common sense and the common man. Fundamentalism did not develop in seminaries, but in Bible conferences, Bible schools, and, perhaps most importantly, on the personal level of small Bible-study groups where the prophetic truths could be made plain.⁴⁰

In the movement one began with particular facts and built from them conclusions of universal validity in the Baconian view of reality. Almost all of them associated with the networks of Bible teachers, Bible institutes, Bible conferences, and evangelists precisely fit the ideological mold of dispensationalism and thoroughgoing Baconianism. The intellectual predispositions associated with dispensationalism gave fundamentalism its characteristic hue. Charles Hodge admonished that theology can remain faithful to its unchanging Lord, “only if it believes that its source of knowledge is without error and only if it adopts the worldview of supernaturalistic realism presupposed by the biblical writers.”⁴¹

American fundamentalism stemmed from opposition to the pressure to change the historic Christian faith. In that pressure many theological and nontheological factors were involved. Among the factors, the intellectual one – more specifically resulting from the issue of the relationship between religion and science, and critical study of the Bible – was the most important by which fundamentalists became marginal in

⁴⁰ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 61-62.

⁴¹ Gary Dorrien, *The Remaking of Evangelical Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 26.

society. However, in the nineteenth century, conservative evangelicalism was a dominant force in America. The main difference between nineteenth-century evangelicalism and twentieth-century fundamentalism was their intellectual status.

Now we need to turn to the emergence of fundamentalism and the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. Robert T. Handy deals with the religious and cultural developments by which fundamentalists became marginal.⁴² Handy shows that the movement from a Protestant America to an explicit pluralism was well under way during the decades from 1880 to 1920. This period was marked by an unprecedented influx of immigrants (many of whom were Catholics and Jews) with the result of the population being doubled, industrialization and urbanization, religious pluralism resulting from the proliferation of religious bodies due to the division of existing denominations and the arrival of new faiths with the immigrants, increasing conflicts between public and private school systems, excitement over imperialism, the growth of progressivism in politics, the rise of the social gospel, and the impact of World War I. Therefore, American society changed very rapidly and Protestantism was challenged by these developments.⁴³

In addition, Handy speaks of shifts in the intellectual climate in the period by stating that some critical people were questioning long-accepted views under the influence of “the Enlightenment, Romanticism, pure and

⁴² Robert T. Handy, *Undermined Establishment: Church-State Relations in America, 1880-1920* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991)

⁴³ *Ibid.*, ix-x.

applied science, historical method, and the increasing pluriformity of religion.” For example, the familiar assertion that America was a Christian nation was being regarded critically, although “the importance of the Christian faith and its churches was still generally recognized throughout American culture.”⁴⁴ The historical background of the fundamentalist movement can be found in the movement of American society from an age of faith to an age of doubt. The middle third of the nineteenth century in the United States has often been described as an age of faith in Protestant history, for then the rapidly growing evangelical denominations were a dominant force in religion and culture. However, the first two decades of the twentieth century were years when the very ground of belief systems were increasingly questioned. Although the critical questioners were few, the fact that their doubts were publicly expressed and seriously debated meant that “alternatives to theistic belief, alternatives that claimed scientific and philosophical justification, were increasingly pressing those who held traditional views about God and the institutions based on them toward a more marginal role in the larger society.” Because it was increasingly evident that individuals and groups could opt for one religious position or another or none at all, the public visibility of religious institutions was beginning to decline.⁴⁵

In this age of doubt, Protestant Christians chose to go in different ways. Some of them became apostates; others liberals; still others

⁴⁴ Ibid., 126.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 126-27.

fundamentalists. Handy continues:

For those trying to mediate between Christian faith and culture rapidly changing by the force of both democratic and intellectual pressures, it was a time of challenge and experimentation. In opening themselves to some trends of their time in an effort to reconcile them with their received religious traditions, many were satisfied that their reinterpretations were helpful, even necessary, for seeing faith in a new light while remaining true to it. But some were moving or drifting away from a recognizable and active Christian connection, and others were resisting all efforts to mediate between a changing culture and inherited religious teaching as a dilution of faith.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Ibid., 128.

3. Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy

Just as so many of the disputes afflicting American Presbyterians had revolved around the Westminster Standards, so too the fundamentalist-modernist controversy, which profoundly divided Presbyterians in the twentieth century, involved a disagreement over Westminster Standards. The subscription controversy in the eighteenth century, eventually settled by the Adopting Act of 1729, pitted strict confessionalists from the Middle Colonies against the Presbyterians from New England and from the English Puritan traditions who were less concerned about strict subscription to Westminster Standards than they were about heartfelt piety. In the wake of the revivals early in the nineteenth century, Old School Presbyterians, whose strength lay in Pennsylvania, the South, and at Princeton Theological Seminary, deplored laxity in the doctrinal matters covered by the Westminster Standards, while the New School, quite popular in New York and in the West, worried more about refining revival techniques and adapting harsh Calvinist doctrines to an age enamored of self-determinism.

By the closing decades of the nineteenth century, the Princetonians, relying on the Scottish Common Sense Philosophy brought to America by John Witherspoon, had developed a strong affinity for propositional truth, especially those propositions set forth in the Westminster Standards, which Princeton viewed as a generally trustworthy distillation of the truths of the Bible, impervious to change, and readily apparent to any openminded seeker. This is not to suggest that the Princetonians were unfeeling confessionalists; indeed, they promoted lively piety among their students.

At the same time, Princeton theologians, and Charles Hodge in particular, were eager to modify Friedrich Schleiermacher's claim that true religion was grounded in a feeling of absolute dependence on God. For them, reason and spiritual experience worked together in the life of faith, and neither should be permitted to prevail over the other. They asserted that truth was not historically relative, as Charles Briggs and others held, and the Bible not only contained the Word of God, it was the Word of God.

Hodge counseled that theological fidelity could be sustained only by holding fast to the doctrine of biblical inerrancy and the realist assurance that ordinary sense experience apprehends the real. He warned that underneath the fatal accommodationism of liberal theology lay the philosophical skepticism of David Hume and Immanuel Kant. He contended that if one cannot assume that the mind apprehends external objects as they are in themselves, there is no escape from the kind of cognitive relativism that creates a new liberal theology every few years. Hodge studied under Friedrich Schleiermacher at the University of Berlin in the 1820s and maintained a running debate with the liberal tradition throughout his career. Against liberal theologians he insisted that if one does not assume that Scripture is God's infallible Word, Christianity has no basis for teaching anything. He admonished that theology can remain faithful to its unchanging Lord, only if it believes that its source of knowledge is without error and only if it adopts the worldview of supernaturalistic realism presupposed by the biblical writers.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Balmer and Fitzmier, *Presbyterians*, 52-53, 86; Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, 462-63.

Hodge died in 1878, just as fundamentalism was beginning to emerge in America as a protest against modernizing trends in the churches. In the early 1880s, Benjamin B. Warfield and A. A. Hodge, Charles Hodge's son, assumed the polemical burden of defending Princeton orthodoxy from modernist criticism. After the younger Hodge died and Warfield assumed the systematic theology chair at Princeton, Warfield's vocational desire was merely to teach Hodge's theology to the next generation of Reformed seminarians. Princeton's insistence on the doctrine of biblical inerrancy issued in various attempts to have the General Assembly reaffirm biblical inerrancy. In the midst of the Briggs heresy trials of the early 1890s, the General Assembly, meeting in Portland, Oregon, in 1892, declared that the original manuscripts of the Bible were "without error." The Assembly reaffirmed this so-called Portland Deliverance the following year.⁴⁸

Moderate Presbyterians early in the 1890s attempted to revise the Confession of Faith. At the 1889 General Assembly fifteen presbyteries had presented memorials asking for a revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith, but the proposed revisions presented the following year failed to garner the necessary two-thirds approval. Conservatives were especially chary about conceding ground on the Confession while they were pursuing the conviction of Briggs, who at his third trial was finally convicted of heresy in 1893. Conservatives also initiated action against Henry Preserved Smith and Arthur Cushman McGiffert for their

⁴⁸ Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, 812-14.

progressive views, their departure from orthodox Calvinism, and for their denial of biblical inerrancy. By 1900 all three had been put out of the denomination.

However, calls for creedal revision continued. The General Assembly of 1900 appointed a “Committee of Fifteen” to make recommendations the following year. Moderates and liberals tended to support some kind of revision, while conservatives refused. Warfield, for instance, declined an invitation to serve on the committee. He wrote that “it is an inexpressible grief to me” to see the church “spending its energies in a vain attempt to lower its testimony to suit the ever changing sentiment of the world about it.”⁴⁹ Northern Presbyterians finally adopted eleven overtures at the General Assembly in 1903, including statements on missions and on the Holy Spirit, an affirmation of God’s love for all humanity, and the assurance of salvation for those dying in infancy.⁵⁰

This action, however, did not placate the growing demands for a more contemporary statement of faith. The General Assembly of 1910, responding to complaints about doctrinal laxity on the part of three Union Seminary graduates, adopted a set of five “essential and necessary” doctrines at its closing session, after many of the delegates had left. These doctrines included belief in the inerrancy of the Bible; the virgin birth of Christ; his substitutionary atonement; Christ’s bodily resurrection; and the authenticity of miracles. The General Assembly reaffirmed these

⁴⁹ Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 83.

⁵⁰ Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, 814-15.

“essentials” in 1916 and 1923, and they became the “famous five points” of contention among Presbyterians in the 1920s. As conservative Presbyterians felt more and more beleaguered, they began to look for allies outside the PCUSA. They found kindred spirits in the emerging, interdenominational coalition of conservative Protestants who became known as fundamentalists, named after the series of twelve booklets called, collectively, *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, published from 1910 to 1915 and financed by two wealthy Los Angeles laymen, Lyman and Milton Stewart.⁵¹

During the 1910s, however, conservatives within the PCUSA carried out their denominational battles largely unaided by the broader fundamentalist coalition. When David S. Kennedy assumed the editorship of *The Presbyterian* in 1911, he titled his first editorial “The Present Conflict” and wrote that the battle shaping up between conservatives and liberals (or fundamentalists and modernists) was “the renewal of the old primitive conflict between cultured heathenism and historic Christianity.”⁵² The immediate cause of the fundamentalist controversy itself was not a fundamentalist but a liberal Baptist minister, Harry Emerson Fosdick of the First Presbyterian Church of New York. His activities within the PCUSA brought into sharp focus the intensity of the conflict between the conservatives and the liberals within that denomination. On Sunday morning, May 21, 1922, he preached the sermon “Shall the

⁵¹ Ibid., 814-16.

⁵² Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 102.

Fundamentalists Win?”⁵³ In this sermon he contrasted the liberal and conservative views on such doctrines as the inspiration of the Scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, His substitutionary atonement and second coming. Fosdick argued that liberalism was certainly a legitimate form of Christianity and that fundamentalists could not “drive out from the Christian churches all the consecrated souls who do not agree with their theory of inspiration.” He continued that “just now the Fundamentalists are giving us one of the worst exhibitions of bitter intolerance that the churches of this country have ever seen.”⁵⁴ He then pleaded for toleration of both views within the church. The sermon served to move the conflict from sermons, books and pamphlets into the courts of the church.⁵⁵

Ivy Lee, an interested layman, added an introduction to the sermon and changed its title to “The New Knowledge and the Christian Faith.” Then he sent copies of the sermon throughout the country, some of which the Presbyterian ministers in Philadelphia received.⁵⁶

As a result of the sermon, “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” *The Presbyterian* rejoined by printing a sermon titled “Shall Unbelief Win?” Even William Jennings Bryan, the “Great Commoner,” former secretary of state and three-time presidential candidate, entered the fray with his 1922 treatise *In His Image: An Answer to Darwinism*, which attacked Fosdick’s theistic evolution. Bryan argued that Darwinism represented the first

⁵³ The complete text of the sermon was reprinted in *The Christian Century* 39 (Jun. 8, 1922), 713 ff.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 29-32; and Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 108-10; Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, 911.

⁵⁶ Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 30; and Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 109.

major menace to Christianity since the birth of Christ. An aroused Presbytery of Philadelphia, meeting in the home of John Wanamaker, adopted and sent an overture to the General Assembly of 1923 in which it charged that the preaching in the First Presbyterian Church of New York “appears to be in open denial of the essential doctrines of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and subversive of the truth of Christianity.”⁵⁷ And it continued:

The Presbytery of Philadelphia hereby respectfully overtures the General Assembly to direct the Presbytery of New York to take such action as will require the preaching and teaching in the First Presbyterian Church of New York City to conform to the system of doctrine taught in the Confession of Faith.⁵⁸

When the General Assembly met in May, 1923, the most important issue before it was the overture from the Presbytery of Philadelphia. The overture was put in the hands of the Assembly’s Committee on Bills and Overtures. The committee brought in a majority report signed by twenty-one of the twenty-two members of it, which rejected the Philadelphia overture and recommended that the New York Presbytery be allowed to conduct its own investigation and submit a report to the General Assembly in 1924. And the minority report was signed and presented by the single member of the committee who had refused to sign the majority report, A. Gordon MacLennan, of Philadelphia. Yet the minority report was adopted

⁵⁷ “Editorials,” *The Presbyterian* 22 (Oct. 26, 1922), 6.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

by the Assembly vote of 439 to 359.⁵⁹ This report required the preaching and teaching at the First Presbyterian Church in New York City,

To conform to the Bible and the Westminster Confession of Faith. It also asked the Assembly to reaffirm its faith in the infallibility of the Bible, in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, in His substitutionary atonement on the cross, in His bodily resurrection and in His mighty miracles, as essential doctrines of Holy Scripture and the Westminster Confession of Faith.⁶⁰

As soon as the minority report was adopted a protest was filed with the Assembly charging that the decision was not substantiated by evidence. This protest declared that the Assembly passed judgment upon a matter that was not correctly placed before the Assembly, and it demanded doctrinal tests upon office-bearers which is not permitted by the constitution of the church.⁶¹

The New York Presbytery in 1923 appointed five men to investigate matters at First Presbyterian Church, in answer to a request from the Harlem-New York Church. On October 1, 1923 and on January 14, 1924 the committee reported to the Presbytery. The committee brought in a report favorable to Fosdick and to the First Church. In accordance with the recommendations of its committee the Presbytery adopted four resolutions. One approved “the purpose and character of the preaching in the First Church of New York;” another affirmed the Presbytery’s

⁵⁹ Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 31, 33.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 33-34.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 36.

confidence in the Session of the First Church; the third declared the Presbytery's willingness "to receive further reports and take further action as occasion may require;" the fourth deplored "controversy and strife."⁶²

Against this action of the Presbytery, complaint was carried to the General Assembly of 1924. And the complaint was handled by the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Assembly, a Commission whose decisions could be accepted or rejected but not debated by the Assembly. The Commission asserted that Fosdick's explanations of his sermon "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" had been by no means sufficiently "clear and unequivocal."⁶³ Then, without offering an opinion as to the orthodoxy of Fosdick's theology, the Commission noted the impropriety of a non-Presbyterian's occupying a Presbyterian pulpit for a long period of time and recommended that Fosdick be invited to become a Presbyterian minister. In essence, the Permanent Judicial Commission recommended that the Assembly commit to the Presbytery of New York the task of ascertaining the orthodoxy of Fosdick's views. The Assembly of 1924 then accepted the recommendation of the Commission.⁶⁴

When confronted with the matter of his relationship to the Presbyterian Church, Fosdick refused to join on the ground that it would violate his conscience to subscribe to any confession of faith. He resigned as associate minister of the First Presbyterian Church. The fundamentalists therefore failed to secure from his case any judicial

⁶² Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 122; and Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 37.

⁶³ Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 122.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 122-23; and Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 38.

precedent that could have been used against Presbyterian ministers with a similar theology. They were unhappy that the Assembly did not take a more definite stand against modernism. And the liberals were also unhappy because they were about to lose an outstanding minister. With great reluctance the congregation accepted his resignation, which was effective as of March, 1925.⁶⁵

The controversy between the modernists and the fundamentalists spread throughout the entire church and manifested itself in numerous ways. Machen and Clarence Edward Macartney addressed a rally in New York City on October 30, 1923. Machen described the liberal position as another religion different from Christianity.⁶⁶ On December 10 and 14, 1923, Maitland Alexander, conservative pastor from the First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, addressed mass rallies in New York and Philadelphia. His subject was “The Maintenance of the Reformed Theology.” He stressed the importance of remaining loyal to the Standards of the church.⁶⁷

At this time J. Gresham Machen became prominent. He had published *The Origin of Paul's Religion* in 1921. The book's language was carefully modulated, but Machen's message augured factional polemics to come. He argued that the Pauline theology of Christ's death and resurrection was central to the faith of the early Christian church. The book repudiated the ethical-experientialist Christologies favored by liberal Protestantism. Liberal theology sought to salvage a normative center for

⁶⁵ Furniss, *Fundamentalist Controversy*, 136-37; and Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 122-23.

⁶⁶ Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 40.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 40-41.

Christian faith that was not vulnerable to historical criticism, finding this center in the redeeming influence or moral example of Jesus. From Schleiermacher to Herrmann, Christ became the exemplar of a religious or moral ideal. Machen countered that this strategy was the invention of a compromised culture-faith that no longer believed in the gospel. Liberal Protestantism set the “religion of Jesus” against Paul’s theology of the cross and resurrection. Machen argued, in response, that so-called Paulinism was actually the heart of any authentic Christianity. For Paul, Jesus was a divine being who vicariously atoned for human sin through his death on the cross. Machen contended that this understanding of the gospel is as old as Christianity itself. It followed for him that any theology that would dilute or displace this central biblical understanding of salvation forsook its connection to genuine Christianity. Though his first book never quite drew out the polemical implication of this thesis, the seed of the argument that soon made him famous was already there: The difference between liberal theology and true Christianity was not a matter of degree but a question of different religions.⁶⁸

However, it was the appearance in 1923 of another book titled *Christianity and Liberalism*, a primer on true and counterfeit Christianities, which established Machen as one of fundamentalism’s outstanding spokesmen. Although the book mentioned Fosdick only once, many people read it as a rejoinder to Fosdick’s modernizing sermons and his

⁶⁸ J. Gresham Machen, *The Origin of Paul’s Religion* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1921).

warnings about fundamentalism. This book sought to remind Americans that the genuine thing made no apology for its supernaturalism. Machen argued that in the great debate of the present day, the fundamentalist side stood with Jesus and Paul. He insisted that liberal Christianity was not a modern version of the Christian faith, as its theologians supposed. It was rather an alternative religion that rejected the authority of the Bible, substituted self-flattering Christ consciousness for Christ's sacrificial atonement, and blathered endlessly about love and compassion while denigrating the faith of traditional believers. He claimed that "modern liberals are never weary of pouring out the vials of their hatred and their scorn." For all their self-congratulating talk about sensitivity, the liberals were grossly insensitive to the feelings of believers who followed Christ as Lord and Savior. They used "every weapon of caricature and vilification" to deride the doctrine of Christ's atoning death. Machen observed that they spoke with disgust "of those who believe 'that the blood of our Lord, shed in a substitutionary death, placates an alienated Deity and makes possible welcome for the returning sinner.'"⁶⁹

This quote was from Fosdick, who contended that the doctrine of penal substitution was crude anthropomorphism that turned God into an avenging tyrant. Liberal theology sought to relieve Christianity of such unfortunate misunderstandings, however anciently rooted. Machen countered that this was a perverse form of moral sensitivity. He remarked

⁶⁹ Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*, 119-20. The citation was from Fosdick's sermon, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?"

that speaking with contempt about the doctrine of Christ's atoning sacrifice, the liberals "pour out their scorn upon a thing so holy and so precious that in the presence of it the Christian heart melts in gratitude too deep for words." Liberals abandoned and derided genuine Christianity on account of their presumed moral superiority, but "it never seems to occur to modern liberals that in deriding the Christian doctrine of the Cross, they are trampling upon human hearts."⁷⁰ In *Christianity and Liberalism* he made the case for a traditional Protestant understanding of God, humanity, Christ, the Bible, and the church. Machen warned that because of sin, we cannot be saved by the discovery of eternal truth, for the discovery of truth only brings us to the truth of our hopelessness. He remarked that even if all the ideas of Christianity were to be discovered in another religion, there would be no genuine Christianity in that religion, for Christianity does not depend on any particular complex of ideas. The truth of Christianity depends rather on the narration of an event. Without this event, humanity is consumed by an overpowering aggressor, the kingdom of sin and death. Machen explained that "but a blessed new face has been put upon life by the blessed thing that God did when He offered up His only begotten Son."⁷¹ This is the heart of gospel faith that makes the gospel "good news."

And how do we know the gospel proclamation is true? Machen made a passing reference to various evidences, including arguments for

⁷⁰ Ibid., 120.

