

Protestantism and Contemporary Christianity

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■ Protestant Reformation

■ 16th Century Europe



Luther's 95 Theses

- 1517 – Luther nails his protests against the Roman Catholic Church to the door of the Church in Wittenburg.



Anglicanism

- 1534 – Henry VIII breaks with Rome. Political move to make Henry head of the Catholic Church in England.



Anglicanism

- 1549 – Book of Common Prayer.
Thomas Cranmer,
author.



Anglicanism

- 1559 – Elizabethan Settlement. Elizabeth resolves bloody disputes between Catholics and Reformers. Episcopal polity, Catholic liturgy informed by Reformed theology.



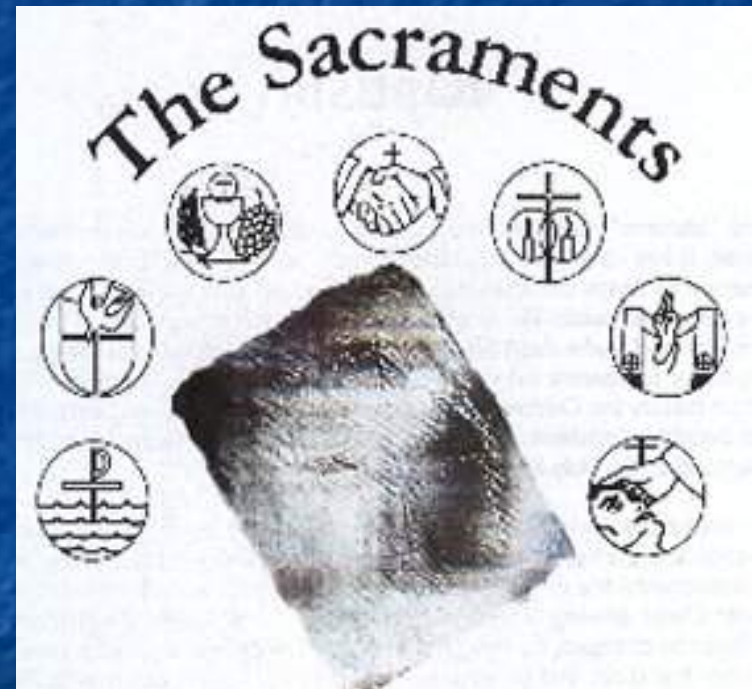
John Calvin

- 1536 – The Institutes of the Christian Religion.
- French Reformer exiled to Geneva, Switzerland. Modern Day Presbyterianism is Calvin's legacy.



Calvinism

- Sacraments of baptism and Lord's Supper
 - Baptism – initiation into the body of Christ where Christians receive forgiveness, mortification of sin, communion with Christ.
 - Lord's Supper – Christ is present in the Lord's Supper through the work of the Holy Spirit.



Huldrych Zwingli

- Swiss Reformer
- Established church in Zurich
- Simple worship focused on baptism, preaching and Lord's Supper.
- Lord's Supper as "thanksgiving" or memorial.
- Democratic not hierarchical authority in the church.
- 1539 – Countered Luther's theology of Lord's Supper.



Menno Sims

- 1536 – Founder of modern day Mennonites.
- Led anabaptist movements in Holland.
- Believer's baptism
- Refusal to participate in politics
- Communal nature of Christian congregation
- Congregational authority within Christian community
- Non resistance to violence



Justification By Faith

- Central Tenet of Reformed Theology – individuals are forgiven their sins and considered righteous by God through faith in Christ. This faith is a gift from God and cannot be earned by the believer.
- Scripture as source of Christian Authority – interpretations of Scriptural authority varied among denominations.