⁷¹ Ibid., 70.

early dates for the Gospels, the evidence for apostolic authorship, the historical credibility of the Gospel narratives, and the testimony of Christian experience, but he cautioned that all these arguments are merely supporting claims for faith, and not the ground of Christian certainty. Apologetics can provide evidence that reinforces Christian belief, but faith is ultimately grounded on the certainty that God has communicated to us through the words of Scripture. He explained that “the doctrine of plenary inspiration does not deny the individuality of the Biblical writers; it does not ignore their use of ordinary means for acquiring information; it does not involve any lack of interest in the historical situations which gave rise to the Biblical books.” “What it does deny is the presence of error in the Bible.”⁷² The doctrine of inspiration proposes that the guiding presence of the Holy Spirit in their writing saved the biblical writers from any kind of error. Everything depends on the fact and implications of this claim. Machen stated that “Christianity is founded upon the Bible.... It bases upon the Bible both its thinking and its life. Liberalism on the other hand is founded upon the shifting emotions of sinful men.”⁷³ It was not altogether implausible in 1922 that the fundamentalists might win their struggle for hegemony in the churches. They nearly controlled the Northern Presbyterian and Baptist churches. Disagreeing with his revered teacher Warfield, Machen judged that a successful purge was possible. He therefore ended *Christianity and Liberalism* with a ringing call to drive the

⁷² Ibid., 74.

⁷³ Ibid., 79.

liberals out.

The liberals did not stand idly by during the Fosdick conflict. A committee of 150 Presbyterian ministers with headquarters at 10 Nelson Street, Auburn, New York, issued a statement on December 26, 1923, in reply to the action taken by the General Assembly concerning the overture from the Philadelphia Presbytery. It was entitled *An Affirmation Designed to Safeguard the Unity and Liberty of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*.⁷⁴ Because of its origin at Auburn Seminary in Auburn, New York, it became generally known as the “Auburn Affirmation.” And it was one of the most important declarations of the twentieth century for the history of the church.⁷⁵

The Affirmationists held that to require a particular interpretation of the Westminster Standards was to jeopardize the unity and the historic liberty of the church. They specifically denied the inerrancy of the Scriptures. The Affirmationists asserted that no such claim was made in the Scriptures or in the Confession of Faith, and that the General Assembly spoke without warrant in claiming that it was. In fact, according to the Affirmation, such a view of the Scriptures “impairs their supreme authority for faith and life, and weakens the testimony of the church to the power of God unto salvation through Jesus Christ.”⁷⁶

The Affirmation contended that it was unconstitutional for the

⁷⁴ *An Affirmation Designed to Safeguard the Unity and Liberty of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (Auburn: The Jacobs Press, 1924). Published in January, 1924, with the signatures of 150 ministers; and by the time of its second publication, in May, 1924, with almost thirteen hundred signatures.

⁷⁵ Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 41-42.

⁷⁶ *An Affirmation*.

General Assembly of 1923 to elevate the five doctrines mentioned in the deliverance to the position of tests for ordination or good standing in the church. In addition, it stated:

Furthermore, this opinion of the General Assembly attempts to commit our church to certain theories concerning the inspiration of the Bible, and the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection, and the Continuing Life and Supernatural Power of our Lord Jesus Christ... we are united in believing that these are not the only theories allowed by the Scriptures and our standards as explanations of ... facts and doctrines of our religion, and that all who hold to these facts and doctrines, whatever theories they may employ to explain them, are worthy of all confidence and fellowship.⁷⁷

Marsden summarizes:

This protest asserted, on constitutional grounds that had been upheld by progressive parties since 1729, that Presbyterian ministers had some liberty in interpreting the Westminster Confession of Faith, the church's official statement of Biblical teaching. Furthermore, the protest emphasized that the five-point declaration was both extra-constitutional and extra-Biblical. The insistence on the inerrancy of Scripture, they said, went beyond both the Confession and the Bible's own statements. Furthermore, in its key passage, the Affirmation declared that the five-point declaration committed the church to "certain theories" concerning inspiration, the Incarnation,

⁷⁷ Ibid.

the Atonement, the Resurrection, and the supernatural power of Christ. Fellowship within the Presbyterian Church, the signers affirmed, should be broad enough to include any people who like themselves held “most earnestly to these great facts and doctrines,” regardless of the theories they employed to explain them.⁷⁸

The issuance of the Affirmation evoked a violent response from the fundamentalists, for to label as “theories” what they considered to be indispensable doctrines of true Biblical Christianity was an offense of the first order. Several overtures against the Affirmation were presented to the General Assembly of 1924, but the Committee on Bills and Overtures debated the overtures for five days and recommended “no action.” The assembly adopted its recommendation. Moreover, there was no protest and no dissenting vote.⁷⁹ Why the fundamentalists were not more active in opposition to the Affirmation during the 1924 Assembly is a question difficult to answer, especially since a strong fundamentalist leader, Macartney, was the moderator of the General Assembly that year. Rian suggested that there was no sound explanation for fundamentalist inactivity other than that they simply made a grave mistake.⁸⁰

The fundamentalists spoke and wrote vigorously against the Affirmation but took no action. Rian lamented, “It is a matter of great sorrow that no attempt whatsoever was made at the time to bring individual

⁷⁸ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 180.

⁷⁹ Edward L. Kellogg, *Lest We Forget* (Philadelphia: Committee on Christian Education, n.d.), 3-4; and Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 53-54.

⁸⁰ Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 54-55.

signers of the ‘Auburn Affirmation’ to trial.”⁸¹ One attempt was made ten years later in the Presbytery of Philadelphia on the ground that the signers had violated their ordination vows, but it failed.⁸²

The Auburn Affirmation, however, considerably widened the rift between the liberal and the fundamentalist elements within the PCUSA.⁸³ Yet the Affirmation was a notable victory for liberalism. Its signers were not only not expelled from the church but gained many allies and soon became dominant in the church. In the late twenties many of the Affirmationists occupied important positions on the boards and commissions of the denomination. And in the mid-thirties fundamentalists found themselves on trial.

However, one very important event occurred in 1925. Since 1923 several Southern states had adopted some type of anti-evolution legislation, and similar bills were pending throughout the nation. The law passed in Tennessee in the spring of 1925 was the strongest. It banned the teaching of Darwinism in any public school. Immediately John T. Scopes, a young Dayton biology teacher violated this law. Scopes was brought to trial in that small mountain town in July. This infamous “monkey trial” seriously discredited the fundamentalist cause. Although Scopes was convicted and fined \$100 for violating the Butler Act (the conviction was later overturned

⁸¹ Ibid., 57.

⁸² Ibid., 57-58.

⁸³ For detailed accounts of the fundamentalist-liberal conflict in the PCUSA over the Fosdick case and the Auburn Affirmation, see Robert H. Nichols, “Fundamentalism in the Presbyterian Church,” *The Journal of Religion* Vol. 5, No. 1 (1925), 14-36; Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, Chapter Two; Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, 335-70; and Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, Chapter Twelve.

on a technicality), fundamentalists lost the larger battle for public sentiment. Clarence Darrow's wry and spirited cross-examination of William Jennings Bryan, who served as counsel for the prosecution, together with H. L. Mencken's stinging dispatches from Dayton ridiculing fundamentalists, succeeded in discrediting fundamentalism and attaching a stigma that persists to this day.⁸⁴ Marsden writes concerning the significance of this event:

It would be oversimplification to attribute the decline and the disarray of fundamentalism after 1925 to any one factor. It does appear, however, that the movement began in reality to conform to its popular image. The more ridiculous it was made to appear, the more genuinely ridiculous it was likely to become. The reason was simple. [Walter] Lippmann was correct that the assumptions of even the best of the fundamentalist arguments were not acceptable to the best educated minds of the twentieth century. Before 1925 the movement had commanded much respect, though not outstanding support, but after the summer of 1925 the voices of ridicule were raised so loudly that many moderate Protestant conservatives quietly dropped support of the cause rather than be embarrassed by association.⁸⁵

In relation to this matter, R. Laurence Moore advocates that the fundamentalist response to the quarrels of the 1920s was not "a response to

⁸⁴ Bradley J. Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and Moderates* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 154-56.

⁸⁵ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 191.

declining social importance and economic status so much as response to diminished intellectual prestige.”⁸⁶ Around World War I, conservative Protestants “began to step self-consciously into outsider roles.”⁸⁷ The Scopes trial in 1925 was “such an important event in shaping contemporary Fundamentalist consciousness.”⁸⁸ Through the ridicule heaped upon the Fundamentalist position through the trial, theological conservatives came to realize that “they operated in a different intellectual universe from the one their fathers had known in the nineteenth century.”⁸⁹ Moore writes:

The outsider consciousness that developed among average American Protestants was a defensive reaction to intellectual insecurity. In America’s best-known centers of learning, they were losing a battle of prestige.⁹⁰

In Moore’s judgment, even evangelicalism cannot shed the minority self-image, nor can it avoid the charge of intellectual backwardness as long as it doesn’t stand well with the scientific community by accepting what modern biology asserts.⁹¹ Therefore, according to Moore, fundamentalism became marginalized by the intellectual standard; and however strong their force is, theologically conservative Protestants are still outsiders by the intellectual standard based upon the theories of modern biology.

There still remained, however, one very important conservative

⁸⁶ R. Laurence Moore, *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 172.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 163.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 159.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 165.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 172.

bastion, Princeton Theological Seminary. The seminary was founded by the Presbyterian Church in 1812, and for more than one hundred years it had served as a citadel of the Reformed faith, vigorously defending and propagating the Calvinism of the Presbyterian Church as set forth in the Westminster Standards. Yet it became soon the object of intense liberal interest and activity. A move was made to reorganize the seminary.

The committee appointed by the General Assembly of 1926 investigated the problem at Princeton Seminary and reported its progress to the General Assembly of 1927. It concluded that the source of the trouble at Princeton lay in the plan of government by two boards and that the reports of the divisions and hostilities at the seminary were not exaggerated and existed in the faculty, boards and alumni. The committee recommended that the General Assembly appoint a committee of eleven to undertake the reorganization of the seminary under a single Board of Control. It also recommended that the appointments of O. T. Allis and J. Gresham Machen as full professors not be confirmed until the reorganization had been effected.⁹² The General Assembly adopted the recommendations.⁹³

In accordance with prescribed procedure the committee presented the exact plan of reorganization to the General Assembly of 1928.⁹⁴ The

⁹² *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1927, Part One, 133-34.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁹⁴ *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1928, Part One, 60.*

General Assembly adopted the plan in 1929.⁹⁵ Consequently, Robert Dick Wilson, J. Gresham Machen, Oswald T. Allis and Cornelius Van Til resigned from the Princeton faculty.⁹⁶

Then, what was the problem with the reorganization of the seminary? The problem was basically this: the reorganization would bring the seminary under closer control of the General Assembly, the president's powers would be increased, and the setting up of a single Board of Control would effectively give control of the seminary to the faction headed by the president, J. Ross Stevenson, whose lack of dogmatism, aggressive leadership and inclusivism had resulted in severe division within the administration of the seminary. The conservatives anticipated that the inevitable result of such a reorganization would be the loss of the seminary's unique contribution to the defense and propagation of the Reformed faith.⁹⁷

In fact, two members of the new Board of Trustees were Affirmationists and the board largely "commended the Affirmation to the confidence of the church. Princeton Seminary, the last institution in the church to stand up against inclusivism, fell, and a new institution of a radically different type took its place."⁹⁸

Thus Machen refused to continue as a member of the teaching staff under the new Board of Trustees. And he desired an institution which

⁹⁵ *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1929, Part One, 143.*

⁹⁶ Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 80.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 64-81.

⁹⁸ Harden, *Brief History*, 21-22.

would preserve the witness of traditional Calvinism. He led in the formation of Westminster Theological Seminary at Philadelphia in 1929. Three other faculty members and twenty-nine students, one of whom was McIntire, made the break from Princeton Theological Seminary with him.⁹⁹

McIntire himself recalls:

This struggle, which brought the last of the theological seminaries of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. into the inclusivist stream of the broadening church, definitely involved the Auburn Affirmationists. Many of these signers were among the leaders in the battle to reorganize the institution, changing it technically from two boards of control – a Board of Directors and a Board of Trustees – to just one board of control. When this was done by the 1929 General Assembly, two signers of the heretical Auburn Affirmation were placed on the board. Princeton was the last of the great seminaries to be captured and its voice silenced.¹⁰⁰

Westminster Theological Seminary opened on September 25, 1929, with a student body of fifty.¹⁰¹ Machen delivered the address entitled “Westminster Theological Seminary: Its Purpose and Plan” at the opening exercises. He said among other things:

No, my friends, though Princeton Seminary is dead, the noble

⁹⁹ Ibid., 22.

¹⁰⁰ Carl McIntire, *The Death of a Church* (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1967), 143; Idem. *Outside the Gate* (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1967), 169.

¹⁰¹ Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 89-90. The details of the reorganization of Princeton Seminary and of the founding of Westminster Seminary are discussed from a conservative viewpoint in Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, Chapters Three and Four; Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, Chapters Eleven, Nineteen, Twenty-one, Twenty-two and Twenty-three. Cf. Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, Chapters Fourteen and Fifteen.

tradition of Princeton Seminary is alive. Westminster Seminary will endeavor by God's grace to continue that tradition unimpaired; it will endeavor, not on a foundation of equivocation and compromise, but on an honest foundation of devotion to God's Word, to maintain the same principles that the old Princeton maintained. We believe, first, that the Christian religion, as it is set forth in the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, is true; we believe, second, that the Christian religion welcomes and is capable of scholarly defense; and we believe, third, that the Christian religion should be proclaimed without fear or favor, and in clear opposition to whatever opposes it, whether within or without the church, as the only way of salvation for lost mankind. On that platform, brethren, we stand. Pray that we may be enabled by God's Spirit to stand firm. Pray that the students who go forth from Westminster Seminary may know Christ as their own Saviour and may proclaim to others the gospel of his love.¹⁰²

In this pronouncement, Machen had stated eloquently what the seminary has striven to accomplish to the present day. It can be known through it that Machen "laid down the platform upon which the seminary appeals for support and upon which the professors teach" in it. Westminster Seminary "assumes the offensive in the warfare against paganism in its

¹⁰² J. Gresham Machen, "Westminster Theological Seminary: Its Purpose and Plan," *What Is Christianity?*, ed. Ned B. Stonehouse (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), 232-33.

many forms.”¹⁰³

In 1932, the publication of a book entitled *Re-Thinking Missions* stirred up anew the controversy within the church, with Machen taking a leading part. Actually the book was “a report by an interdenominational committee about foreign mission work.”¹⁰⁴ It urged a recasting of missions in light of the many changes in the world during the past century. The report urged greater respect for the validity and integrity of other religions. It advocated the extremely liberal view of religious eclecticism in the work of foreign missions.

Macartney observed that Christianity was considered as just one of the numerous religions of the world, emphasizing the statement of the report that we should look forward to their continued coexistence with Christianity making unity in the most complete religious truth the ultimate goal. It meant that the name of Christ would no longer be the only name given under heaven among men by which we must be saved. Macartney was nevertheless grateful that the report gave the confirmation concerning the issue facing the churches, an issue to which they were largely blind or indifferent at the time of the Fosdick controversy in 1920s. Two members of the committee responsible for the production of this book also served as members of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA.¹⁰⁵

Machen stated with regard to the book that it “constitutes from

¹⁰³ Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 93-94.

¹⁰⁴ John Patton Galbraith, *Why the Orthodox Presbyterian Church?* (Philadelphia: The Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1965), 23.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 23-24; Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 149-50; and Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, 469, 472-74.

beginning to end an attack upon the historic Christian Faith. It presents as the aim of missions that of *seeking* truth together with adherents of other religions rather than that of *presenting* the truth which God has supernaturally recorded in the Bible.” In an attempt to check the spread of liberalism throughout the missionary ministry of the church, he proposed, early in 1933, to the Presbytery of New Brunswick, an overture, which if adopted by the General Assembly would have guaranteed that only conservatives would be elected to the Board of Foreign Missions and only conservatives would be appointed by the Board as missionaries. It read:

The Presbytery of New Brunswick respectfully overtures the General Assembly of 1933,

1. To take care to elect to positions on the Board of Foreign Missions only persons who are fully aware of the danger in which the Church stands and who are determined to insist upon such verities as the full truthfulness of Scripture, the virgin birth of our Lord, His substitutionary death as a sacrifice to satisfy Divine justice, His bodily resurrection and His miracles, as being essential to the Word of God and our Standards and as being necessary to the message which every missionary under our Church shall proclaim,

2. To instruct the Board of Foreign Missions that no one who denies the absolute necessity of acceptance of such verities by every candidate for the ministry can possibly be regarded as competent to occupy the position of Candidate Secretary,

3. To instruct the Board of Foreign Missions to take care lest,

by the wording of the application blanks for information from candidates and from those who are asked to express opinions about them, or in any other way, the impression be produced that tolerance of opposing views or ability to progress in spiritual truth, or the like, is more important than an unswerving faithfulness in the proclamation of the gospel as it is contained in the Word of God and an utter unwillingness to make common cause with any other gospel whether it goes under the name of Christ or not,

4. To warn the Board of the great danger that lurks in union enterprises at home as well as abroad, in view of the widespread error in our day.¹⁰⁶

In support of his views, Machen personally financed the publication of a 110 page booklet which he had written entitled *Modernism and the Board of Foreign Missions*.¹⁰⁷

The Presbytery of New Brunswick did not adopt Machen's overture, but through the distribution of his pamphlet the overture and his case against the Board of Foreign Missions became well-known. A number of other presbyteries, including the Presbytery of Philadelphia, adopted the overture, thus assuring it would be brought before the General Assembly of 1933.¹⁰⁸

When the 1933 General Assembly met in Columbus, Ohio, it rejected the overture originally authored by Machen and gave wholehearted

¹⁰⁶ Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, 474-76.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 476.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 479-80.

and enthusiastic support to the Board of Foreign Missions. Machen and his associates came to the conclusion that it was impossible to reform the present board for foreign missions within the Presbyterian Church. They felt their only alternative was to organize an independent board operating outside of the Church which would be devoted to biblical and truly Presbyterian foreign missions. On June 27, 1933, therefore, the Independent Board was organized. The officers were J. Gresham Machen, President; Merrill T. MacPherson, Vice-President; H. McAllister Griffiths, Secretary; and Murray Forst Thompson, Treasurer.¹⁰⁹

By the time of the 1934 General Assembly, the existence of the Independent Board had become a burning issue before the church. The Assembly of that year issued a mandate which demanded:

1. That "The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions" be and is hereby directed to desist forthwith from exercising any ecclesiastical or administrative functions, including the soliciting of funds, within the Synods, the Presbyteries, the particular churches and the mission stations of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

2. That all ministers and laymen affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, who are officers, trustees or members of "The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions", be officially notified by this General Assembly through its Stated Clerk, that they must

¹⁰⁹ Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 146; and Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, 480-82.

immediately upon the receipt of such notification sever their connection with this Board, and that refusal to do so and a continuance of their relationship to the said Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, exercising ecclesiastical and administrative functions in contravention of the authority of the General Assembly, will be considered a disorderly and disloyal act on their part and subject them to the discipline of the Church....¹¹⁰

Machen refused to obey the order; consequently, he was brought to trial early in 1935 and found guilty by the Presbytery of New Brunswick. He was ordered suspended from the ministry. Machen appealed to the Synod of New Jersey and to the General Assembly of 1936 but to no avail. Machen defended his refusal to obey the 1934 mandate on the ground that it was contrary to the constitution of the PCUSA and, therefore, he was not bound to obey it. When the court of the Presbytery of New Brunswick refused to accept or regard any arguments regarding the legality of the General Assembly's mandate, Machen was deprived of his entire line of defense.¹¹¹

The conservatives contended that the mandate of 1934 and

¹¹⁰ *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, 1934, Part One, 115.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 485-92. For the details of the preceding discussion of the foreign missions question, see Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, "Foreign Missions in the Balance," 469-92. Cf. *The Presbyterian Guardian* for the years 1935 and 1936. The other trials that were held were those of Carl McIntire, J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., H. McAllister Griffiths, Merrill T. MacPherson, Edwin H. Rian, Charles J. Woodbridge, Paul Woolley, Harold S. Laird, and Roy T. Brumbaugh. All of these men were members of the Independent Board and had refused to withdraw. In the 1936 General Assembly Griffiths, McIntire, MacPherson, Rian, Woodbridge, and Woolley were ordered suspended from the ministry of the PCUSA. Cf. *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, 1936, Part One, 83ff.

Machen's trial were riddled with illegalities and violations of the constitution of the church. To combat what they considered to be a growing tyranny within the church, many banded together to organize on June 27, 1935, the Presbyterian Constitutional Covenant Union.¹¹²

The members of the Covenant Union organized the PCA when the 1936 General Assembly of the PCUSA, which met in Syracuse, denied their appeals and suspended from the ministry certain members of the Independent Board who had been tried in church courts. The first annual convention of the Covenant Union met June 11 to 14, 1936, in Philadelphia. The delegates organized the new church on the first day and elected Machen the moderator.¹¹³

¹¹² Ibid., 494; and Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 218-19. Further reference to the Presbyterian Constitutional Covenant Union will be abbreviated to the Covenant Union. For more on the character of this organization, see Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, 495-96.

¹¹³ Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 227.

CHAPTER II

THE INFLUENCE MACHEN HAD ON MCINTIRE

1. The Fundamentalist Heritage

(1) The European Legacy

Although religious fundamentalism as an organized movement in American Protestant Christianity is comparatively youthful, the tradition from which it sprang is very old: some scholars trace the spirit of fundamentalism back to the Reformation. However, some fundamentalist leaders declare that it goes back to the New Testament period and the apostles, and that the Reformation only restated the neglected fundamentals of the gospel.¹¹⁴

William Ward Ayer, a popular radio evangelist in New York City, delivered a speech during the Cleveland convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in April, 1956. In it he stated that fundamentalism represented a resurgence of ancient practices which had not begun with Martin Luther but at Pentecost. Fundamentalism is apostolic, and the doctrine of justification by faith alone goes back to the apostle Paul. The branch of Christianity to which the fundamentalist movement belonged had never been completely silenced even in the Dark Ages.¹¹⁵

Much of what the fundamentalists teach today are doctrines which were delineated during the Reformation period and were further clarified

¹¹⁴ Gasper, *Fundamentalist Movement*, 2.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

through subsequent developments in Protestant Christianity. It was during the Reformation that the cry for less ecclesiastical authority was heard and an appeal for more reliance on the Scriptures as the only infallible rule of faith and practice was demanded. The fundamentalists are still echoing the Reformers in terms of doctrines.¹¹⁶

Martin Luther rebelled against what he and his followers considered to be a mechanical operation of the Roman Catholic ritual. And historically speaking, the Lutheran movement successfully detached itself from papal authority, and since the Reformation Protestantism generally has been characterized as anti-Catholic. Since the late nineteenth century, with the rise of liberalism, this anti-Catholic spirit has greatly decreased. However, the fundamentalists have continued the anti-Catholic attitude, largely because they had stern and rigid dependence on the supreme authority of Scripture and enmity against any organization or people not espousing a similar view concerning it.¹¹⁷

The doctrines which first became important in American churches were enunciated by John Calvin. Calvin's ideals for all Christians were 'thrift, industry, and sobriety,' which permitted men to prosper economically without the fear of being regarded as tainted by the sin of avarice. However, Calvin's emphasis on sanctification was eventually misconstrued by some church people to mean the regulation of all petty activities such as card playing, dancing, and unnecessary frolicking. Thus,

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 3.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 3-4.

a large number of fundamentalists inherited this modified version of Calvinism with only minor variations.¹¹⁸

(2) The American Legacy

Calvinism first came to America during the early part of the seventeenth century by way of the Puritan migrations from England, and they were irreconcilable enemies of the Roman Catholic church. Besides introducing Calvinism into America, they established two fundamentalistic traditions for dissenting groups to follow: first, the emphatic anti-Catholic spirit of Protestantism, and second, the principle of separation as a method by which religious minorities might safeguard their beliefs and protect themselves from the domination of the majority.¹¹⁹ However, the non-separatistic one of the two Puritan groups established the idealistic community based on the Scriptures in the Massachusetts Bay area with the vision of “city on a hill.”

By 1729 there were those who favored and those who opposed a strict subscription of ministers and licentiates to the Westminster Standards. The synod of that year issued the Adopting Act which was a kind of compromise. Contention was even greater at the time of the Great Awakening, when Presbyterians, like others, divided into Old Side and New Side, the former averse to the methods and beliefs of the movement, the latter supporting them. In 1801 the plan of union between Presbyterians and the Congregationalists on the western frontier caused

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 4.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

more strife. The Presbyterians became divided between New School men, who wished to keep the union, and Old School men who resented the impact of New England theology on traditional Calvinism. Other factors were involved, including differing attitudes toward the issue of slavery. The differences became so pronounced that the Old School and New School factions were divided from 1837 to 1870, finally reuniting on the basis of the Westminster Confession of Faith. In the 1830s Princeton Theological Seminary shifted from a moderate position to the Old School side, influenced in part by the opening of Union Theological Seminary in New York City in 1836 under New School leadership and independent of the rule of the General Assembly. Even after the reunion of the two factions, Princeton Seminary continued in the Old School tradition, loyal to Calvinism. In this broad context of previous controversy and division, Presbyterians confronted the challenge of liberalism in the early twentieth century.¹²⁰

The nineteenth century ended with a decomposition of medieval theology. The chief issues in religion at that time were between a prescientific and scientific expression of it. The conservatives, who comprised those who held to the Bible as the absolute revelation of God, were regarded as advocates of a pre-scientific epistemology hardly compatible with modern developments. Those who applied the methods of science to the study of the Bible and religion were referred to as

¹²⁰ Russell, "Scholarly Fundamentalist," 57-58.

modernists.¹²¹ When the influence of liberalism began to infiltrate the colleges and seminaries of America, to make its impact on denominational officials, and to be rooted on some of the mission fields, fundamentalism arose in the major denominations as a responding force. American fundamentalism arose in opposition to the pressure to change historic Christianity.¹²² However, James Davison Hunter argues that fundamentalism is not a recovery of orthodoxy. He states that “if the New Christianity was a conciliatory response to the cognitive pressure of modern institutional structures and processes, Fundamentalism is a reaction to modernity.” Fundamentalism as an aspect of evangelicalism was not only a reaction to calamities associated with industrialization and urbanization, but it was a reaction to the modern worldview as represented by theological modernism as well. He further argues that the result of the militant concentration on the five points in evangelical theology and teaching, “to the exclusion of the social dimensions of faith, was a modification of the historical faith instead of apostolic or reformational orthodoxy itself. The labeling of conservatives as Fundamentalists was an accurate indication of this inner transformation of nineteenth-century Evangelicalism.”¹²³ Yet their genuine intention and situational factor should be considered.

But Marsden writes about the decline and disarray of fundamentalism

¹²¹ Gasper, *Fundamentalist Movement*, 10.

¹²² Russell, “Scholarly Fundamentalist,” 58.

¹²³ James Davison Hunter, “The Evangelical Worldview Since 1890,” in *Peity and Politics: Evangelicals and Fundamentalists Confront the World* ed. Richard John Neuhaus and Michael Cromartie (Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1987), 34-35.

after 1925 that “after the summer of 1925 the voices of ridicule were raised so loudly that many moderate Protestant conservatives quietly dropped support of the cause rather than be embarrassed by association.” And he states that “the simplest explanation lies in the sordid and reactionary cultural image it had acquired.”¹²⁴ However, it changed during the 1930s. In general, although the rest of American Protestantism floundered in the 1930s, fundamentalist groups, or those at least with fundamentalist sympathies, increased. Fundamentalism provided ordinary people with as compelling a critique of modern society.¹²⁵ Marsden observes that “certainly one of the most remarkable developments in American religion since 1930 has been the reemergence of evangelicalism as a force in American culture. Probably it is the one least likely to have been predicted in 1930.” Most contemporary sociologists thought that all that remained to be carried out were mopping-up operations, and that conservative religion would die out as modernity advanced. However, the “neo-evangelical” reformers of fundamentalism were among the first to anticipate the possibility of an evangelical resurgence, and the evangelical movement started when they organized the National Association of Evangelicals¹²⁶ with the conviction that if the voice of fundamentalism is tempered slightly, evangelical Christianity can win America.¹²⁷ Also, Joel A. Carpenter writes that “the recovery of American fundamentalism is an

¹²⁴ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 191.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 194.

¹²⁶ Further reference to the National Association of Evangelicals will be abbreviated to the NAE.

¹²⁷ George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991) 63-64.

amazing story,” and he attempts to explain how it happened.¹²⁸ In relation to this, Truman Dollar reviews briefly the history of fundamentalism:

From inconspicuous beginnings in storefronts on side streets, the movement shifted uptown and became the mainstream of American religious life – all in my lifetime. My age made it possible for me to participate in the whole evolutionary process.

The national media in the forties and fifties invariably turned to mainline denominational Liberals for opinion and commentary on the issues of the day. In the seventies and eighties the media more frequently turned to Fundamentalists. Clearly the mainline became the sideline.

Since the end of World War II we have seen the collapse of denominational Liberalism. I am personally euphoric. Although the Liberal intellectuals still have a national forum, local Bible-doubting pastors are not only powerless but even irrelevant.

The seventies brought a new respectability to political Conservatism that culminated in the dominance of national politics by Ronald Reagan. Concurrent with that political phenomenon was the explosive growth of Fundamentalism. Seemingly overnight, Bible-believing churches became the largest in America, and their pastors were thrust abruptly into prominence and influence.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Joel A. Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

¹²⁹ Truman Dollar, “Can Fundamentalism Survive?” *Fundamentalist Journal* (1985), v. 4, No. 11, 74.

2. The Influence Machen Had on McIntire

Machen had a great influence on fundamentalism in general. First of all, he supplied many outstanding texts for the use of the fundamentalists.¹³⁰ And each of Machen's works helped define the issues that distinguished fundamentalists from the false, unbelieving philosophy that pretended to be "Christian."¹³¹

Machen was convinced following in the tradition of Princeton Theology that "scholarship as well as piety was absolutely necessary for establishing a solid foundation for long-term evangelical survival and resurgence." But Machen was a lonely prophet for the realms of militant fundamentalism were intellectually barren. Nevertheless, the vision he proclaimed at Princeton Seminary and carried to Westminster Seminary was inspiring a succeeding generation of fundamentalist leaders.¹³² Among them were the founders of Fuller Theological Seminary.¹³³

Moreover, Machen had a great influence on McIntire and the American Council of Christian Churches.¹³⁴ The separatist concept of the church as represented by Machen is essential to the Presbyterian Separatist Movement.¹³⁵ From the beginning of his connection with the Presbyterian

¹³⁰ George W. Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America* (Greenville: Bob Jones University Press, 1973), 181.

¹³¹ James A. Borland, "J. Gresham Machen: Valiant for Truth," *Fundamentalist Journal* (1983), v. 2, No. 3, 33.

¹³² George M. Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987), 34.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 51-52.

¹³⁴ Further reference to the American Council of Christian Churches will be abbreviated to the ACCC.

¹³⁵ George P. Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod* (Cherry Hill: Mack Publishing Co., 1974), 201.

Separatist Movement, McIntire was a fervent, indeed imitative, admirer of J. Gresham Machen. Perhaps he saw himself as Machen's successor in the leadership of the movement even before Machen's death. At any rate, from that point onward McIntire felt providentially appointed to succeed Machen as the recognized leader, not only of the Presbyterian Separatist Movement, but of the whole fundamentalist separatist movement as well.¹³⁶

Impelled by a deep sense of divine leading, McIntire was the leading organizer, and first president, of the fundamentalist ACCC founded in 1941 as a parallel organization to the modernist Federal Council¹³⁷ McIntire is a fervent follower of Machen's separatist principle that "separation must take place in one of two ways, either the unbelievers must be put out or the Bible-believers must withdraw; else the church ceases to be the church."¹³⁸

McIntire stood for too strict separation. He wrote:

But Machen maintained that it is not how men talk but how they vote that counts. It is not what they say, but where they find fellowship which God's people should judge. In fact, he said repeatedly that evangelicals who work with the modernists are greater enemies to the cause of Christ than the modernists themselves.... It is this collaboration with the modernists that removes persecution and the stigma of alleged bigotry, racism, and hate mongering.¹³⁹

And he spoke of Edmund P. Clowney that "a great Gibraltar of separatism," that is, Westminster Theological Seminary, "founded by the lonely and

¹³⁶ Ibid., 265.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 266.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 267.

¹³⁹ McIntire, *Outside the Gate*, 169. Cf. *Catalog of Faith Seminary, 1937-1977*, 27.

courageous Machen, found its president warming his hands by the wrong fires.”¹⁴⁰ McIntire continued:

Compromise begets weakness and unbelief. Woe be unto that church whose leaders covet the recognition and the praise of an ecumenical-oriented conference of any nature at any time and any place. If the Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practice, then the fellowship which it requires must be maintained without delusion, confluence, and unholy alliances. It is indeed better for the preservation of the faith that a church be too strict, than that it not be strict enough.¹⁴¹

But McIntire’s separatism does not apply to ordinary situations. It can only apply to emergent situations.¹⁴² Also, there were the reasons leading to the schism in the ACCC. They are: (1) the disapproval of the leadership of McIntire, (2) the rigid separatist position of the ACCC, (3) discrepancies in the statistical reports which it was charged exaggerated the actual membership of the ACCC, and (4) the failure of the Bible Presbyterian Church to grow during the period between 1951 and 1954.¹⁴³

Here it can be said that there are many reasons which are irrelevant to the influence of Machen. Thus, it should not be misunderstood of Machen’s influence exerted on fundamentalism including the case of McIntire and the ACCC. Machen had a great influence on fundamentalism in many good respects. But we should not misunderstand

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 170.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 174.

¹⁴² D. Clair Davis, “Separate from Unbelief” (tape).

¹⁴³ Gasper, *Fundamentalist Movement*, 31-35.

his thought. And we should strive for both the purity and unity of the church. The apostle Paul shows “a more excellent way, the way of the Spirit who both binds the church in one and purifies it as the spotless bride of Christ.”¹⁴⁴

(1) Machen’s Thought and Theology

Now what is the relationship between Machen and fundamentalism? It is not easy to decide whether he was a fundamentalist or not. C. Allyn Russell argues that Machen must be considered a fundamentalist despite some differences in piety and doctrinal belief because the nature of his protest against liberalism, the attention he paid to the five essential points of 1910, and his constant intransigent mood and spirit can be regarded as the reasons which combine to place him within the fundamentalist camp. Although certainly against his will, he may be considered “the indirect founder of ultrafundamentalism through the separatist action and thought of Carl McIntire.”¹⁴⁵ Yet Ned B. Stonehouse claims that Machen was not a fundamentalist at all. He enumerates the reasons that disqualified Machen from being classified precisely as a fundamentalist. They are his standards of scholarship, his distaste for brief creeds, his rejection of chiliasm, the absence of pietism from his makeup, and his sense of commitment to the historic Calvinism of the Westminster Confession of Faith. Moreover, he never spoke of himself as a fundamentalist, and he

¹⁴⁴ Edmund P. Clowney, *The Doctrine of the Church* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1969), 59.

¹⁴⁵ Russell, “Scholarly Fundamentalist,” 66.

really disliked the term.¹⁴⁶

Then Machen himself writes that “the term fundamentalism is distasteful to the present writer I regret being called a fundamentalist ... but in the presence of the great common foe, I have little time to be attacking my brethren who stand with me in the defense of the Word of God.”¹⁴⁷ And then Roark also writes concerning it:

[Machen] had for years been a leading Presbyterian, a New Testament scholar with great intellectual acumen, a stringent critic of religious liberalism, a man with a positive word on the relationship between Christianity and culture, and one who sought to maintain the freedom and liberty of education against the inroads of conformity and governmental control. In these respects, he was in direct contrast to the usual picture painted of the fundamentalist personality.¹⁴⁸

Thus, Machen was not a fundamentalist, but just a conservative believer of historic Christian faith. But it is apparent that he had much influence on fundamentalism.

The theology of Machen was centered in the truthfulness of the Christian religion as set forth in the Scriptures and summarized most accurately in the creeds of the Reformed faith, especially the Westminster Standards. He thought that such Christianity required and was susceptible to scholarly defense. Machen, the apologist, was the first to admit that

¹⁴⁶ Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, 337.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 337-38.

¹⁴⁸ Dallas M. Roark, “J. Gresham Machen: The Doctrinally True Presbyterian Church,” (*Journal of Presbyterian History* (1965), v. 43, 124-25.

argument alone was insufficient to win individuals to Christianity, but he reasoned that it does not follow that it is unnecessary. He spent most of his life advancing the claims of the Christian faith and refuting its enemies.¹⁴⁹

Crucial to Machen's understanding of Christianity was the conviction that the Christian faith was based not on aspiration or exhortation but on historical facts – the birth, life, death, and bodily resurrection of Jesus – and could not be reduced to subjective ideas disconnected from history and science, as Protestant liberalism did. He used to say that miracles are at the heart of Christianity. Also, he said repeatedly that Christianity is a historical religion. For him, Christianity was not a life, as distinguished from a doctrine, but rather a life founded upon doctrine and doctrine, in turn, founded upon facts.¹⁵⁰ He speaks in the public address, "History and Faith," delivered at Princeton Seminary in 1915 on the occasion of his inauguration as Assistant Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis:

You cannot change the facts. The modern preacher offers reflection. The Bible offers more. The Bible offers news – not reflection on the old, but tidings of something new; not something that can be deduced or something that can be discovered, but something that has happened; not philosophy, but history; not exaltation, but a gospel. The Bible contains a record of something

¹⁴⁹ Russell, "Scholarly Fundamentalist," 46.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

that has happened, something that puts a new face upon life. What that something is ... is the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The authority of the Bible should be tested here at the central point.¹⁵¹

Yet some have claimed that he espoused too closely the Scottish Common Sense Philosophy and failed to consider the question of the presuppositions of one's thinking. Some have even argued that he merely belonged to the nineteenth century in his approach. However, while he insisted that historical analysis could lead one to accept facts as true, more was required for one to confess that Jesus Christ died for our sins. Machen stated that a non-Christian might believe in Christ's resurrection, but it was only by the work of the Holy Spirit that that person would believe that Christ rose from death for the sinner's justification. He realized that without the basic Christian faith, even historical evidence would not bring conviction of the truth of Christianity. Although he did not work out the whole problem of presuppositions, he never ignored them in favor of a view that the facts were all that were needed.¹⁵²

While anxious that his faith not be reduced to a few carefully selected doctrines as many of the fundamentalists were doing – he preferred the conception of truth as a systematic whole – nevertheless Machen possessed his own emphasis “at the central point.” Specifically, this was his belief in the supernatural nature of Jesus including his virgin

¹⁵¹ Machen, *What Is Christianity?*, 171-72.

¹⁵² W. Stanford Reid, “J. Gresham Machen,” in *Reformed Theology in America: A History of Its Modern Development*, ed. David F. Wells (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 105-6.

birth, his vicarious atonement and his bodily resurrection. Machen specially emphasized the vicarious atonement. The substitutionary death of Jesus made Christianity a religion of redemption and distinguished it from liberalism which found salvation in man's obedience to moral demands. Machen called the latter a "sublimated form of legalism."¹⁵³

Since the central doctrines of Christianity including the vicarious atonement were found in the Scriptures, Machen gave considerable attention to his doctrine of biblical inspiration following in the tradition of Princeton Theology. He concluded that the books of the Bible, in the original autographs, were an infallible rule of faith and practice. And he underscored the absence of error of any kind in the Scriptures while affirming simultaneously the true individuality of the biblical writers.¹⁵⁴

In other words, Machen followed the Reformed position that the Bible is the Word of God. He constantly insisted in both his expository and his apologetic works on the validity of his historico-grammatical exegesis of the Bible. Since the Bible is truly infallible, the Word of God in the word of man, one must study the Bible by the grammatico-historical method in order to gain a true and proper understanding of the divine revelation. A true evangelical and Reformed exegesis should employ "the scientific historical method that is the true foundation and source of a sound Christian theology."¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ Russell, "Scholarly Fundamentalist," 47.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 48.

¹⁵⁵ Reid, "Machen," 106-7. When we trace the history of American Presbyterianism from its colonial period to the present, as stated earlier, fundamentalism came into existence as a reaction against the rise of liberalism. Also, the evangelical movement arose to reform

Machen wrote that “dispensationalism of the Scofield Bible seems to us to be quite contrary to the system of doctrine taught in the Westminster Standards.”¹⁵⁶ On the important subject of dispensationalism, Machen was convinced that the Scriptures did not speak so precisely as to warrant the dispensational premillennialist conclusion. He wrote concerning it:

A large number of Christian people believe that when evil has reached its climax in the world, the Lord Jesus will return to this earth in bodily presence to bring about a reign of righteousness that will last a thousand years, and that only after that period the end of the world will come. This belief ... is an error arrived at by a false interpretation of the Word of God; we do not think that the prophecies of the Bible permit so definite a mapping out of future events. The Lord will come again, and it will be no mere ‘spiritual’ coming in the modern sense – so much is clear – but that so little will be accomplished by the present dispensation of the Holy Spirit and so much will be left to be accomplished by the Lord in bodily presence – such a view we cannot find to be justified by

fundamentalism for a recovery of the high-minded Protestant orthodoxy. The uniting bond for various strands within the evangelical movement was the high view of Scripture. Yet it was divided in the view of Scripture. For instance, conservative evangelicals such as John Woodbridge insisted on biblical inerrancy. However, evangelicals such as Donald McKim argued for the biblical authority for the matters of salvation alone, not for other matters like science, geography, chronology. Also, a number of evangelical theologians suggested some ways of compromising biblical inerrancy to remake evangelical theology to broaden its constituency. But Harold Lindsell maintained in his *The Battle for the Bible* that Fuller Theological Seminary went in the direction of open evangelicalism eventually once it had departed from the doctrine of biblical inerrancy.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

the words of Scripture.¹⁵⁷

In addition to these significant doctrinal differences, Machen, in his personal life, did not reflect traditional piety. On such matters as the drinking of alcoholic beverages and the use of tobacco he differed from the fundamentalists. He believed that intemperance was wrong, assuredly, but he declined to accept total abstinence as the only alternative.¹⁵⁸

And his doctrinal position was stated forcefully and succinctly when writing to a lawyer-friend in 1927:

... thoroughly consistent Christianity, to my mind, is found only in the Reformed or Calvinistic faith; and consistent Christianity, I think, is the Christianity easiest to defend. Hence I never call myself a 'Fundamentalist.' There is, indeed, no inherent objection to the term; and if, the designation is between 'Fundamentalism' and 'Modernism', then I am willing to call myself a Fundamentalist of the most pronounced type. But, after all, what I prefer to call myself is not a Fundamentalist but a Calvinist – that is, an adherent of the Reformed Faith. As such, I regard myself as standing in the great central current of the church's life – the current which flows down from the Word of God through Augustine and Calvin, and which has found noteworthy expression in America in the great tradition represented by Charles Hodge and Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, and the other representatives of the 'Princeton School.'¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*, 48-49.