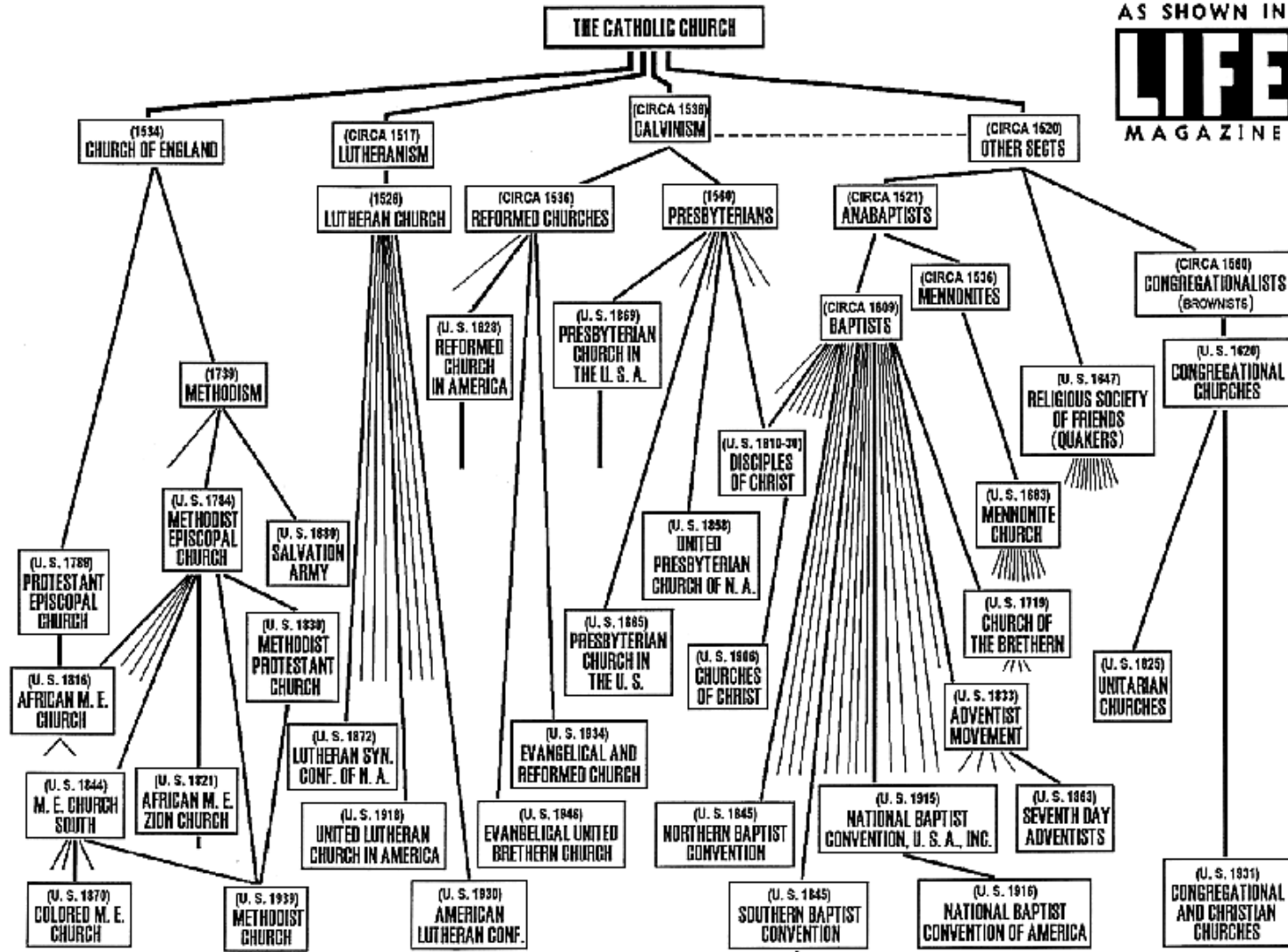
Main Issues

- Polity – Hierarchical vs. congregational, presbyteral or synodal.
- Degree of involvement of church in politics and affairs of state.
- Authority – Sola Scriptura vs. Tradition and Reason.
- Sacraments – two or seven? And what do they mean?