¹⁵⁸ Russell, "Scholarly Fundamentalist," 49.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 49-50.

Here, it needs to pay attention to one frequently neglected aspect of Machen's thought, that is, his attitude toward social issues. Machen took a wide interest in the social issues of his day. While mentioning his social concerns occasionally in his sermons and books, normally through personal correspondence, denominational and secular journals, and especially through constant letters to *The New York Herald Tribune* and *The New York Times*, he pronounced them.¹⁶⁰

Russell maintains that Machen's views on social issues has been characterized by his four convictions. First, Machen was "a firm civil libertarian who fought restrictions and regulations placed upon the individual. He was particularly adamant in opposing trends of centralization in government, declaring that the great American principle of liberty was being threatened." Second, he believed that the church itself as a body should not take a stand on social and political issues about which there was no specific biblical guidance, but individuals might express themselves. Third, the church of his day was paying too much attention "to the physical distresses of mankind and insufficient regard to the spiritual needs of men and the intellectual basis of the Christian faith." Fourth, the true hope for social progress lay not in liberalism characterized by an optimistic view of the human, but rather in Christian supernaturalism with its emphasis on human sinfulness and the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶¹ It should be pointed out here that Machen was greatly

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 52.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 52-53.

influenced by James Henley Thornwell in these theological aspects.¹⁶² Bradley J. Longfield speaks of the southern roots of Machen by writing that “Old School Presbyterianism, primarily as interpreted by James H. Thornwell, remained the theology of the Southern Church, of Mary Gresham Machen, and thus of her middle son, John Gresham.... The extremely close ties Machen would maintain with his mother throughout her life would reinforce his understanding of himself as heir not only to orthodox Christianity but to the noble civilization of the Old South.”¹⁶³

We have so far examined Machen’s thought and theology in general. Now we turn to his doctrine of the church. When the PCA was formed on the afternoon of June 11, 1936, Machen preached a sermon entitled “The Church of God” at the concluding service of the first General Assembly. In it he said:

On Thursday, June 11, 1936, the hopes of many long years were realized. We became members, at last, of a true Presbyterian Church; we recovered, at last, the blessing of true Christian fellowship. What a joyous moment it was! How the long years of struggle seemed to sink into nothingness compared with the peace and joy that filled our hearts! ... With that lively hope does our gaze turn now to the future! At last true evangelism can go forward without the shackle of compromising associations.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Bradley J. Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, & Moderates* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 35-36.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹⁶⁴ J. Gresham Machen, “A True Presbyterian Church at Last,” *The Presbyterian Guardian* 2 (Jun. 22, 1936), 110.

Machen's central thought is shown through these words of Machen. Dallas M. Roark speaks that "J. Gresham Machen's actions within the Presbyterian Church must be interpreted in the light of his desire for a doctrinally 'true Presbyterian Church.'"¹⁶⁵ For Machen, the pursuit of the purity of the church in terms of doctrine was his main interest.

Some historians view the modernist-fundamentalist controversy, which reached its peak in the PCUSA during the 1920s and the 1930s, as basically a dispute over the doctrine of the church. For example, Lefferts A. Loetscher suggests that the conflict was, at least in part, ecclesiological, and that the persons who played major roles in the controversy expressed different views on the concept of the church.¹⁶⁶

However, he is wrong to minimize the real differences between the conservatives and the liberals in the controversy and maximize the related issues, such as administrative differences and institutional power struggles. Above all, Loetscher criticizes Machen's doctrine of the church that it is not truly Presbyterian but Anabaptist.¹⁶⁷ Others take much the same view. For instance, Edward J. Carnell finds Machen's fatal weakness in his doctrine of the church, maintaining that Machen did not honor the Reformed doctrine of the church.¹⁶⁸ Speaking of J. Gresham Machen, he writes:

Machen gained prominence through his litigations with the

¹⁶⁵ Dallas M. Roark, "J. Gresham Machen: The Doctrinally True Presbyterian Church," *(Journal of) Presbyterian History* (1965), v. 43, 126.

¹⁶⁶ Loetscher, *Broadening Church*, 117-24.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 117.

¹⁶⁸ Edward John Carnell, *The Case for Orthodox Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), 114-16.

Presbyterian Church U.S.A. He contended that when the church has modernists in its agencies and among its officially supported missionaries, a Christian has no other course than to withdraw support. So Machen promptly set up “The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions”; and with equal promptness the General Assembly ordered the Board dissolved. Machen disobeyed the order on the conviction that he could appeal from the General Assembly to the Constitution of the church. But this conviction traced to ideological thinking, for if a federal system is to succeed, supreme judicial power must be vested in one court. This is federalism’s answer to the threat of anarchy. Wrong decisions by a court are not irremediable; but until due process of law effects a reversal, a citizen must obey or be prosecuted.... No individual Presbyterian can appeal from the General Assembly to the Constitution, and to think that he can is cultic.

Ideological thinking prevented Machen from seeing that the issue under trial was *the nature of the church*, not the doctrinal incompatibility of orthodoxy and modernism. Does the church become apostate when it has modernists in its agencies and among its officially supported missionaries? The older Presbyterians knew enough about Reformed ecclesiology to answer this in the negative. Unfaithful ministers do *not* render the church apostate.¹⁶⁹

Also, Roark contends that Machen was an independent, who did not

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 115.

understand or act in conformity with Presbyterianism. He contends that Machen's demand for full subscription in the Presbyterian Church should be called "hierarchical" rather than "Anabaptist" (as Loetscher calls Machen for viewing the church as a voluntary organization). He criticizes Machen's doctrine of the church as "separatistic," pointing out that others were personally as orthodox as Machen, but would not separate along with him.¹⁷⁰ He concludes that Machen "himself deviated from the standards in regard to the doctrine of the Church."¹⁷¹

However, Machen was essentially a faithful Reformed and Presbyterian theologian. His theology shaped his writings and guided the actions he took in the Presbyterian controversy. The logic of Machen's opposition to liberalism that liberalism and historic Christianity are two entirely distinct religions led to confrontation in the PCUSA. Above all, he was concerned to maintain the biblical purity of the church, for without that there could be no church.

(2) Machen's Influence on McIntire

Born in Ypsilanti, Michigan on May 17, 1906, McIntire was raised in a devout Christian home. His father was a Presbyterian minister. As a young boy he moved to Oklahoma with his parents where he completed his public school education. He attended Park College, Missouri and

¹⁷⁰ Dallas Morgan Roark, "J. Gresham Machen and His Desire to Maintain a Doctrinally True Presbyterian Church" (Ph.D. dissertation, the Graduate College of the State University of Iowa, 1963), 214.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 219. Cf. Ki Hong Kim, "Presbyterian Conflict in the Early Twentieth Century: Ecclesiology in the Princeton Tradition and the Emergence of Presbyterian Fundamentalism" (Ph.D. dissertation, Drew University, 1983). Kim takes much the same view as that of Loetscher and Roark.

received his B.A. degree from this Presbyterian institution in 1927. Thereupon, he was enrolled at Princeton Seminary.

Being an ardent admirer of Machen he followed the eminent professor from Princeton Seminary to the newly created Westminster Seminary. He received his divinity degree from this institution in 1931.

After he was ordained in the PCUSA, he served a parish in Atlantic City, New Jersey. After a short pastorate there, McIntire became pastor of the Collingswood Presbyterian Church on September 28, 1933. He was only 27 years of age when Machen invited him to become a member of the Independent Board. He was elected to that board on April 10, 1934. Therefore, McIntire was included in Mandate of 1934.

In April, 1935, McIntire published a ninety-six page pamphlet entitled, *Dr. Robert Speer, the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and Modernism*. In this publication he presents the same argument as Machen stressing the need for a foreign mission agency that would be true to the Bible. He charged that there was modernism in the board's literature, personnel and union enterprises.¹⁷²

Machen, Charles Woodbrige, Paul Woolley, McIntire, and some other leaders of the Independent Board were defrocked by their presbyteries. As the 1936 General Assembly approached, they announced their intention to found a new denomination if the Assembly sustained these convictions.

Under such circumstances, everyone had to choose sides. Disagreements among conservative allies now turned into sorrowful bitter

¹⁷² Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 148; Harden, *Brief History*, 34.

partings of ways. Machen now saw the PCUSA as hopelessly apostate and demanded that his allies join him on his separatist course. Under the threat of denominational censure, some of Machen's staunchest supporters deserted him. During the 1935-36 school year, Westminster Seminary suffered a crippling loss of one senior faculty member and thirteen members of the board of trustees, including Clarence Macartney.¹⁷³ Undaunted, Machen went ahead in the summer of 1936 with his plan to found a new denomination, the PCA; but by this time his followers were few. However, McIntire united with Machen in forming that new denomination.

After another division in 1937 between the majority and minority of the PCA forming the Bible Presbyterian Synod, McIntire led in the formation in 1941 of the ACCC to offset the Federal Council of Churches. In 1948, he formed the International Council of Christian Churches¹⁷⁴ to bring together the churches "around the world which accepted the precepts of the purity of the Church and the purity of the Gospel, all based upon the inerrancy of the Scripture."¹⁷⁵

When the Revised Standard Version of the Bible was published by the National Council of Churches in 1952, McIntire opposed it through numerous "Back to the Bible" rallies. Also, McIntire became vociferous in his condemnation of Communism and his advocacy of patriotism during the McCarthy era, postures he maintained long after the Red Scare had

¹⁷³ Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, 496-97; Rian, *Presbyterian Conflict*, 97-99.

¹⁷⁴ Further reference to the International Council of Christian Churches will be abbreviated to the ICCC.

¹⁷⁵ *Catalog of Faith Seminary. 1937-1977*, 26-27.

dissipated. Through his “Twentieth-Century Reformation Hour,” a daily half-hour radio broadcast begun in 1957, and his publication, *Christian Beacon* started in 1936, McIntire disseminated his militant fundamentalism.

The influence Machen had on McIntire, above all, should be considered in aspects like opposition to liberalism, hostility to indifferentists, and separatism. Especially, McIntire has been the fervent follower of the separatist principle of Machen. Thus Machen exerted a great influence on McIntire in terms of ecclesiology. McIntire even attempted to make separatism an article of faith.¹⁷⁶ He wrote:

The issue that Dr. Machen touched on when he dealt with the men in the apostasy of the old church lives again. His strongest denunciations were against those who made common cause with the enemies of Christ.... What is significant is that in the struggle, Faith Theological Seminary has been privileged to occupy a place of leadership, and those who have broken with its strict stance on separation and obedience have always drifted toward the ecumenical side, for there is no other way to go. Where issues of eternal truth are at stake, the words of Jesus apply, “He that is not with me is against me” (Matt. 12:30; Luke 11:23).¹⁷⁷

However, Machen was no schismatic or secessionist. He did not follow the example of so many Christians who refuse to get involved and simply withdraw. He stayed in and fought until forced out. Therefore,

¹⁷⁶ Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, 45.

¹⁷⁷ *Catalog of Faith Seminary, 1937-1977*, 27.

the nature of Machen's influence exerted on McIntire in terms of the issue of separatism should not be misunderstood.

CHAPTER III

THE DIFFERENCES OF THOUGHT BETWEEN MACHEN AND MCINTIRE

When the PCA was formed, it appeared that the members of the newly-constituted assembly were united. However, it became evident that they did not have one mind on every detail of doctrine and practice when the business of the First Assembly came to the adoption of the constitution. A committee on the constitution was appointed and authorized to recommend the adoption of the Westminster Standards at the next General Assembly. It was given power to recommend only the elimination from the standards of the 1903 amendments which had been made by the PCUSA.¹⁷⁸ The majority of the assembly favored this action, but a minority, who claimed that the standards should be adopted intact in the interest of maintaining the direct spiritual succession of the PCUSA, opposed it informally.¹⁷⁹ The issue was not a factor in the division of the denomination. Yet the lines of division, among the members of the denomination, were drawn in the debate over the issue. Here is shown a difference of position between Machen and McIntire. It is a difference between doctrinal orthodoxy and doctrinal latitude. Stonehouse writes:

Machen and his most intimate associates were determined once for all to get free from the mediating 1903 amendments, and Major articles by Machen and others appeared in the *Guardian* in support

¹⁷⁸ *Minutes of the First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America* (Philadelphia: The Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension, 1936), 7-8.

¹⁷⁹ Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, 503.

of this view. The final decision in November, 1936, was in agreement with this position. It is indicative of the situation that had developed, however, that the Rev. Carl McIntire and others led a vigorous fight against this proposal at the time.... To the others the appeal to spiritual succession could not in the nature of the case be decisive. If that were taken as a determining voice in matters of faith and life, it might frequently result in the maintenance of beliefs and practices which had developed in the period of gradual declension in which Modernism had taken root. To a Church that stood for the Word of God, and desired therefore to eliminate all compromising features from its faith and practice, there could be no temporizing in the fundamental matter of the truth or error of its doctrinal standards.¹⁸⁰

Moreover, when the Second General Assembly met, five months later, the lines of division between the two parties in the church had become sharper. And in June of 1937, a year later, the PCA was divided. Immediately following its Third General Assembly, a minority of its ministers and elders withdrew to form the Bible Presbyterian Synod. In other words, within less than a year the men who had united with Machen in forming “a true Presbyterian Church” were divided into two denominations. There were three issues involved in the division.

But even before the division, there were differences of opinion between Machen and McIntire concerning the issues. Therefore we

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 503-4.

should examine the issues to know what the differences of opinion were between Machen and McIntire. The issues, which had been also major factors in the division of the denomination, were dispensationalism, Christian liberty, and polity. Also, it may be said that these issues reflect those differences between the Old and the New School. The Old School position was confessionalist Calvinist, while that of the New School was broader interdenominational evangelicalism.

In nineteenth-century Presbyterianism, Old School and New School had split over the New School's emphasis on revivalism, interdenominational cooperation, extradenominational agencies, a broader interpretation of Calvinism, and zeal for social reform. The New School thus stood near the center of the massive evangelical consensus that dominated American Protestant culture. After the Civil War, the two schools of northern Presbyterianism reunited. New School tolerance, originally developed to promote revivalism, eventually revealed its legacy in fostering theological liberalism. Much less noticed was that the New School heritage survived in twentieth-century fundamentalism as well. Though broadly Calvinist, it was doctrinally tolerant and not exclusively denominationalist. It tended to work through extradenominational agencies, stressed evangelism, and still fostered some spirit of evangelical cultural dominance.¹⁸¹

Also, the Old School position was largely shaped by the old Princeton Theology. That theology was a major expression of

¹⁸¹ Marsden, "New School Heritage," 129-47.

conservative Calvinism. The three most important Princeton theologians were Archibald Alexander, Charles Hodge and Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield. These three were joined by many other important figures, including Hodge's son, Archibald Alexander Hodge, and the New Testament scholar and apologist, J. Gresham Machen. The Princeton theologians upheld Reformed confessionalism. Also one of the Reformed positions which the seminary held most strongly was the infallibility of the Bible. Principles of the Scottish Common Sense Philosophy provided guidelines for them in their organization of biblical material and for their approach to theology. Furthermore, they had a large place for the role of the Holy Spirit in religious experience.¹⁸² Although they distrusted unrestrained revivalism, they worked for renewal in the church.

They guarded Calvinistic views on the divine preeminence in salvation, the unity of the race in Adam's guilt and of the elect in the work of Christ, and the moral inability of humans apart from God's grace. They defended these positions and fought against continental romanticism and rationalism, domestic forms of subjectivity, the excesses of enthusiastic revivalism, all varieties of theological liberalism and evangelical perfectionism. They faithfully represented historic Calvinism and energetically adopted their confessional position to the needs and opportunities of the American experience.¹⁸³ This sketch provides a basis

¹⁸² W. Andrew Hoffercker, *Piety and the Princeton Theologians: Archibald Alexander, Charles Hodge, and Benjamin Warfield* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981).

¹⁸³ Mark A. Noll, "Introduction," in *The Princeton Theology 1812-1921: Scripture, Science, and Theological Method from Archibald Alexander to Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield*, ed. Mark A. Noll (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1983), 25-40.

for the comparison of the positions of the majority and minority in the PCA.

Now we turn to the first issue. This was a doctrinal issue, which concerned the church's attitude toward dispensational premillennialism. Dispensationalism in its modern form, that is, modern dispensationalism, originated within the Plymouth Brethren movement which arose in England and Ireland around 1830. John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) gave great impetus to the Brethren movement and to the theological system which developed into and is now known as dispensationalism.¹⁸⁴

Dispensationalism is characterized by two basic features. They are a hermeneutical principle which employs strict literalism in the interpretation of the Scriptures and a precisely defined chronology of events "that were not known in the historic faith of the church before its rise."¹⁸⁵ Also, the tendency of separatistic spirit and practice may be added to these. Within this system, sharp distinctions are drawn between Israel and the church and between law and grace. Thus a multiple basis is created for God's dealing with man.¹⁸⁶ Yet Frank E. Gaebelein states that dispensationalism "is not a theology but rather a method of interpretation helpful in grasping the progress of revelation in the Bible."¹⁸⁷ And Charles C. Ryrie writes concerning the definition of the word "dispensation":

Dispensationalism views the world as a household run by God. In

¹⁸⁴ C. Norman Kraus, *Dispensationalism in America* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1956), Chapters 1 and 2.

¹⁸⁵ Clarence B. Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism: Its Historical Genesis and Ecclesiastical Implications* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1960), 18.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

¹⁸⁷ Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), 8.

this household-world God is dispensing or administering its affairs according to His own will and in various stages of revelation in the process of time. These various stages mark off the distinguishably different economies in the outworking of His total purpose, and these economies are the dispensations. The understanding of God's differing economies is essential to a proper interpretation of His revelation within those various economies.¹⁸⁸

Dispensationalists were influenced in biblical interpretation by the method of Francis Bacon, the early seventeenth-century champion of the objective empirical method. So in applying the literalistic approach to interpreting the Bible in the Baconian view of reality, that is, on the basis of thoroughgoing Baconianism founded in Scottish Common Sense Realism, they began with particular facts and built from them conclusions of universal validity. In this aspect, they agreed with Princeton theologians. Also, they alike argued for the inerrancy of Scripture in the autographs. They believed that the firmness of the facts of Scripture was guaranteed by its supernatural inspiration of the Holy Spirit. For them alike, Scripture possessed a human as well as a divine character. But the supernatural element was essential and the natural incidental to their view of Scripture. However, they differed in terms of eschatology due to the fact that Princeton theologians insisted on the subscription of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms Larger and Shorter as containing the

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 31.

system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.¹⁸⁹

During the latter years of the nineteenth and early years of the twentieth century dispensational schemes of biblical interpretation became very widespread in America through the media of Bible and prophetic conferences, the establishment of Bible-training institutes, and the *Scofield Reference Bible*.¹⁹⁰ Especially the conferences, which were held in New York State from 1878-1897, were closely associated with the popular revival movements of the late nineteenth century, and were interdenominational like the revival movements.¹⁹¹

It had been due to the dispensational scheme of things that the character of the movements associated with dispensationalism was interdenominational. C. Norman Kraus writes with regard to the dispensationalists' doctrine of the church in terms of the emphasis on the spiritual quality of the church's life:

According to dispensational teaching the Church is a spiritual fellowship of those who have been called to participation in Christ. Its visible boundaries cannot be discerned by man. It has no organizational structure. It is, to use Darby's words, a "heavenly body." It is to be carefully distinguished from Christendom or the organized church. There is a very sound element in this emphasis

¹⁸⁹ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 55-62. This issue will be more addressed later.

¹⁹⁰ In 1909, Cyrus Ingerson Scofield, a lawyer turned minister with no formal theological training, popularized dispensationalism in America with the publication of this book. This book was simply a King James Version of the Bible copiously adorned with explanatory notes, definitions and outlines. For more on this, see Kraus, *Dispensationalism in America*, 111-30.

¹⁹¹ Kraus, *Dispensationalism in America*, Chapters 1-3.

upon the spiritual quality of the Church's life, but when it is emphasized so exclusively that the reality of the Church's earthly existence is denied, great harm can result.... Emphasis upon the strictly spiritual character of the Church has led dispensationalists to frown upon all attempts at unity which begin with the recognition of the existing denominational structures.¹⁹²

Despite the interdenominational character of the movement, dispensationalism's appeal initially was almost entirely to fundamentalists of Calvinistic background – Baptists and Presbyterians, who already had acquaintance with covenantal schemes.¹⁹³ Kraus declares that “the basic theological affinities of dispensationalism are Calvinistic.”¹⁹⁴ Therefore the teaching, which was closely associated with premillennialism, developed strong roots within the PCUSA.

Premillennialism must not, however, be identified with modern dispensationalism. Kraus maintains the basic distinction between premillennialism and dispensationalism:

Premillennialism can be defined as a theological entity distinct from its dispensational trappings; and historically, it has been so defined and defended apart from dispensationalism. This interpretation of the relation between the two positions has been verified by recent developments within the premillennialist camp.... In spite of the long-standing claim made by some contemporary dispensationalists

¹⁹² Ibid., 134.

¹⁹³ For the factors in the success of dispensationalism in fundamentalist circles and more on the emphasis of the dispensationalists, see Hutchinson, *History*, 166-68.

¹⁹⁴ Kraus, *Dispensationalism in America*, 59.

that all premillennialists must of logical necessity be dispensationalists, the opinion to the contrary seems to be gaining ground.¹⁹⁵

Historic premillennialism, a doctrine which has existed throughout the history of the Christian church, differs from dispensational premillennialism in numerous ways.¹⁹⁶

The PCA was forced to take a stand on the theological issue of eschatology. By the time the new church was organized the issue had already been well developed in a debate which centered around Westminster Seminary. When the seminary was founded in 1929 its position on eschatology was not altogether clear. The faculty was primarily concerned with continuing the battle against modernism.

But in the spring of 1936 Westminster's position on dispensational premillennialism became firm.¹⁹⁷ John Murray of the department of systematic theology wrote articles on "Modern Dispensationalism." Murray stated that his articles would deal only with that form of dispensationalism "which discovers in the several dispensations of God's redemptive revelation distinct and even contrary principles of divine procedure and thus destroys the unity of God's dealings with fallen mankind."¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 110.

¹⁹⁶ Timothy P. Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 9-11.

¹⁹⁷ *The Presbyterian Guardian* 2 (May 4, 1936), 44. John Murray was writing against dispensational premillennialism, not historical premillennialism. Paul Woolley himself as a faculty member of Westminster Seminary, held the historical premillennialist position.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

When Murray's article appeared in *The Presbyterian Guardian* of May 18, 1936, the author attacked the dispensational scheme presented in the very popular *Scofield Reference Bible* and the views of prominent dispensationalists, namely, Arno C. Gaebelein, Lewis Sperry Chafer and Charles Feinberg. Murray stated:

What we are intent upon showing is that the system of interpretation [Modern Dispensationalism] widely prevalent in this country, and set forth, for example, in the *Scofield Reference Bible* and in the books of various Bible teachers of prominence, is palpably inconsistent with the system of truth embodied in our Presbyterian standards.¹⁹⁹

His thesis was that Modern Dispensationalism "contradicts the teaching of the standards of the Reformed Faith."²⁰⁰ He argued that dispensationalism taught that radically opposite, mutually exclusive and destructive principles prevail in the differing dispensations concerned. In the dispensation of law and kingdom the administration of law prevails. In the church age, or the dispensation of grace, it is grace which prevails. And two mutually exclusive principles as law and grace do not operate in one period. Murray wrote with regard to the teaching of dispensationalism:

The church age or dispensation of grace exhibits a ruling principle of the divine economy that is in flat antithesis to the ruling principle of the dispensation extending from Sinai to the cross. It must not

¹⁹⁹ John Murray, "The Reformed Faith and Modern Substitutes," Part VI "Modern Dispensationalism," *The Presbyterian Guardian* 2 (May 18, 1936), 77.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

be thought that these differing ruling principles are mutually supplementary and co-exist. It is not to be thought that the difference is simply one of preponderance, a preponderance of law over grace in the one, and of grace over law in the other. Not at all. Nowhere does the principle of mutual exclusiveness apply more absolutely than just here. The exponents of dispensationalism are peculiarly explicit and insistent that they are mutually exclusive and destructive. Law as a governing principle is the very opposite of grace and reigns without rival in the law and kingdom dispensations. Grace to the exclusion of law reigns in the dispensation of grace.... Nothing ... could be plainer than that, in the judgment of this school of interpretation, radically opposite, mutually exclusive and destructive governing principles prevail in the differing dispensations concerned.²⁰¹

The Westminster Confession, on the other hand, teaches that the covenant of grace became operative as a result of the fall, and that it is this same one unified covenant which is administered in the time of the law as well as in the time of the gospel. The contrast between the positions of dispensationalism and the Westminster Standards is absolute. Whereas the former is “emphatic and reiterative that the governing principle of this Mosaic dispensation was the principle of law or covenant of works”, the latter is “explicit that the Mosaic dispensation was an administration of the

²⁰¹ Ibid., 77-78.

covenant of grace.”²⁰² Murray concluded:

Herein consists the real seriousness of the dispensationalist scheme. It undermines what is basic and central in Biblical revelation; it destroys the unity and continuity of the covenant of grace. We hope that many may be induced to withdraw from a system of interpretation the logic of which leads to such disastrous consequences.²⁰³

In his next article, Murray contended with the dispensational interpretation of the “kingdom of heaven” and the “kingdom of God,” which were terms of eschatological significance found in the New Testament.²⁰⁴ His articles were important. They created a potentially explosive situation because at that time dispensationalism was enjoying considerable popularity among conservatives both Presbyterian and non-Presbyterian. Also it is striking that the explicit and uncompromising attack upon “Modern Dispensationalism” should appear in *The Presbyterian Guardian* at such a critical moment in the struggle against modernism in the PCUSA. The strong stand against dispensationalism had a significance that the PCA was to be explicitly Reformed and to tolerate no doctrines which were considered inconsistent with its standards. The majority of the new denomination took the position of the strict constitutionalism.²⁰⁵ On the other hand, the minority (who eventually

²⁰² Ibid., 77-79.

²⁰³ Ibid., 79.

²⁰⁴ Murray, “The Reformed Faith and Modern substitutes,” *The Presbyterian Guardian* 2 (Aug. 17, 1936), 210-12.

²⁰⁵ Cf. *The Presbyterian Guardian* 4 (May 15, 1937), 37-40.

became the Bible Presbyterians) were the premillennialists who feared the implications of such a thoroughgoing attack upon dispensationalism.²⁰⁶

The dispensationalism, of which Murray wrote, was by its nature premillennial. It may be said that all dispensationalists were premillennialists, but not all premillennialists were dispensationalists. Thus premillennialism need not be associated with dispensationalism. The editor of *The Presbyterian Guardian*, H. McAllister Griffiths, anticipated that Murray's articles might be interpreted wrongly. He, who was himself a premillennialist, wanted to make it clear that Murray's articles were not intended in any way to exclude premillennialists from Reformed fellowship. In an editorial entitled "Eschatological Freedom," he stressed that neither *The Presbyterian Guardian* nor the Covenant Union, which *The Presbyterian Guardian* then represented, was opposed to premillennialism as such. The differences of the mode in which the return of Christ will take place, whether it is premillennialism, postmillennialism, or amillennialism, have been historically permitted in the church. He emphasized that Murray's articles were not to be interpreted as an effort to read premillennialists out of the church. He pointed out that there were premillennialists on the faculty of Westminster Seminary, on the Independent Board and in the Covenant Union, and that premillennialism was not incongruous with the Reformed faith.²⁰⁷

Nevertheless, the debate over eschatological liberty was beginning.

²⁰⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, 50.

²⁰⁷ H. McAllister Griffiths, "Eschatological Freedom," *The Presbyterian Guardian* 2 (May 4, 1936), 44, 52.

R. B. Kuiper, professor of practical theology at Westminster Seminary, wrote in his article, which was published originally in *The Banner* and reprinted in *The Presbyterian Guardian*:

The General Assembly had the privilege of examining several graduates of Westminster Seminary for licensure and ordination. It would have warmed the cockles of the heart of any Christian Reformed minister to hear how closely they were questioned about the two errors which are so extremely prevalent among American fundamentalists, Arminianism and the Dispensationalism of the Scofield Bible. The Assembly wanted to make sure that these prospective ministers were not tainted with such anti-reformed heresies.²⁰⁸

Kuiper's statement caused McIntire to react against it. To him Kuiper's labeling of the dispensationalism of the Scofield Bible as an "anti-reformed heresy" was tantamount to an attack upon premillennialism. McIntire wrote in his paper:

Why is it necessary even to talk about "eschatological liberty"? Such liberty has been recognized. The answer, we believe, is that men have had to talk about it because a few individuals who are a-millennialists have been attacking more strenuously the premillennialists. The premillennialist position has been quite generally accepted by Christian people, and the a-millennialists

²⁰⁸ R. B. Kuiper, "Why Separation Was Necessary," *The Presbyterian Guardian* 2 (Sep. 12, 1936), 227.

have launched their attack upon it. This attack has proceeded in various ways – most frequently in indirect ways – and has reached the stage where it has found itself in print a number of times.²⁰⁹

And he continued:

We are unable to see in our own thinking how the a-millennialists can say they grant liberty to the premillennialists and then turn in such a manner as this and condemn them as heretics.... We do not fear at the present time concerning the future of the right of premillennialists, but we do believe that unless the a-millennialists cease their veiled and continued attacks upon the premillennialist position concerning “dispensationalism” there will be a united expression on behalf of the premillennialists in the Church.²¹⁰

Kuiper promptly wrote to McIntire to reply to the editorial. He stated emphatically that his attack upon dispensationalism was not an attack upon premillennialism. He explained:

It is a matter of common knowledge that there is ever so much more to the Dispensationalism of the Scofield Bible than the mere teaching of Premillennialism. Nor do the two stand and fall together. There are premillennialists who have never heard of Scofield’s dispensations. More important than that, there are serious students of God’s Word who hold to the premillennial return of Christ and emphatically reject Scofield’s system of dispensations

²⁰⁹ Carl McIntire, “Premillennialism,” *Christian Beacon* 1 (Oct. 1, 1936), 4.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

as fraught with grave error.²¹¹

Here was the difference between the two positions. The Westminster Seminary and *The Presbyterian Guardian*²¹² group clarified that their criticism of “Modern Dispensationalism” had nothing to do with premillennialists who were not dispensational premillennialists. The *Christian Beacon* group, on the other hand, thought that such criticism was an attack upon their position.

The premillennialists in the PCA were never dispensational premillennialists.²¹³ H. McAllister Griffiths stated a year later:

The main attack centered upon the Scofield Bible. Now I do not wish to be understood as holding that the notes accompanying the text of Scripture are inspired. In the first place, I doubt the wisdom (to put it mildly) of attaching the name of any man to God’s Holy Word. In the second place, I do not believe that all of Dr. Scofield’s notes are equally well-grounded in Scripture. With some of them I frankly disagree. But I do not believe that Dr. Scofield claimed infallibility for his notes. He held too high a view of Scripture for that. And, in the main, I think that his system as a whole is faithful to the Word of God. And I say this as a convinced Calvinist, whose allegiance to the Reformed Faith is no

²¹¹ Kuiper’s letter to McIntire was reprinted in *The Presbyterian Guardian* 3 (Nov. 14, 1936), 54.

²¹² As of September 12, 1936, the editorship of *The Presbyterian Guardian* passed from H. McAllister Griffiths to J. Gresham Machen and Ned B. Stonehouse, both of whom were amillennialists.

²¹³ Even though some of the premillennialists in the PCA were sympathetic toward dispensationalism, they did not themselves hold the dispensational view.

less sincere than that of any man alive, however imperfect my understanding of it may be.²¹⁴

Also with reference to Kuiper's statement McIntire stated:

We believe with the Bible references compiled by Dr. C I. Scofield that the millennium is a definite dispensation or period of time.... Without any effort to distinguish the good from the bad, Dr. Kuiper calls the "Dispensationalism of the Scofield Bible" an "anti-reformed heresy." Heresy is not a pleasant word. The remark in regard to the "Dispensationalism of the Scofield Bible" is an attack upon the premillennialists, as heretics.

According to Dr. Scofield's references to dispensationalism, the millennium is a dispensation. Of course, Dr. Kuiper does not believe in the millennium, and his generalized condemnation of the Scofield references leaves no room for the premillenarian to join with Scofield in believing that the millennium is a dispensation!²¹⁵

The difference of opinion between McIntire and Kuiper was that McIntire viewed the identification of the two positions of premillennialism and dispensationalism as even more extensive, but Kuiper clarified the

²¹⁴ H. McAllister Griffiths, "The Character and Leadership of Dr. Machen," *Christian Beacon* 2 (Sep. 2, 1937), 2.

²¹⁵ Carl McIntire, "Premillennialism," *Christian Beacon* 1 (Oct. 1, 1936), 4. Although McIntire was tolerant toward dispensationalism, he did not join in this movement for spreading or developing this system of belief. According to Scofield, a dispensation is "a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God." Scofield distinguished seven such dispensations in the Bible: Innocency, Conscience, Human Government, Promise, Law, Grace and Kingdom; the last referring to the millennium. For more on this, see Cyrus Ingerson Scofield (ed.), *The Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1909), 5.

distinction between the two positions.²¹⁶

However, the debate on dispensationalism and premillennialism developed when the Presbytery of California addressed to the assembly a resolution and an overture which were in perfect agreement with the sentiments of McIntire's editorial of October 1, 1936. Quoting a paragraph from Kuiper's article, the presbytery resolved that *The Presbyterian Guardian* be requested to cease printing attacks upon dispensationalism or to make it clear that such statements in no way represented the position of the church.²¹⁷ And the overture requested:

Therefore, we earnestly and prayerfully appeal to you (and to all other Presbyteries, if God wills it, to join us in our plea) that definite, emphatic, and unambiguous eschatological liberty be written into the constitution of our beloved church.²¹⁸

The issue of *The Presbyterian Guardian* which appeared just prior to the Second General Assembly dealt with the millennial question. Machen strove diligently to convince premillennialists through his editorial that the Westminster Seminary and *The Presbyterian Guardian* group was not attacking them. He agreed with Kuiper's views and affirmed that the attack upon dispensationalism was not an attack upon premillennialism. Machen felt that McIntire had misrepresented Kuiper in his editorial.²¹⁹

Furthermore, Machen wrote of the refusal of the editor of the *Christian Beacon* to publish Kuiper's reply, despite the insistence of both

²¹⁶ Carl McIntire, "A Correction," *Christian Beacon* 1 (Oct. 29, 1936), 4.

²¹⁷ *The Presbyterian Guardian* 3 (Nov. 14, 1936), 55.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 41-42. Cf. *Christian Beacon* 1 (Oct. 29, 1936), 4.

him and Kuiper:

The result is that which is nearly certain to come when an editor refuses to give to a person whom he has attacked the right to reply – namely, a rising tide of suspicion and injustice. The suspicion and injustice due to the original misrepresentation culminated in the attack which has been made by the Presbytery of California against certain persons in The Presbyterian Church of America and particularly against *The Presbyterian Guardian*.... But the important thing is that the misrepresentation on the basis of which the Presbytery of California has acted should now be corrected once and for all.²²⁰

Besides this editorial, Machen's attitude toward McIntire was revealed in a letter to McIntire dated October 22, 1936.²²¹ Machen saw that the great danger to the church was misunderstanding and consequent misrepresentation. He stated in his editorial that they were opposed to anyone who accepted all that is taught in the Scofield references, but that it is possible to use some of the notes and still be perfectly Reformed.

Yet two sides emerged, those who supported the position taken by the editors and contributors of *The Presbyterian Guardian*,²²² and those

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Machen to McIntire, Oct. 22, 1936, Machen Archives. In a letter written before this incident but not sent, Machen expressed his exasperation with McIntire's journalistic methods and questioned the need for a rival church paper. Machen to McIntire, Sep. 25, 1936, Machen Archives.

²²² Almost everything which appeared in *The Presbyterian Guardian* on the subject of eschatology was written from an amillennial viewpoint. One exception was J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., "A Premillennialist's View," *The Presbyterian Guardian* 3 (Nov. 14, 1936), 46-47. At the time, Buswell was president of Wheaton College and a member of the PCA.

who supported the views expressed in the *Christian Beacon*. When fully developed, this controversy caused the divisions within Westminster Seminary and the new denomination. Allan A. MacRae stated concerning the reason in detail.²²³

Yet there were more issues in which the differences of opinion between Machen and McIntire were found. Prior to the Second General Assembly the issue of Christian liberty had not been raised publicly within the PCA. The issue, to be more specific, revolved around the question of the legitimacy of the moderate use of alcoholic beverages by a Christian. What was Machen's view on such matters as the drinking of alcoholic beverages and the use of tobacco? What did he think concerning Christian teaching on living a "separated life"? While he believed that intemperance was wrong, he declined to accept total abstinence as the only alternative. And when it came to tobacco, Machen was even more precise. "My idea of delight is a Princeton room full of fellows smoking. When I think what a wonderful aid tobacco is to friendship and Christian patience I have sometimes regretted that I never began to smoke."²²⁴

When H. L. Mencken first commented on Machen in the pages of the *American Mercury* he took some delight pointing out the fundamentalist's politics. Machen "is a Democrat and a wet," Mencken observed, "and may be presumed to have voted for AI in 1928." While Machen had never written publicly about his political preferences, his

²²³ "Professor MacRae Leaves Westminster Seminary," *The Presbyterian Guardian* 4 (May 15, 1937), 50.

²²⁴ Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, 85.

opposition to Prohibition would have been common knowledge in Baltimore. That city was the site of the 1926 Presbyterian General Assembly where denominational officials had used Machen's opposition to the Eighteenth Amendment to block his election to the chair of apologetics and ethics at Princeton Seminary. Mencken's newspaper, the *Baltimore Sun* had covered that controversy and noted the irony of the Presbyterian proceedings that pitted "dry modernists" against a "wet fundamentalist." Machen's reasons for opposing Prohibition, as Mencken noted, were religious as well as political. Prohibition had been crucial to the 1928 presidential contest between the Republican Herbert Hoover and the Democratic nominee, Al Smith, who openly supported repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, and it was the major reason why Machen voted for Smith. Moreover, the politics of Prohibition were closely tied to religious differences. Machen's decision to vote for Smith was indicative of the divergence between his own social outlook and those of other Protestants. Civil libertarianism gave Machen additional reasons for supporting Smith.²²⁵

Machen's view of the church comported well with the Southern Presbyterian idea of the spirituality of the church, a concept forged during nineteenth-century debates over slavery. In this aspect, he was influenced by James Henley Thornwell, a great theologian of the Southern

²²⁵Darryl G. Hart, *Defending the Faith: J. Gresham Machen and the Crisis of Conservative Protestantism in Modern America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 135-6.

Presbyterian Church.²²⁶ Many Southern Presbyterian divines taught that the church should not meddle in political affairs because it is a spiritual entity. Machen drew on this tradition when he stated that the church's tasks were strictly spiritual: to preach the word, administer the sacraments, and nurture believers. It had, as a corporate body, no obligation, except in extreme circumstances, to intervene in social matters. Yet this understanding of the church also reflected Machen's humanistic and political outlook. For him the fundamental aspect of human existence was spiritual and eternal, not temporal or material well-being. In the end, society could not be improved unless the religious needs of individuals, families, and communities became priorities. And with other established institutions attending to other aspects of human existence, the church, he reasoned, could hardly abandon the spiritual task.²²⁷ Machen used this same argument to oppose church support for Prohibition.²²⁸

This issue that split fundamentalist and traditionalist Presbyterians concerned personal morality. In Buswell's estimation this was the proverbial straw that would break the camel's back. Those in the church who sided with him, Buswell wrote in his last letter to Machen, were concerned about reports that Westminster students used liquor in their rooms "with the approval of some members of the faculty." The use of alcohol, even in the celebration of the sacrament, he added, was "far more likely" to divide the church than "any question of eschatology." Buswell

²²⁶ Longfield, *Presbyterian Controversy*, 32-36; Wells, *Reformed Theology in America*, 236-243.

²²⁷ Hart, *Defending the Faith*, 145-6.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 202-3.

and other fundamentalists in the church were also “shocked” by leaders of the new denomination who defended “the products of Hollywood,” a “useless, ... waste of energy.” Machen never responded to Buswell but his opposition to Prohibition provides a clue to his views on alcohol. In addition to opposing the expanded powers of the federal government that the Eighteenth Amendment granted, Machen also thought the Bible allowed moderate use of alcohol. This was also the position of the majority of faculty at Westminster who came from ethnic churches where the idea of total abstinence within American evangelicalism was foreign. As for Buswell’s reference to Hollywood, Machen enjoyed going to the movies and commented favorably on Charlie Chaplin but did not make any remarks about film in his published writings. The church chose not to establish any policy about consumption of alcohol or movies.²²⁹

Also Westminster Seminary had taken no official stand on this matter. It had placed no restrictions upon students or faculty members regarding the moderate use of alcoholic beverages.