ORIGINS AND DIVISIONS OF PROTESTANTISM

AS SHOWN IN

LIFE
MAGAZINE



Protestantism Today in USA

- “Mainline” Protestants
 - Episcopalians
 - Methodists
 - Lutherans
 - Presbyterians
- American Baptists are similar today to “Mainline” although probably not considered part of traditional “mainline.”



Evangelical/Pentecostal Christianity

- Fastest Growing Churches in US and abroad.
- Southern Baptists
- Various non-denominational Christian congregations
- “Megachurch”



Issues that Divide

- Social issues
 - Human Sexuality
 - Abortion
 - Marriage and Divorce
 - Death Penalty
 - Pluralism and response thereto
 - Separation of Church and State
 - “Liberal” vs. “Conservative”



Issues that Divide

- Ecumenical issues re sacraments and polity.
- Who can participate in the Lord's Supper in who's church?
- Whose orders of ministry are valid?
- What are legitimate sources of "authority" for a Christian? Issues of Scriptural interpretation.



Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints

- A truly “American” religion.
- Founded in Palmyra, NY in 19th century
- Post Christian religion.
- Highly evangelical and fast growing both in USA and abroad.



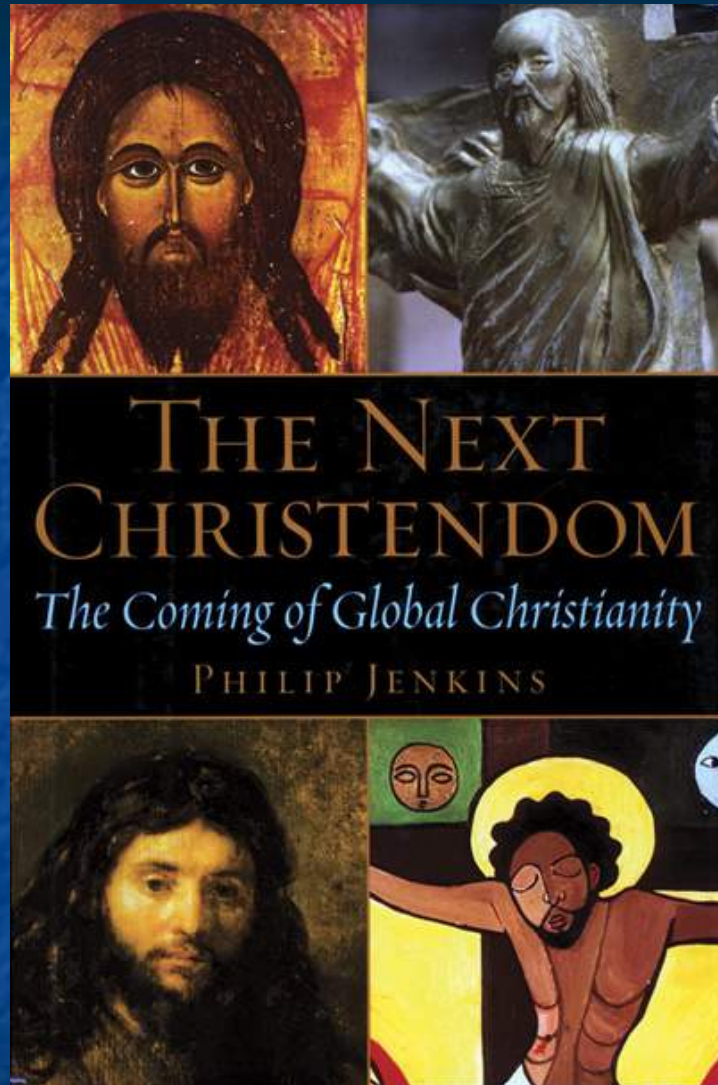
Contemporary Christianity

- Enormous shift to “Global South” – Latin America, Asia and Africa.