In contrast, McIntire states with regard to drinking:

The more one drinks, the greater the temptation to continue to drink. This is the nature of wine.... What a curse drink is! It has always been a curse. It will never be anything else.... A drunken man is always dangerous – dangerous in an automobile, dangerous in an airplane, dangerous in the home, dangerous in the community.... A man is not responsible in a drunken rage. This is one reason

²²⁹ Ibid., 164-5.

why drunkenness is such an aggravated sin. Men lose control of themselves.²³⁰

And he concludes that “the one safe way of dealing with drink is to leave it alone.”²³¹

Late in September, 1936, McIntire raised the issue in connection with the policies of Westminster Seminary. He felt that all consistently Christian institutions should take a strong official stand on this issue. And he reported that rumors existed throughout Philadelphia in relation to the attitude of the seminary toward the use of alcoholic beverages. He wrote to Paul Woolley, the registrar of the seminary, about the matter. Woolley replied on October 8, with a letter in which he acknowledged that there had been students at the seminary who used alcoholic beverages. He indicated that the students were adult men and should be dealt with as such and that to prohibit the use of alcoholic beverages would run counter to the example of Christ. Woolley continued:

The students should ... be an example in word and deed to others about them in the matter of temperance as in the matter of all other Christian virtues and all parts of the Christian life. They should be particularly mindful that they do not place temptations in the way of weak brethren. However, I doubt whether the teaching of the Bible contemplates that there should be enforcement by regulation of this

²³⁰ Carl McIntire, *For Such a Time As This* (Collingswood, N. J.: Christian Beacon Press, 1946), 16-21.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 20. When I had an interview with Dr. McIntire at his home on May 22, 1998, I asked him concerning this matter. Then he said to me, “I have never had alcohol or coffee in my life.”

matter in specific cases. Is it not left to each Christian to judge what is a temptation to his brother and how he can best avoid putting such in his way?²³²

In relation to this matter, in his last letter to Machen, J. Oliver Buswell, Jr. stated as follows:

The report that some Westminster students use liquor and keep it in their rooms with the approval of some members of the faculty is ... likely to produce a serious explosion. I feel also (as an individual) that the commercial stage can never be defended as though it existed merely for drama as a fine art. Not all of your friends and mine agree with the position of Wheaton College in completely boycotting the commercial theatre. We maintain our position without desiring to force it upon our Christian friends who cannot see exactly with us. Nevertheless it seems so useless, such a waste of energy, that a considerable number of our mutual friends, a considerable portion of the Presbyterian Church of America, have to be shocked by the spectacle of some of their leaders in the defense of the faith also defending the products of Hollywood.²³³

The third issue, in which the differences of opinion between Machen and McIntire were found, was the issue of the Independent Board. When the PCA was founded it established no foreign mission board but continued to support the work of the Independent Board. But before the meeting of

²³² “‘Wet’ and ‘Dry’ Resolution Made,” *Christian Beacon* 2 (Jun. 24, 1937) 2, 7.

²³³ Buswell to Machen, Dec. 4, 1936, Machen Archives.

the Second General Assembly, there was already general dissatisfaction that was suddenly to develop into an important change in the leadership of the board.

Disagreements between fundamentalist and traditionalist Presbyterians had also surfaced within the Independent Board and the PCA. The issue generating the most debate was the use and popularity of the Scofield Reference Bible, an edition of the King James Version first published in 1909 that included extensive notes and comments from a dispensationalist perspective. Presbyterian traditionalists like Machen and the majority of faculty at Westminster opposed the Scofield Bible because they thought its teachings undermined Calvinistic conceptions of sin and grace. Some fundamentalist Presbyterians, like James Oliver Buswell, president of Wheaton College, tolerated dispensationalism in the interest of solidarity while others, such as McIntire, defended the use of the Scofield Bible. Machen tried to close the widening breach by backing Buswell as moderator at the new church's second General Assembly. His conciliatory efforts, however, could not satisfy disgruntled fundamentalists, like McIntire. For Machen, even though the board was established to be independent of the mainline church, its Presbyterian identity was critical. He was committed to Presbyterian theology and polity and believed that the board should only support missionaries of like mind. Fundamentalists on the board in early November 1936, contrary to Machen's impassioned requests, succeeded in ousting Machen as president and elected a minister of a nondenominational church. Close associates and family members

believed that Machen was so hurt by this action that his physical strength was seriously depleted, making him an easy prey for his fatal illness.²³⁴

McIntire expressed the unrest in the pages of the *Christian Beacon*. He criticized Machen and his associates at Westminster in the November 5, 1936, issue of the *Christian Beacon* in the form of an editorial entitled “A Machine.” The editorial observed that there was a “machine” controlling the PCUSA and suggested that the members of the PCA were determined “that no such unpresbyterian and unprotestant thing as a machine should ever develop.”²³⁵ McIntire proceeded to define the characteristics of “machines.” These characteristics included such developments as: “A little group of men set themselves up to rule the Church.... They develop a complex in which they feel that their actions are right and that anyone who differs with them should not be in the Church.”²³⁶ The editorial gave no indication that anyone thought that there was such a “machine” in the PCA. But what was McIntire’s concern became clear soon. The PCA, Westminster Theological Seminary, and the Independent Board were all controlled by the same small group. Machen was the acknowledged leader of each of the three organizations, and Machen and his associates controlled the policies of each.

Yet Machen claimed confidence that the church would weather the storm in his estimate of the Second General Assembly, expressed editorially in the November 28, 1936, issue of *The Presbyterian Guardian*.

²³⁴ Hart, *Defending the Faith*, 163.

²³⁵ *Christian Beacon* 1 (Nov. 5, 1936), 4.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

He praised the work of the assembly and went out of his way to commend the work of the moderator who was J. Oliver Buswell, Jr.²³⁷ Machen, however, criticized the attitude of some of the opposition.²³⁸

Then Machen's leadership had already been challenged in another sphere than within the church itself. Machen had been president of the Independent Board since its inception in 1933. And when the board met for the election of officers immediately following the Second General Assembly, his name was again placed in nomination. But the opposition was no longer content to have the same man, or group of men, controlling every organization. With this interest they nominated Harold S. Laird, pastor of the First Independent Church of Wilmington, Delaware, in opposition to Machen. After hours of debate Laird was elected. At the same time Merrill T. MacPherson, also an independent, was reelected vice-president, leaving the eight-man executive committee of the board evenly divided between members and non-members of the PCA.²³⁹

Machen was deeply distressed. Some of his associates and family members believed that he was so hurt by the action of the board, an institution upon which he had risked his whole career, that this made him succumb to an infection that ended in his fatal illness – pneumonia. Members of the family gathering during the Christmas holiday before his death repeated that they had never seen Machen as depressed and disappointed as he was over the changes on the Independent Board,

²³⁷ *The Presbyterian Guardian* 3 (Nov. 28, 1936), 70.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 70-71.

²³⁹ *The Presbyterian Guardian* 3 (Nov. 14, 1936), 71.

especially the change in the presidency of the board.²⁴⁰

In his last letter to Buswell, Machen wrote as follows:

With regard to the Independent Board, I am inclined to take a somewhat grave view of the situation. It is true, no doubt, that there will be no immediate effort to amend the charter of the Board. But the experience of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., as well as that of a great many other churches and institutions, shows that the undermining process frequently goes on quite without any formal change in the doctrinal Standards. As a matter of fact, it does seem to me that the Independent Board is at the parting of the ways between a mere fundamentalism, on the one hand, and Presbyterianism on the other ... it does seem to me that the whole business represents rather clearly a tendency away from a truly Presbyterian character for our Board.²⁴¹

Here Machen indicated that the Presbyterian identity of the board had always been most important to him. Its independence was only a means of circumventing the PCUSA. But some of his fundamentalist followers put greater stress upon the board's independence and saw it as a non-denominational agency which might serve all conservative Protestants. Machen's devotion to Presbyterianism cannot be over-stressed. Paul Woolley writes regarding the change in the presidency in the Independent

²⁴⁰ Paul Woolley, *The Significance of J. Gresham Machen Today* (Nutley, N. J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1977), 43. See affidavits prepared by Arthur W. Machen, Jr., Helen Woods Machen, Laura Hall Woods, and Mary Gresham Machen, Oct. 6, 1937, Machen Archives.

²⁴¹ Machen to Buswell, Nov. 27, 1936, Machen Archives.

Board:

The annual fall elections for the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions were approaching. Das [Machen] was amazed to discover that the Buswell-McIntire position had been developed into the policy of a party in the Board and that an opponent to himself for the office of President of the Board had been selected. He fully realized how seriously this situation threatened the Independent Board. If the Buswell-McIntire forces were victorious, it was probable that the Independent Board would adopt policies that would impair, at the best, and annul, at the worst, its Reformed character. By a very close margin Machen lost the election. In following months new lines of inquiry were pursued in questioning candidates for appointment under the Independent Board. In the election Machen for the first time in his life, voted for himself as a matter of principle. The issue was not primarily between men but between theological principles. He could do no less for his convictions.²⁴²

Westminster faculty feared that McIntire and his associates were now in control of the board. And Charles J. Woodbridge, the general secretary of the board, stated concerning the changes on the Independent board:

Dr. Machen was greatly shocked. The evening of the Board meeting it was clear that he foresaw the collapse of the Independent

²⁴² Woolley, *Significance*, 43.

Board as a Presbyterian agency. He said to me, with a note of tragedy in his voice, “If it were not for our missionaries I would at once resign from the Board.”

The Rev. Samuel J. Allen was present with Dr. Machen in Bismarck, North Dakota, during the last days of our beloved leader’s life. He has told us that again and again during those hours of agony Dr. Machen told him that the Independent Board was lost to true Presbyterianism.

Before the November meeting of the Board Dr. Machen had thought that probably it would be unnecessary for The Presbyterian Church of America to establish its own missionary agency. He had thought that the Independent Board might continue to be the channel through which the church might support foreign missions. But the meeting of the Board had revealed to him clearly that the Independent Board had lost its thoroughly Presbyterian testimony. He repeatedly told Mr. Allen that The Presbyterian Church of America would have to establish its own missionary agency if it desired to conduct truly Biblical and truly Presbyterian foreign missions.²⁴³

Samuel J. Allen reported that shortly before his death Machen had told him, “There is nothing now that we can do but organize a board in our own church, if true Presbyterian missionaries are to be sent out and Reformed

²⁴³ Charles J. Woodbridge, “Why I have resigned as general secretary of the Independent Board,” *The Presbyterian Guardian* 4 (Jun. 12, 1937), 70.

doctrine propagated.”²⁴⁴

Yet for McIntire, the practice of independency was not incompatible with Presbyterian missions, and he favored cooperation with non-Presbyterians. He said:

It should be remembered that the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. functioned for forty-nine years without any Board of its own, but authorized the sending of its gifts even to an agency which was congregational, the American Board of Missions....²⁴⁵

In the early nineteenth century, the PCUSA had cooperated with non-Presbyterians in various independent mission agencies. After the division of 1837 the Old School conducted its mission work through its own denominational agencies. Yet the New School favored interdenominational cooperation and continued to conduct its missions through independent agencies for some time. However, later the New School ended its close cooperation with other denominations and established denominational mission boards. After they reunited in 1870, the PCUSA continued to conduct its missions through denominational boards.²⁴⁶ In relation to this, Ned B. Stonehouse states concerning the matter of forming an Independent Board:

Judged in terms of the Constitution of the Church as well as traditional Presbyterian policy the formation of the Independent Board was legal. The methods pursued in the effort to suppress it

²⁴⁴ “Foreign Missions Forge Ahead in the Presbyterian Church of America,” *Ibid.*, (supplement).

²⁴⁵ “Minority Report,” *Minutes of the Third General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America*, 15. Cf. Sweet, *Story*, chapter 17.

²⁴⁶ Marsden, “Perspective,” 300-301.

and to discipline its members were emphatically highhanded and unconstitutional. In refusing to give its members a day in court a shocking travesty of justice was enacted. It must be admitted that there was an element of abnormality about the formation of an Independent Board since under ordinary circumstances the missions program would be conducted by official agencies of the Church. But these were abnormal times, and the bold and explosive action of the organizers of this Board, if it is to be fairly evaluated, must be understood in the context of the historical situation. It was basically an extraordinary act in a time of crisis, when it became imperative that unusual measures should be taken if the gospel in its purity was to be preached in fulfillment of the divine command.²⁴⁷

And the charter of the Independent Board explicitly stated

it would support only those missions which were consistent with the Westminster Standards and the “fundamental principles of Presbyterian Church government.”²⁴⁸

This split paralleled almost exactly the division a century earlier between Old and New School Presbyterians. The Presbyterian split of 1837 had also concerned the meaning of Calvinism, cooperation with non-Presbyterians in evangelism and missions, and personal behavior. Presbyterian fundamentalists such as Buswell and McIntire were closer to the outlook of nineteenth-century New England evangelicals who

²⁴⁷ Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen*, 497-98.

²⁴⁸ Marsden, “Perspective,” 301.

minimized denominational differences in order to convert individuals and reform society. Presbyterian traditionalists, most of whom taught at Westminster and were now in control of the PCA, paralleled the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who resisted the tide of revivalism and reform in order to preserve old-world patterns of faith and practice.²⁴⁹

In the give-and-take of these debates the PCA became the institutional manifestation of the faith Machen had striven to defend. Unlike fundamentalists who stressed biblical inerrancy and dispensationalism, the new denomination adhered carefully to Presbyterian polity and the Westminster Confession. The church also shunned respectability in the broader culture, not by adhering to the mores of the fundamentalist subculture, but by insisting that the institutional church's mission was narrowly religious, not social or moral. In further pursuit of a strict Presbyterianism, the PCA valued a well-educated ministry and leaned heavily upon the conservative and well-informed scholars. Machen's legacy was the preservation of Old School Presbyterianism through a Calvinist seminary and a confessional church free from the constraints of establishmentarian Protestantism. And Westminster Seminary and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church embodied those ideals. Although the size and influence of his church and seminary was small, Machen had managed to sustain a religious tradition that otherwise may have become extinct.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ Hart, *Defending the Faith*, 165.

²⁵⁰ Ibid. Also, see Mark A. Noll, "The Spirit of Old Princeton and the Spirit of the OPC," in *Pressing Toward the Mark*, ed. Dennison and Gamble, 235-46.

In relation to this matter, it needs to be mentioned that the splintering of conservatives during the 1940s highlighted historic tensions within American Protestantism. The National Association of Evangelicals²⁵¹ reflected the outlook of antebellum revivalism while the PCA embodied the attitudes of nineteenth-century confessional groups who sought to preserve their own particular identity against the inclusive and expansive evangelical empire of revivalism and voluntary associations. Theologically, the message of evangelicals was well adapted to the forces of modernization while confessionalists strove to retain Old World beliefs. Revivalists showed a higher estimate of human nature, by calling upon rational, autonomous individuals to make personal decisions for Christ, than many confessionalists who affirmed traditional conceptions of human sinfulness and inability, and relied upon the institutional church for spiritual sustenance. Revivalists emphasized Christianity's ethical demands and looked for a highly disciplined and morally responsible life as evidence of true faith. Confessionalists, however, equated correct doctrine with religious faithfulness because theological distinctions were crucial for them. Moreover, evangelicals and confessionalists disagreed about the nature of the church. Revivalists did not have clear definitions of the church; their communions minimized the distinction between clergy and laity while evangelical support for religious and benevolent voluntary agencies blurred differences between religious doctrines. In contrast, confessionalists had

²⁵¹ Further reference to the National Association of Evangelicals will be abbreviated to the NAE.

a high view of church offices and government, and believed that the spiritual tasks of preaching and performing the sacraments limited what the church as an institution could do and provided a proper perspective on human suffering. These religious differences also had social and political consequences.²⁵²

Machen was influenced by Thornwell in terms of the issue of social involvement and had a very limited thought about the matter. In other words, his “narrow religious aims severely limited the authority and responsibility of the church in public life.”²⁵³ Hart raised the issue of Machen’s having the same view as Menken’s cultural modernism toward the social and cultural matters.²⁵⁴ However, he concluded that “the alliance between Machen, the defender of Presbyterian orthodoxy, and Mencken, the debunker of all orthodoxy, was not as farfetched as it first seemed.”²⁵⁵ Also, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church went in the direction, restricting its involvement in social matters and implicitly acknowledging the cultural diversity that Machen had defended.²⁵⁶ As a result, they refused to join in the evangelical movement which began by the organization of the NAE in 1942. Thus the fragmentation of conservatives in the 1940s actually revealed four different camps within American Protestantism, fundamentalists, evangelicals, mainline Protestants, and confessionalists. The first three groups agreed on the

²⁵² Hart, *Defending the Faith*, 167-68.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 170.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 2, 9.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 169.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 168-69.

necessity of a cultural consensus informed by Anglo-American Protestantism but disagreed over the means for achieving that consensus. Confessionalists dissented from the idea of a Christian America that churches should provide moral and spiritual leadership for the nation, and sought autonomy to preserve their own faith and practice.²⁵⁷ In this aspect, however, McIntire had an entirely different view. He held to the idea of a Christian America and formed such organizations as ACCC in 1941, ICCA in 1948, and started the Twentieth-Century Reformation Movement. Also, McIntire espoused a thoroughgoing separatism of the church seeking for its doctrinal purity and strongly renouncing liberalism. In the 1930s, fundamentalists argued for separation. Joel Carpenter stated:

The fundamentalist movement produced a message that attracted many at a time when Americans were searching for a heritage to remember and conserve. Thus the movement was prepared to play a leading role in the postwar evangelical revival. Three dominant motifs, then, pervaded fundamentalists' thought and action in these years: separation, the Second Coming, and revival.²⁵⁸

While fundamentalists and liberals continued to cling, though differing over specifics, to the idea of a Christian America, Machen was remarkably willing to defend religious freedom and cultural pluralism. The churches' involvement in cultural and social life, Machen argued, was harmful because it undermined faithful witnessing to Christian truth. Yet

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 169-70.

²⁵⁸ Joel A. Carpenter, "From Fundamentalism to the New Evangelical Coalition," in *Evangelicalism and Modern America* ed. George Marsden (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984), 4-5.

Machen's commitment to Presbyterian orthodoxy and religious pluralism went largely unheeded in fundamentalist and evangelical circles. Hart concludes, however, that Machen's "outlook may still prove instructive to believers and secularists in America today who through a series of culture wars struggle to reconcile the demands of faith with the realities of modernity."²⁵⁹

²⁵⁹ Hart, *Defending the Faith*, 170.

CHAPTER IV

THE INFLUENCE OF MACHEN AND MCINTIRE ON THE KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1. Historical Background

Protestant missions to Korea began in 1884 when Horace N. Allen was transferred from the Presbyterian Mission in China. To gain access to Korea, he came not as a missionary but as physician to the U.S. Legation in Seoul. A short-lived palace coup in December 1884 gave him the chance to heal the wounds of a Korean prince, Young Ik Min, just returned from Washington, D. C., thereby earning the gratitude of the king and permission to start a Royal Hospital. He also won toleration for religious missionary work in Seoul. In 1885 missionary work began in earnest with Horace G. Underwood and Henry G. Appenzeller, Presbyterian and Methodist, respectively. Underwood, the first clerical missionary to Korea, was known as an English teacher at the hospital Allen had founded. Allen and Underwood were sent by the PCUSA. Appenzeller and William B. Scranton were from the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. However, they could not be engaged in direct evangelistic works. They had to be satisfied with indirect methods of evangelism, that is, education and medical service.²⁶⁰

Accordingly, the number of converts as the fruit of their evangelistic

²⁶⁰ Allen D. Clark, *A History of the Church in Korea* (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1986[1971]), 88-95; Roy E. Shearer, *Wildfire: Church Growth in Korea* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1966), 40-43; Donald N. Clark, *Christianity in Modern Korea* (New York: University Press of America, 1986), 6-7.

work was insignificant. Going through national crises such as the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, the battlefield of which was Korea, and the Ulmi Incident in 1895 in which the Japanese brutally murdered the Korean queen Minbi, the Koreans felt so insecure that some of them came to the Christian church to seek refuge. Even at this time, however, the number of baptized Korean Christians in 1896 was only 777. 1897 statistics show that there were about 5,000 Christians including about 3,000 Presbyterians.²⁶¹

In 1890, however, in response to the invitation of Korea missionaries who were impressed with the plan shown in his book *Methods of Mission Work*, John L. Nevius visited Korea. Nevius had immediate and profound effect on mission policies of the then seven young Presbyterian missionaries through his two-week visit. The mission fully adopted Nevius' principles and put them into practice. The phenomenal growth of the Korean church was brought about through the practice of the Nevius method.²⁶²

There occurred a very significant incident in Korean church history, which was the Great Revival in 1907. It started in an annual Bible-study meeting at a Presbyterian church in Pyongyang, resulted in an unprecedented spiritual experience for Korean Christians as well as moral enhancement, and has exercised a formative influence on the Korean Church for a century. From this revival on, the Korean church began to be characterized by its zeal for prayer, Bible study and evangelism. The

²⁶¹ Mahn Yol Yi, *Korean Christianity and the National Consciousness* (Seoul: Gishik Sanubsa, 1991), 279.

²⁶² Shearer, *Wildfire*, 45.

Korean Church, it may be said, was born in a true sense through this revival. L. George Paik, the great Christian educator, looked back on the revival as a Great Awakening by stating that “the religious experience of the people gave to the Christian church in Korea a character which is its own.... Korean Christians of today look back on the movement as the source of their spiritual life.”²⁶³ The revival spread all over the nation, as leaders who had experienced it first in Pyongyang were invited to come to various places in the country and conduct revival meetings.²⁶⁴

Foreign missionaries may take credit for much of what was begun in Korean Christianity. Their work took on three main forms: church-planting, medical work and education. Church-planting and the training of a native pastorate were their primary concern, but medicine and education were vital to the modernization of Korea. Mission schools were the only modern schools prior to World War I, and a large number of Korea’s postwar leaders had spent some time in mission schools.

In 1907 the first Presbytery meeting of the Korean church was organized and held. At that meeting, the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church in India was adopted as the creed of the church. George Paik characterizes that creed as a very clear expression of Reformed doctrine by stating that “the confession itself consisted of twelve articles of strong Calvinistic trend.” The Calvinism stressed therein was cultivated most effectively in Pyongyang Theological Seminary. Since

²⁶³ L. George Paik, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea, 1832-1910* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1970), 374.