21st Century Christianity

- 1. **POSTCOLONIAL.** In 1900, 81% of all Christians were White, by AD 2025 this will drop to 30%.
- 2. **INDEPENDENTS.** A huge new Christian nonconfessional megabloc, the Independents/Postdenominationalists, is growing rapidly and numbers 21% of all Christians.
- 3. **EUROPE.** In 1900, 70% of all Christians lived in Europe, by 2025 this will drop to only 20%.
- 4. **UNAFFILIATED.** People who call themselves Christians but who are unaffiliated with any church, number over 100 million globally.
- 5. **LEADERS.** The fastest growing churches in North America and Europe are led by Africans, Asians, and Latin Americans.
- Source: World Christian Database.



- Philip Jenkins – Professor of History and Religious Studies, Pennsylvania State University. Analysis of emerging “global Christianity.”


Global Christianity in 21st Century

- But in its variety and vitality, in its global reach, in its association with the world's fastest-growing societies, in its shifting centers of gravity, in the way its values and practices vary from place to place—in these and other ways it is Christianity that will leave the deepest mark on the twenty-first century.

The First Annual Philip N. Lockhart Lecture
"The Future of Global Christianity"

Dr. Philip Jenkins
Professor of History and Religious Studies
The Pennsylvania State University

Friday, September 17, 2004
7:30 p.m.
Anita Tuvin Schlechter Auditorium

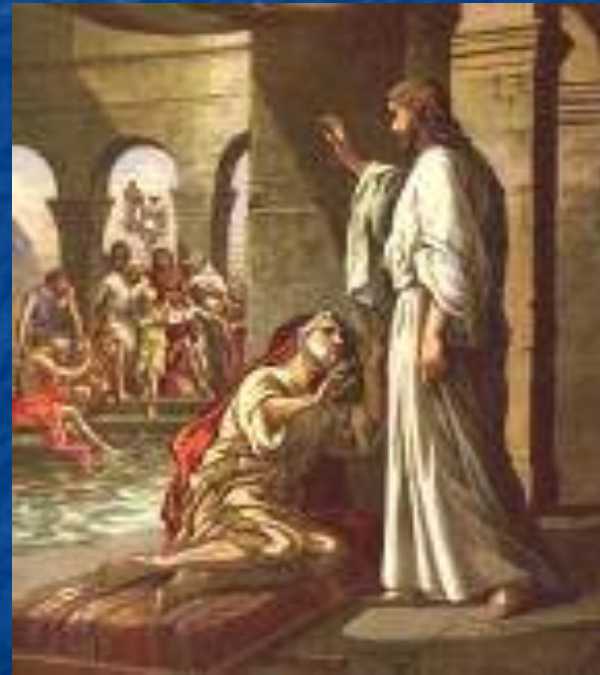


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Gobal Christianity

- Worldwide, Christianity is actually moving toward supernaturalism and neo-orthodoxy, and in many ways toward the ancient world view expressed in the New Testament: a vision of Jesus as the embodiment of divine power, who overcomes the evil forces that inflict calamity and sickness upon the human race.



Global Christianity

- Today across the global South a rising religious fervor is coinciding with declining autonomy for nation-states, making useful an analogy with the medieval concept of Christendom—the *Res Publica Christiana*—as an overarching source of unity and a focus of loyalty transcending mere kingdoms or empires.



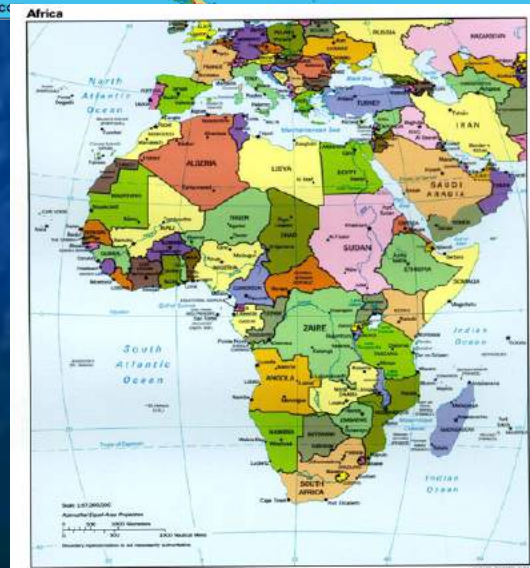
Global Christianity

- Christendom was a primary cultural reference, and it may well re-emerge as such in the Christian South—as a new transnational order in which political, social, and personal identities are defined chiefly by religious loyalties.



Global Christianity

- Christians are facing a shrinking population in the liberal West and a growing majority of the traditional Rest. During the past half century the critical centers of the Christian world have moved decisively to Africa, to Latin America, and to Asia. The balance will never shift back.



Global Christianity

- “World Christianity [is falling] increasingly under the sway of anti-intellectual fundamentalism.” But the cultural pressures may be hard to resist.
- The denominations that are triumphing across the global South—radical Protestant sects, either evangelical or Pentecostal, and Roman Catholicism of an orthodox kind—are stalwartly traditional or even reactionary by the standards of the economically advanced nations.



Global Christianity

- It is Pentecostals who stand in the vanguard of the Southern Counter-Reformation. Though Pentecostalism emerged as a movement only at the start of the twentieth century, chiefly in North America, Pentecostals today are at least 400 million strong, and heavily concentrated in the global South. By 2040 or so there could be as many as a billion, at which point Pentecostal Christians alone will far outnumber the world's Buddhists and will enjoy rough numerical parity with the world's Hindus.



Global Christianity

- The most successful Southern churches today speak openly of spiritual healing and exorcism.
- In the contemporary South, however, the success of highly supernatural churches should rather be seen as a direct by-product of urbanization.



Global Christianity

- In Africa, struggle against witchcraft is significant.
- The desperate public-health situation in the booming megacities of the South goes far toward explaining the emphasis of the new churches on healing mind and body. In Africa in the early twentieth century an explosion of Christian healing movements and new prophets coincided with a dreadful series of epidemics, and the religious upsurge of those years was in part a quest for bodily health.



Global Christianity

- Alongside the fast-growing churches have emerged apocalyptic and messianic movements that try to bring in the kingdom of God through armed violence. Some try to establish the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ on earth, as prophesied in the Book of Revelation.



Global Christianity

- On present evidence, a Southern-dominated Catholic Church is likely to react traditionally to the issues that most concern American and European reformers: matters of theology and devotion, sexual ethics and gender roles, and, most fundamentally, issues of authority within the Church.
- On moral issues, too, Southern churches are far out of step with liberal Northern churches. African and Latin American churches tend to be very conservative on issues such as homosexuality and abortion.



Global Christianity

- Yet the more we look at the Southern Hemisphere, the more we see that although supranational ideas are flourishing, they are not in the least secular. The parallels to the Middle Ages may be closer than anyone has guessed.
- Across the global South cardinals and bishops have become national moral leaders in a way essentially unseen in the West since the seventeenth century.

- Cardinal Francis Afrinze, Nigeria



Global Christianity

- The most significant conflict is in Nigeria, a nation that by rights should be a major regional power in this century and perhaps even a global power; but recent violence between Muslims and Christians raises the danger that Nigerian society might be brought to ruin by the clash of *jihad* and crusade. Muslims and Christians are at each other's throats in Indonesia, the Philippines, Sudan, and a growing number of other African nations; Hindu extremists persecute Christians in India. Demographic projections suggest that these feuds will simply worsen. Present-day battles in Africa and Asia may anticipate the political outlines to come, and the roots of future great-power alliances.



Global Christianity

- As the media have striven in recent years to present Islam in a more sympathetic light, they have tended to suggest that Islam, not Christianity, is the rising faith of Africa and Asia, the authentic or default religion of the world's huddled masses. But Christianity is not only surviving in the global South, it is enjoying a radical revival, a return to scriptural roots. We are living in revolutionary times.
- But we aren't participating in them. By any reasonable assessment of numbers, the most significant transformation of Christianity in the world today is not the liberal Reformation that is so much desired in the North. It is the Counter-Reformation coming from the global South. And it's very likely that in a decade or two neither component of global Christianity will recognize its counterpart as fully or authentically Christian.