²⁶⁴ Shearer, *Wildfire*, 56-57.

1888, Korean students had been selected for theological training, and from 1901 on, a tentative course of study was outlined and sessions conducted on a regular basis. In 1907, that seminary was formally established and “administered by a committee of the Presbyterian Church Council, including representatives of the four missions then working among Presbyterians in Korea.” In 1918, a theological quarterly magazine was started. Samuel A. Moffett was elected president of the seminary in 1907 and served in that capacity until 1924.²⁶⁵

Japan annexed Korea outright and made it a colony in 1910. Thus Korea became a victim of imperialism. In Korea the church was associated with a new nationalism. Christian leaders were prominent in societies organized to awaken Korean resistance to colonization. The organization and networks of the church caused political problems for the Japanese. Thus the Japanese were worried about Christianity in Korea, and started to neutralize the church and to be favorable toward only the missionaries who upheld their policies. Through the incident, known as the Korean Conspiracy Case which had occurred in 1911, the Japanese authorities succeeded in intimidating many Christian activists and offered the church an incentive to emphasize the life of piety over the life of social action. Furthermore, they required “church institutions such as schools and hospitals to meet government standards for staffing and facilities. These included a requirement that religion not be part of regular school

²⁶⁵ Harvie M. Conn, “Studies in the Theology of the Korean Presbyterian Church: An Historical Outline,” Part I, *Westminster Theological Journal*, vol. xxix. 31-35.

curriculum.” For most missionaries, the Japanese regime was an enemy of religious freedom.²⁶⁶

The March First Movement was a pivotal event in modern Korean history. The Japanese colonial government ruled the Korean people by the sword. After the occupation of Korea, Japan started to exploit Korea economically. Also, permission was required even to build a new church building. All the religious publications were censored. Worship services and religious meetings were subject to surveillance. Teaching the Bible in the Christian schools was outlawed, and the use of the Japanese language was enforced in all the classes. To go abroad for travel or study was forbidden. The Koreans were deprived of the freedom of speech, meeting and association. The Japanese government treated Koreans discriminatively everywhere.²⁶⁷

Some Christian students, church leaders, and Chondogyo (a Korean religion) leaders agreed to declare the independence of Korea on March 1, 1919. A Declaration of Independence was prepared and was signed by a group of thirty-three outstanding leaders. On that day, thousands of Koreans gathered at Pagoda Park in Seoul and heard the Declaration of Independence read in the name of thirty three leaders of the nation. After that, they rushed out into the street and demonstrated their desire for independence from Japan. With the declaration and demonstration in Seoul as a start, Korean people living in all towns and villages throughout

²⁶⁶ Donald Clark, *Christianity*, 8-9.

²⁶⁷ The Institute of Korean Church History Studies, *A History of Korean Church* Vol. II (Seoul: The Christian Literature Press, 1990), 24-25.

the country began to rise up and ask for independence. They read the Declaration sent from Seoul and marched in the street. It was literally a nation-wide movement, and there has never been such a widespread nationalistic movement in the history of Korea.²⁶⁸

Christians played a vital role in this nationalistic movement. They took part in all the stages of preparation for the declaration at Pagoda Park. Out of the forty eight persons who played central roles in its preparation, twenty four were Christians. Out of thirty three who signed the Declaration of Independence, sixteen were Christians. It was Christian students who distributed the Declaration to the whole country, and invited people to Pagoda Park on D-day. Such rapid spread of the movement throughout the country owed much to 200,000 Christians and their churches.²⁶⁹

In 1918, Japan began to build a Shinto shrine in Seoul, and finished it in 1925. However, until then, shrine worship was not enforced upon Koreans. In 1931, the Japanese government began to force shrine worship upon Koreans. The Japanese militarists required shrine worship of Koreans as an expression of the Koreans' unconditional loyalty to the Japanese emperor. The first target of the enforcement of the Shrine worship was the educational system. In 1932, the government forced all the schools in Korea to do shrine worship. Yet the twenty-first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea passed a resolution to refuse

²⁶⁸ Shearer, *Wildfire*, 63-65.

²⁶⁹ Mahn Yol Yi, *Korean Christianity*, 339, 347-48; Allen Clark, *Church in Korea*, 196-203.

the shrine worship. In November 1935, the governor of Pyungnam Province called on a meeting of the principals of the middle schools, and at the beginning of the meeting he directed them to worship at the shrine. G. S. McCune, V. L. Snook and H. M. Lee, the American missionaries who were serving as the principals in the Christian schools in Pyungyang, refused to follow the direction. In January 1936, the governor revoked the authorization of McCune and Snook, and accordingly, McCune had to return to America. In February, Darby Fulton, the General Secretary of the Board of Foreign Mission in the Southern Presbyterian Church in America visited Korea. He was knowledgeable concerning Shinto, having been born and raised in Japan where his father had been president of the Kansai Theological Seminary. During his stay in Korea, he announced that shrine worship was an unquestionably religious action. However, the Governor-General Minami continued to enforce that the Christian schools sponsor shrine worship. Thus ten schools that belonged to that denomination were closed. Also in March 1937, the Northern Presbyterian Mission closed eight middle schools under the mission, concluding that shrine worship was a religious activity that was composed of praise of the gods and prayer for their blessings.²⁷⁰

Encouraged by the surrender of the Catholic and the Methodist Church, the government began to demand that the Presbyterian Church worship in the shrine. In February 1938, the Pyungbuk Presbytery, the

²⁷⁰ Allen Clark, *Church in Korea*, 221-31; Shearer, *Wildfire*, 69-76; Donald Clark, *Christianity*, 12-14.

largest Korean presbytery, passed a resolution to worship in the shrine. Until September of the same year, seventeen out of twenty-three presbyteries followed the precedent of the Pyungbuk presbytery. Finally, the General Assembly of 1938, which was held under the threat and operation of the Japanese police, surrendered to the pressure of the government and passed a resolution to worship at the shrine. Thus there was no denomination in Korea which officially refused the shrine worship.²⁷¹

However, not all Christians submitted to the demand of the shrine worship. Those who refused to worship in the shrine and chose to be persecuted did so not because of any political or nationalistic reason, but because of religious conviction. They simply did not want to commit a sin by violating the first of the Ten Commandments. Nevertheless, for Japanese authorities, Korean Christians' refusal of shrine worship, which was closely related to the deification of the emperor, was a serious threat to the foundation of their state. Even some Korean pastors' emphasis on the doctrine of Jesus' second coming was taken by Japanese as a threat to their state system. Therefore, the Japanese government was so anxious to secure the surrender of Korean Christians concerning shrine worship.²⁷²

²⁷¹ Conn, op. cit., 167-68.

²⁷² Nak Heong Yang, *Reformed Social Ethics and the Korean Church* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1997), 126-27.

2. The Influence of the American Missionaries on the Korean Presbyterian Church

Harvie M. Conn speaks of the great influence of missionaries exerted in the early period of Korean church history by stating that “the history of the Korean church in its early years is the history of conservative, evangelical Christianity. That history must be credited to the missionaries of the Presbyterian faith who brought it.”²⁷³ Furthermore, A. J. Brown, one of the General Secretaries of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA, comments on the missionary before 1911:

The typical missionary of the first quarter century after the opening of the country was a man of the Puritan type. He kept the Sabbath as our New England forefathers did a century ago. He looked upon dancing, smoking and card-playing as sins in which no true follower of Christ should indulge. In theology and Biblical criticism he was strongly conservative, and he held as a vital truth the premillenarian view of the second coming of Christ. The higher criticism and liberal theology were deemed dangerous heresies. In most of the evangelical churches of America and Great Britain, conservatives and liberals have learned to live and work together in peace; but in Korea the few men who hold ‘the modern view’ have a rough road to travel, particularly in the Presbyterian group of missions.²⁷⁴

In the early years of Korean church history, the missionaries continued

²⁷³ Conn, op. cit., 26.

²⁷⁴ A. J. Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East* (New York: Scribners, 1919), 540.

to be almost the only theological guide of the church. For example, it was not until 1927 that the first Korean professor was added to the faculty of Pyungyang Theological Seminary. The missionaries had the continuing authority in the theological direction of the Korean Presbyterian church. In other words, the Korean missionary church was thoroughly affected for many years by the missionaries who provided its first trained theological leadership which was strongly conservative.²⁷⁵

The *Annual Report* (1922) of the Korean Mission, PCUSA gives information concerning the training of these missionaries. Among the forty ordained men serving in Korea at that time, seven seminaries are represented. Princeton Seminary comes first with 16 men, McCormick Seminary next with 11, San Anselmo Seminary with 4 and Union Seminary, New York, with 3. About ten Bible Institutes are represented, Moody Bible Institute easily leading with the Biblical Seminary of New York in the second place.²⁷⁶ Through this training in largely conservative centers of education, the early missionaries cultivated an evangelical, conservative way of thinking in the Korean Presbyterian Church.

The adoption of the Nevius method in 1890 as an overall strategy for the evangelization of Korea was an illustration of the prevalence of that theology. The center of the system was not the principles of self-support, self-government, and self-propagation, but emphasis on the Bible as the basis of all Christian work and the elaborate system of Bible classes by

²⁷⁵ Conn, op. cit., 27.

²⁷⁶ Korea Mission, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., *Annual Report*, 1922, 17.

which that book could be studied and applied to the believer's heart.²⁷⁷ The central emphasis on the Bible in the Nevius method is uniquely conservative in its coloring.

The conservative and evangelical thinking of the early Korean church and its missionaries appears also, as mentioned above, in the adoption of the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church in India as its creed. Also, the Calvinism stressed in the creed, which "consisted of twelve articles of strong Calvinistic trend," was cultivated most effectively in Pyongyang Theological Seminary.²⁷⁸ As late as 1936, missionaries still continued to motivate and largely direct the theology of Pyongyang Seminary. Especially, Conn says of three representative missionaries who exerted such influence – Samuel A. Moffett, Charles Allen Clark, and William D. Reynolds.²⁷⁹

However, Conn points out some problems with the theology that emerged from this time. He raises a question about "whether all the Presbyterian missionaries in Korea emphasized a Calvinism that made distinctions and drew lines." He states that "that desire on the part of the missionaries to inculcate a distinctive theological Calvinism was not always made reality." First of all, the years 1905-1906 were the high water mark of desire of missionaries for the union between the Presbyterian Church and the Methodist Church in Korea. Such organic union never became a reality. The union would have been fulfilled, however, had the

²⁷⁷ Allen Clark, *Church in Korea*, 114 ff.

²⁷⁸ Conn, *op. cit.*, 31-32.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 36-41.

missionaries alone voted on that question. But there were two obstacles which stopped it – “the home boards’ unfavorable reaction and the lack of desire for it among the Koreans.” Thus, the question is raised about just how strictly Calvinistic the missionaries wanted the early Korean church to become.²⁸⁰

Second, another indication of inconsistent Presbyterianism consists in the fact that dispensationalism came, through the missionaries, in its milder forms from the west. The division of the unfolding revelation of God into seven dispensations found its way into much of the teaching of the Korean church.²⁸¹ Korean dispensationalism flourished encouraged by the translation and publication of western literature. But it differed from its western forms in some aspects. For instance, it was not of the strong antinomian type so often found in America. Also, it did not seem to tend toward the complications of the western variety in its eschatological interpretations. In fact, Korean dispensationalism more closely resembles the early embryonic stage represented by the spirit of the First International Prophecy Conference of 1878 than the highly formalized approach popular after the publication of the Scofield Reference Bible in 1909.²⁸² In this regard, dispensationalism exerted the greatest theological influence in terms of the early Korean church’s concept of the kingdom of God and its adherence to the more simplistic rules of interpretation used by the teaching. The dispensational principle of exact literal interpretation and exact literal

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 48-49.

²⁸¹ Bruce F. Hunt, “Beachhead in Korea,” *The Presbyterian Guardian*, Vol. 29, No. 2, 23. Cf. Kraus, *Dispensationalism in America*, 71-110.

²⁸² Kraus, *Dispensationalism in America*, 82-88.

fulfillment of all prophetic promises would fit in very well in the early Korean church. Especially, the strongly futuristic emphasis of the dispensational approach was influential. Also, the strong emphasis on a merely future aspect of the kingdom played a strong role in the conflict of the Korean church with Shinto nationalism under the Japanese authorities. According to Geun Sam Lee, “eschatological expectation and personal commitment to Christ’s kingship” was one of the four major motives for the Christian resistance to Shinto in Korea. However, his description of the “eschatological expectation” is more close to dispensationalism than to historic premillennialism, and particularly the idea of a church raptured away from war and persecution is strikingly unique to dispensationalism.²⁸³

Third, Conn points out a problem in relation to “the indebtedness of the Christian church to Korea’s native religious concepts for the form and content which the Korean pours into Christian terminology.” This is about the influence of other native religions of Korea such as Buddhism and Confucianism being exerted on Korean Christianity. Although it is difficult to say how far such charges can be sustained, there may be real merit in some of the charges. Conn concludes that these charges “leave one with new suspicions and a great deal of circumstantial evidence that needs further study.”²⁸⁴

Fourth, he indicates other problems such as mysticism and a form of pietism that “also troubled early Presbyterian waters.” The early Korean

²⁸³ Conn, *op. cit.*, 50-53.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 53-55.

Presbyterian church not only had great strengths but it had weaknesses as well. And as time went by, both were magnified.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 55-57.

3. Machen's Influence through Korean Theologians on the Korean Presbyterian Church

Sung Kuh Chung speaks of the great influence of Hyung Nong Park as the theological educator by stating that “he was born for theological education and was called for this purpose. In actuality, all the pastors of the Korean Presbyterian Church from 1930 to 1960 were his disciples. His theology and life were those of the leaders of the Korean Church.”²⁸⁶

Also, Aaron Pyungchoon Park writes for an assessment of Hyung Nong Park:

In spite of the great extent to which a mere mentioning of his name generates fierce debates and negative criticisms among the theologians and church leaders of Korea's liberal, ecumenical Christianity, Dr. Henry Hyungnong Park, since his death in 1978, has been remembered lovingly, admired fervently, and treated with almost “apostolic reverence” as a theologian, as a preacher-educator, and as a leader of the “Korean conservative theology movement,” by a large group of his loyal followers, which includes both graduates and non-graduates of Chongshin Theological Seminary, where Dr. Park taught and served more than once as its president, and, more surprisingly, whose church affiliation is not just limited to the Hapdong Presbyterian church whose ordained minister Dr. Park was, but extends over the whole range of conservative and evangelically-oriented, Protestant churches in

²⁸⁶ *Chongshin Theological Journal(CTJ)*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Feb. 1998, 6.

Korea.²⁸⁷

In this connection, Ezra Kilsung Kim states that “a proper evaluation of Dr. Park’s theology and legacy is not relevant only to the past, present, future of Chongshin University and the Presbyterian General Assembly Theological Seminary, but it also affects the entirety of the Presbyterian Church in Korea.”²⁸⁸

Hyung Nong Park’s theology is rooted in the old Princeton Theology. He graduated from Pyungyang-Soongsil School in 1920, a year after the March First Movement. Afterwards, he attended Geumrung University in Nanking, China, and graduated in 1923. Upon graduation, he traveled to America and studied at Princeton Theological Seminary from September 1923 to May 1926. During this three-year period he received both bachelor’s and master’s degrees in theology (Th.B. and Th.M.). From 1926 to 1927, Park attended the Southern Baptist Seminary in Kentucky where he worked on his doctorate degree. After returning to Korea, he worked at Pyungyang Theological Seminary as an evangelist, pastor, instructor, and finally became a full-time professor a year after becoming an instructor. While he was teaching as a full-time professor, he also wrote his doctoral dissertation and finally received the Ph.D. degree from Southern Baptist Seminary in 1933.

Hyung Nong Park’s theology developed at an early age of his life. It first found root during his days as a student at Pyungyang-Soongsil School

²⁸⁷ *Presbyterian Theological Quarterly(PTQ)*, Vol. 64, No. 3, Fall 1997, 11, 13.

²⁸⁸ *CTJ*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Feb. 1999, 88.

where he learned about the concept of national pride during Japan's colonial rule of Korea. His theology was further developed when he attended with the help of missionaries the University of Nanking in China. This help he received from these missionaries must have produced a good effect on the young Hyung Nong Park considering his later accomplishments.²⁸⁹

However, the greatest influence on the development of his theology was exerted during his days at Princeton Theological Seminary from 1923 to 1926 where he had received his bachelor's and master's degrees. The theological thoughts and tradition of Princeton Theological Seminary from 1812 to 1929 is called the old Princeton Theology in contrast with its theological thoughts from 1929 to the present. This is the period when Princeton Seminary held fast to and taught the historical Reformed thought and orthodox Calvinistic theology. The representative theologians of the old Princeton theological tradition are Archibald Alexander and Charles Hodge who were the founding fathers of the school as well as A. A. Hodge, B. B. Warfield, J. Gresham Machen, and others.

In 1923 when Hyung Nong Park went to America to study, fundamentalism began to decline under the attacks of modernism. As a countermeasure, fundamentalists began to strongly enforce the five points which were agreed on in 1910 and were confirmed in both 1916 and 1923. Since the five points were adopted by the General Assembly of the PCUSA,

²⁸⁹ John Euiwhan Kim, "Theology of Hyung Nong Park," in *The Life and Thought of Dr. Hyung Nong Park*, ed. Yong Kyu Park (Seoul: Chongshin University Press, 1996), 235.

they were used as a minimum confession of faith to ordain pastors in the Presbyterian denomination as well as to examine those from other denominations who aspired to pursue ministry.

Hyung Nong Park started as an apologist. And he turned a systematic theologian later. He began to teach systematic theology when he taught at Bong Cheon Theological Seminary in Manchuria in 1943.²⁹⁰ Also, he majored in apologetic theology when he studied at Princeton Theological Seminary. He used some portion of his knowledge of apologetics into writing the first seven volumes (for the subject of dogmatics) of his *Collected Writings of Dr. Hyung Nong Park*.²⁹¹ The motivation that he majored in apologetics when studying at Princeton Theological Seminary was to defend Christianity from the ones who criticize it based on science, socialism, evolutionism.²⁹² He learned the apologetics courses such as “Apologetics and Theism,” “Evidences of Christianity,” “Christian Sociology,” “Christian Ethics,” “Metaphysics of Christian Apologetics,” “Philosophical Apologetics,” “Exposition of the Ten Commandments in Relation to the Problems of Modern Society,” “Historical Effects of Christianity and Social Solutions” primarily from Dr. William Brenton Greene, Jr. who was then an apologetics professor at Princeton Seminary.²⁹³ Then, Machen was the assistant professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis. He taught courses such as “New

²⁹⁰ Aaron Park, “The Life and Theology of Jook San, Dr. Hyung Nong Park,” in *The Life and Thought of Dr. Hyung Nong Park*, 142, 144.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 145.

²⁹² Dong Min Jang, *A Study in Hyung Nong Park's Theology* (Seoul: The Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 1998), 64.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 62.

Testament Greek,” “New Testament Introduction and Exegesis” as compulsory courses, and “The Birth of Jesus,” “Paul and His Environment” as elective courses. Later Park asked Machen in a letter to write an article for the title of “The Origin of Christianity” to insert in *The Standard Bible Commentary* for which he was working as the editor.²⁹⁴ In this letter Park mentioned Machen’s book *The Origin of Paul’s Religion* which was one of his greatest apologetic works.²⁹⁵ It can be inferred through this that Park took the course or knew it well.²⁹⁶ Also, it is probable that Park read some of Machen’s books including *Christianity and Liberalism*, *The Origin of Paul’s Religion*. Therefore, it may be said that Hyung Nong Park was greatly influenced by Machen in terms of apologetics also.

In the early 1920s, Machen rose up as a leader of the conservatives against the teachings of modernism. The philosophical thoughts of Princeton Seminary from the time of its establishment in 1812 to 1929 were highly influenced by the Scottish Common Sense Philosophy. Thus, the seminary adamantly defended the doctrine of inspiration, inerrancy, and the authority of Scripture as specified in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. Princeton Seminary with this orientation defended its stance on fundamentalism against modernism during the 1920s and 1930s as spearheaded by Machen. There is an irony in his defense of fundamentalism, for he did not like to identify himself as a fundamentalist.

²⁹⁴ Young Il Seu, *A Study in Yune Sun Park’s Reformed Theology* trans. Dong Min Jang, (Seoul: The Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 2000), 138-141. Machen could not write that article due to untimely death.

²⁹⁵ Hyung Nong Park to Machen, February 1, 1936 in Seu, *Yune Sun Park’s Reformed Theology*, 140.

²⁹⁶ Jang, *Hyung Nong Park’s Theology*, 83-84.

Joel Carpenter defined fundamentalism as “an interdenominational, evangelical movement that grew up around the Bible schools, magazines, missions, and conferences founded by Dwight L. Moody and his protégés, such as Adoniram J. Gordon, Cyrus I. Scofield, and Reuben A. Torrey in the 1880s and 1890s.”²⁹⁷ Nevertheless, he was the catalyst by whom fundamentalism was provided with the intellectual leadership in fighting against liberalism.

Machen was very clear in both his defense of fundamentalism and his criticism of the teachings of modernists. He rebuked the modernists’ denial of the supernatural events recorded in the Bible and their endorsement of natural explanations for all phenomena. Therefore, Machen had even concluded that liberal theology has nothing in common with Christianity because of the fact that its roots are completely different from those of Christianity.²⁹⁸

During the 1920s, however, the fundamentalist movement in the PCUSA began to lose its influence, particularly around 1925. This major decline in its influence is attributed to two incidents that took place in 1925, that is, the appointment of Charles Erdman to the office of the moderator of the PCUSA and the Scopes Trial held at Dayton, Tennessee, where William Jennings Bryan’s defense of the creation account versus evolution diminished the credibility of conservatives everywhere.

It was during this time in America when the debates between

²⁹⁷ Joel Carpenter, “The Fundamentalist Leaven and the Rise of an Evangelical United Front,” in *The Evangelical Tradition in America* ed. Leonard I. Sweet (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1984), 259.

²⁹⁸ Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*, 2.

fundamentalists and modernists were at their height that Hyung Nong Park completed his studies at Princeton Seminary. Also, he recommended his student, Yune Sun Park, to attend Westminster Seminary which Machen had founded in 1929. Instead of recommending Princeton Seminary, Hyung Nong Park recommended Westminster Seminary while he was teaching as a professor at Pyongyang Seminary after he had returned to Korea. Therefore, it may be said that Hyung Nong Park's theology is rooted on the theological system and beliefs of the old Princeton Theology of 1812 to 1929. In order to understand his theology, it should be seen in the light of the theological tradition of the old Princeton Theology in American church history. This giant theologian in Korean church history was greatly influenced especially by Machen. When he went to Princeton Seminary to study, Machen had taken over the baton of the tradition of the Princeton Theology and was teaching there as the last remaining defender of the orthodox theology. After meeting Machen, Hyung Nong Park's theological position and viewpoint were formed. Park had a close relationship with Machen. T. Stanley Soltau writes that "Dr. J. G. Machen later told me that Henry Park was the brightest oriental that had ever studied under him and he was delighted with the quality of his work."²⁹⁹ It is true that this theological position influenced his overall view and dogmatics. Thus in publishing his dogmatics, he expressed in a parable that his theology was not his own creative work, but was like a bouquet

²⁹⁹ T. Stanley Soltau, "Hyungnong Park, the Saintly Scholar," in *The Life and Thought of Dr. Hyung Nong Park*, 178.

made by picking from someone else's garden. However, he tried to convey precisely the Reformed orthodox theology which he had learned. He stated that "my intention is not to create something daring, but just to convey by receiving the Reformed orthodox theology of Calvinism." He further revealed that "my desire is to transmit to a new generation the same theology as what the missionaries conveyed to our country eighty years ago."³⁰⁰ It can be inferred from this statement that the pietistic Puritan tendency in his theology derived from the influence of the missionaries with whom he was associated.

In the early 1930s, the conflict between liberal theology and conservative theology began to come to the surface in Korea. At that time, each position had found a Korean strong enough to be its representative. Hyung Nong Park was representing the conservative forces. The man whom Hyung Nong Park particularly opposed in these years was the leading representative of his position in Korea at the time. Chai Choon Kim returned from his studies at Princeton and Western Seminaries to become Bible teacher in the church-related Soong In Commercial School at Pyongyang. A regular contributor to *The Theological Review* of the Pyongyang Seminary during the early 1930s, his writing eventually placed him in direct theological opposition to Hyung Nong Park. Finally, in 1935, that opposition reached a climax over a foreword which Kim had written for the January issue of the Seminary journal. Park then directly

³⁰⁰ Dr. Hyung Nong Park's *Systematic Theology I*, Preface.

opposed his being a contributor to the magazine.³⁰¹

In these early years Kim was not a solitary figure. By the time of the 1934 and 1935 General Assemblies of the Korean Presbyterian Church, the conflict had apparently reached such proportions that more than one missionary commentator have intimated that the church was close to division. Previously liberalism's influence had been restricted to isolated men and quiet skirmishes. Now for the first time it became a problem for the whole church.³⁰²

The conflict arose over more than one issue. At the 1934 General Assembly, it centered primarily on two questions: the authorship of Genesis, and the rights of women. A committee was appointed by the 1934 Assembly to study the two questions and report. Hyung Nong Park was one member of the committee. The following year, at the 24th General Assembly, the committee made its report, which determined "to exclude from the fellowship of our church those church leaders who interpret the Bible freely according to world trends, and those church leaders who teach destructive higher criticism of the Bible."³⁰³

At this same General Assembly, other doctrinal questions also received great attention. As part of their Jubilee celebration, the Korean Methodist Church had published a translation of *The One Volume Bible Commentary*, known also as *The Abingdon Commentary*. Included among

³⁰¹ Harvie M. Conn, "Studies in the Theology of the Korean Presbyterian Church: An Historical Outline," Part II, *Westminster Theological Journal*, vol. xxix., 148-51.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 154-55.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 155-56.

its Korean translators were several Presbyterian ministers. On the basis of the theological liberalism expressed within its pages, the Assembly “made the Presbyterian contributors issue a statement promising that they would retract the work they had contributed at the time of re-printing and instructing them to express their regret, issuing also a prohibition to Presbyterian believers not to buy and read this book.” Presbyteries were advised to take up the matter with those of their ministers who had had a part in the work of translation. There were also other problems. In general, however, the actions taken during these years did not seem to provide any effective antidote to the spread of liberalism. The effect of all this was a “suppression” of liberalism, not a cleansing of it. Although the control of the church was still obviously conservative, it was not so firm or clear.³⁰⁴ However, it is true that Hyung Nong Park played a great role in defending conservative theology in the face of the challenge of liberalism when the fundamentalist-modernist controversy he experienced in America occurred repeatedly in Korea through its history.

Aaron Park writes concerning Hyung Nong Park’s theology:

To speak in a few words about what his theological thought was or what his position in theology was is not an easy task. But, assuming and inferring from the definitive utterances Dr. Park had given regarding the theological tradition of the Korean church or even that of the Korean Presbyterian church we can adequately say that his was a reformed theology interpreted according to the

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 156-59.

historical Westminster Standards with a particular emphasis on Christian living and evangelism....

Therefore, the writer of this editorial would call Dr. Henry Hyungnong Park's theology, if he may be allowed to do so, a "Presbyterian and reformed theology", which has come to its fruition in the course of its being developed in and for the Presbyterian church in Korea. For his was an evangelical theology, which, having been firmly anchored in the belief in an infallible Scripture as the written Word of God and also in the absolute sovereignty of God which manifests itself in His redemption of mankind through the atoning blood of His Son, Jesus Christ as well as in His creation of the universe and man in it, refuses to go over to the extremity of charismatic practices such as a tongue-speaking and divine healing, on the one hand, and condemns and rejects totally the liberal theologies of non-biblical and philosophical speculations, such as Neo-Orthodoxy, Post-Bultmannian theology and radical political theology, on the other hand.³⁰⁵

Also, Hyung Nong Park himself declared concerning his theological position that "Presbyterian Theology, in regard to salvific issues, requires all the elements of Reformed Calvinism, Anglo-American Puritanism, and the acceptance of the Westminster Standards. Also, the tradition of the Presbyterian Church in Korea is the process of the acceptance,

³⁰⁵ Aaron Pyungchoon Park, "A Few Congratulatory Remarks Concerning the Opening of Dr. Henry Hyungnong Park's Memorial Lecture Series at Chong Shin Theological Seminary," in *Presbyterian Theological Quarterly(PTQ)*, Vol. 64. No. 3, (Fall 1997), 7, 9.

development and growth of Anglo-American Reformed Puritanism.”³⁰⁶

Therefore, Hyung Nong Park’s theology is influenced by and is based on the conservative nature of both Anglo-American Presbyterianism and Dutch Reformed theology. As he draws on the great theologians of church history, he has guarded the truth of Reformed theology. Furthermore, he has also stipulated that Reformed theology must be continuously developed. In terms of theological methodology, Hyung Nong Park devised “Synthetic Method” by synthesizing Cornelius Van Til’s “Method of Implication” and Charles Hodge’s inductive method.³⁰⁷ Also, he tried to synthesize the system of Dutch Reformed theology in the tradition of Kuyper-Bavinck-Berkhof-Van Til and the Princeton apologetics which was the classical apologetics in the tradition of Hodge-Warfield-Machen in terms of the principles of theology: *principium essendi*(God), *principium cognoscendi externum*(revelation), *principium cognoscendi internum*(faith and reason).³⁰⁸ Park was influenced by Princeton Theology so great that he did not forsake Princeton apologetics in terms of apologetics. Although he was also greatly influenced by Dutch Reformed theology, he did not fully develop it.³⁰⁹

Also, Yune Sun Park studied at Westminster Theological Seminary from September 1934 to May 1936 and learned from Machen. He also had a close relationship with Machen while he studied at Westminster.³¹⁰

³⁰⁶ Hyung Nong Park, *Collected Writings* 14: *Theological Essays*, No. 2, 389.

³⁰⁷ Jang, *Hyung Nong Park’s Theology*, 319-320.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 320-339.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 336-9, 341-2.

³¹⁰ Seu, *Yune Sun Park’s Reformed Theology*. 135.

Later he wrote commentaries on all the books of the Bible. He was greatly influenced by Machen in terms of biblical interpretation. He used the method of biblical interpretation which he learned from Machen when he wrote biblical commentaries on all the books of the Bible.³¹¹

Furthermore, Yune Sun Park loved Machen and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church(OPC). He did a great role in connecting the Koryu denomination and the OPC. For him, the name Machen symbolized theological orthodoxy and the purity of the church. He criticized the education of Pyongyang Theological Seminary in terms of true Calvinism based on the education he received from Westminster Theological Seminary. Through his teaching at seminaries in Korea, Park tried to transmit to and establish in Korea true Calvinism he learned at Westminster Seminary. Also, he was the first in Korea to have tried to preach the expository sermon, that is, the sermon based on exegesis. This was also the influence exerted on him through the education he received at Westminster Seminary.³¹²

Yune Sun Park went to Westminster Seminary again to study from September 1938 to November 1939. He learned apologetic method, that is, presuppositional apologetics from Cornelius Van Til who was then the professor of apologetics then. By using this method, he criticized neo-orthodoxy and protected the Korean Presbyterian Church based on the Word of God. He appropriated Van Til's apologetic methodology to

³¹¹ Ibid., 134-141.

³¹² Ibid., 134-151.

attack neo-orthodoxy, although Van Til's apologetic method was different from Machen's apologetic method which was the Princeton apologetics.³¹³

³¹³ Ibid., 165-9.

4. McIntire's Influence on the Korean Presbyterian Church

In 1938 the Pyongyang Theological Seminary, an institution that had been the center of conservative thinking in the Korean church for over forty years, shut its doors. After all missionaries were forced to return home during World War II, the Chosun Theological Seminary was founded in 1940 exclusively by Koreans. All leading faculty members of this school advocated the neo-orthodox line which was forming the main current of the world theology at the time. Controversies arose when the missionaries came back to Korea upon Korea's liberation from Japan in 1945. Also, those trying to return to the church which they had left over the shrine issue or to reform the church which had forsaken Presbyterianism to become part of a Japanese government-controlled union church found liberalism and neo-orthodoxy more and more dominant. Especially, the inerrancy of the Bible became the object of the controversy. The Korean faculty members of the Chosun Theological Seminary declared that they were opposed to the doctrine of the plenary verbal inspiration.

It can be said that the post-war controversy in Korea was a "fundamentalist-modernist controversy" remarkably paralleling the similar pre-war struggle in America. In relation to this, Harvie Conn writes:

The relationships and converging lines between the struggle as it was carried on in the west and as it appeared in Korea are most interesting. Two of the groups, for example, that emerged from the western controversy, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, are said by many

commentators to have had considerable influence in the Korean controversy. Many of the conservative leaders in the struggle, like Park Hyung Nong and Pak Yune Sun, had studied under Machen. In fact, one particular group vigorously advocating reform in the church is referred to consistently by Kim Yang Sun as “the Machen group”.... In this same connection, Kim draws a parallel between the purposes of the Machen-minded missionaries and the Koryu Theological Seminary, with which they eventually joined forces.³¹⁴

A minority in the mission of the PCUSA felt such strong dissatisfaction with the home board over the shrine and over liberalism in the mission that many resigned. About fifteen missionaries resigned from the Korea mission since 1936 for these reasons. About half of these missionaries returned to Korea under the IBPFM. The sympathy of the Korean Presbyterian Church for Machen and those others who had been disciplined for trying to bring the church back to its standards was so strong that the Orthodox Presbyterian missionaries were accepted by the Korean Church in full standing. The constitution of the Korean Church was amended to include the Orthodox Presbyterian (originally Presbyterian Church of America) as one of the cooperating churches.³¹⁵

Concerning McIntire’s influence on the Korean Presbyterian church, it should be mentioned first that in 1937, the Bible Presbyterian Church was formed in America by the leaders who were separated from the PCA.

³¹⁴ Harvie M. Conn, “Studies in the Theology of the Korean Presbyterian Church: An Historical Outline,” Part III, *Westminster Theological Journal*, vol. xxx., 28.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, (Part II), 165-66.

Dwight R. Malsbury, who represented the Bible Presbyterian Church, returned to Korea in March 1948 and cooperated with Bruce F. Hunt, who represented the PCA in Korea. Malsbury and William H. Chisholm joined the faculty of the Koryu Theological Seminary, which was opened in September 1946 to inherit the old tradition of the reformed theology of the Pyungyang Theological Seminary, as the missionaries of the IBPFM in 1948. They had belonged to the mission board of the PCUSA before liberation.³¹⁶

Immediately after liberation, two areas particularly became the stages on which the conflict was waged. They were the shrine issue and the question of the liberal leadership that had assumed control of the church during the Japanese occupation. Chosun Seminary had been the training institution for such leadership.

For the program for reform, the first successful step for reform was executed in South Kyungsang Province. There a theological institute was held, at the instigation of Sang Dong Han and Nam Sun Choo who had been imprisoned before liberation over the opposition to shrine worship, in the summer of 1946. And it continued its services as Koryu Theological Seminary on September 20.

The direction of the seminary quickly took form. And perhaps the one man who formed it more than any other was Yune Sun Park who was the first president. He brought to Koryu Seminary an insistence on the promotion of a distinctive Calvinism. From research under Machen at

³¹⁶ Cf. "Open Doors in Korea," *Christian Beacon*, August 25, 1949, 2.

Westminster Theological Seminary(1934-1936), and again under Cornelius Van Til(1938-1939), Yune Sun Park saw more than the need for just the continuation of an old tradition. He wanted something larger than a mere fundamentalism. He wanted the Korean church to see and to be moved by the larger perspectives of Calvinism. Unlike Hyung Nong Park, he sought to achieve these purposes through New Testament research. Especially he emphasized the importance of “the reasoning based on the divine revelation.”³¹⁷

Hyung Nong Park, the leader in the church’s early struggle against liberalizing influences, and for years connected with theological education in Manchuria, was persuaded to join the faculty of Koryu Seminary as President. He reached southern Korea in late September, 1947, and began his duties at the seminary the following month. However, he came to Seoul leaving Koryu Seminary in May 1948 having the difference of opinion over the issues such as the relationship between the General Assembly and the seminary. He wanted the seminary to be supported by all the churches of the nation.

In September 1952, the South Kyungsang Province Presbytery oriented to the Koryu Seminary “decided to enlarge their presbytery and carry their testimony beyond the limits of their original boundary.” This meeting is often called the first General Assembly of the Koryu denomination. This

³¹⁷ Chi Mo Hong, “The Significance of Yune Sun Park’s Theology in the Korean Church History,” in *The Life and Theology of Yune Sun Park* ed. Hapdong Theological Seminary Press (Suwon: Hapdong Theological Seminary, 1995), 296-98.

division was due to the issue of shrine worship.³¹⁸

Also, there was another division in the Korean Presbyterian Church. The 38th General Assembly opened in April 1953. The body repeated its former declaration discharging Chai Choon Kim from the ministry. Shin Hong Myung, the moderator of the General Assembly, announced that “the Rev. Chai Choon Kim, having ignored the decision of the 36th General Assembly and continuing to hold to the fallibility of the Scriptures, according to Chapter 6, Section 12 of the Book of Discipline, he is expelled from the ministry and forbidden to exercise his office, in the name of the Lord Jesus.” On June 10, 1953, representatives from nine presbyteries gathered in the auditorium of Hankuk Seminary (the former Chosun Seminary) to open “the legal 38th General Assembly.” This division was due to the theological issue, especially the view of the Bible.

In the 44th General Assembly, Tonghap group departed from the Presbyterian Church over the issue of the World Council of Churches organized in Amsterdam in 1948. When the Korean Presbyterian Church split in 1959 over opposing views on ecumenism, McIntire visited Korea and led anti-ecumenical and anti-Communist meetings throughout important cities in Korea. The Korean Presbyterian Church (the anti-ecumenical, Hapdong denomination) was involved in McIntire’s campaigns in 1959. However, the General Assembly of the Hapdong denomination decided in 1960 not to have any further relationship with the McIntire movement because the character of McIntire’s activity was seen as too

³¹⁸ Conn, *op. cit.* (Part IV), 172.

exclusivistic and militant. In 1961, the Bible Presbyterian Church in Korea was formed by followers of McIntire.³¹⁹ McIntire's visits to Korea had caused separatism to flourish.

Yune Sun Park received in 1954 D. D. (Doctor of Divinity) degree from Faith Theological Seminary founded by McIntire. In fact, he introduced the ICCC to Korea. He was favorable toward the council because it was a conservative international organization against the WCC.

Also, Hyung Nong Park had association with McIntire, especially because he opposed the WCC movement. He received 100,000 dollars from McIntire as the aid to the seminary in order to buy a building in Yong San for the school after the division into Hapdong denomination and Tonghap denomination in 1959.³²⁰ Tonghap side was supported by the missionaries. But at that time Hapdong side was isolated not being aided by the missionaries.

Carl McIntire criticized liberalism and new evangelicalism severely. He had fierce controversies with new evangelicals including Harold Ockenga and Carl Henry. He severely attacked them in terms of their compromise with liberalism. However, the new evangelicals criticized fundamentalists such as McIntire of their isolation from society, lack of social involvement. They emphasized the importance of social responsibility. Yet McIntire was vocal in the issues of communism, the

³¹⁹ *The Christian Year Book, 1972* (Seoul: Korean National Council of Churches, 1972), 279.

³²⁰ Cf. "Pray for Korean Presbyterians: the Evangelicals there, faithful to Christ have fought the WCC," *Christian Beacon*, October 22, 1959, 2.

super-church and the United Nations, UNESCO.³²¹ However, he criticized Billy Graham's method of evangelism. He asked conservative Christians remaining in the mainline denomination such as the PCUSA to come out of the denomination and join with the Twentieth Century Reformation movement led by him. He appealed all the conservative Protestant denominations to unite with each other and rise up against liberalism through joining in the ACCC.³²²

McIntire's theological tendency is that of the New School. And it was the same as that of the early missionaries of the Korean Presbyterian Church. The early missionaries were mild dispensationalists. And they were Puritan in their pietistic life. They stressed the observance of Sabbath and prohibited drinking, smoking, dancing, etc. They were also favorable toward interdenominational cooperation for mission. So in these aspects, McIntire was congruous not only with the early missionaries but also with the two great theologians, Hyung Nong Park and Yune Sun Park. His weakness consisted especially in his practice of movementism. Because of that reason, many people departed from him and he lost many good helpers. However, he was consistent in his opposition to liberalism and compromise with it. There is tension between fulfilling social responsibility and maintaining doctrinal purity. It is difficult to gain social influence while maintaining traditional Christian doctrines such as biblical inerrancy at the same time. We can see it demonstrated by history.

³²¹ Gasper, *Fundamentalist Movement*, 46-54.

³²² Carl McIntire, *Twentieth Century Reformation*, 8-10.

Subsequent developments show that Machen and McIntire were right in their insistence on right doctrines. If the leaders of the denomination (PCUSA) had listened to them, it would have prevented the denomination from losing theological identity.

The influence that Hyung Nong Park received from the missionaries in the early period was the New School tendency. On the other hand, the influence that he received from Machen at Princeton Theological Seminary from 1923 to 1926 was the Old School tendency. Thus it may be said that in Hyung Nong Park were combined those two tendencies.

While McIntire tolerated toward dispensationalism, Hyung Nong Park criticized dispensationalism.³²³ However, Vern S. Poythress, Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Westminster Theological Seminary, pleaded for mutual understanding between dispensationalists and covenant theologians.³²⁴ Also, McIntire himself is not a dispensationalist, but he has only a tolerant attitude toward dispensationalism.³²⁵

Therefore, McIntire also had a great influence on the Korean Presbyterian Church through some missionaries such as Malsbury, the great theologians like Hyung Nong Park and Yune Sun Park, and Faith Theological Seminary.

³²³ Hyung Nong Park, *Collected Writings 3: Dogmatics (Anthropology)*, 384-91.

³²⁴ Vern S. Poythress, *Understanding Dispensationalists* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 7-8.

³²⁵ In relation to this matter, D. Clair Davis, Professor of Church History at Westminster Seminary wrote in his e-mail letter to me on February 15, 1999. He stated that he had never read that McIntire was a dispensationalist.