British Christianity in the Roman Empire

"Those portions of Britain which are inaccessible to the Romans had submitted to Christ.”
Tertullian 2nd Century AD

"Lord, give me Scotland”
John Knox

"One generation shall praise Your works to another” Psalm 145:4
Christianity in Britain

‘We praise the Lord. Latinus, aged 35 years and his daughter aged 4 years. The grandson of Barrovadus set up this memorial’.

5th Century
Celtic Christianity

Isle of Iona
Reformation in Europe
16th Century
John Knox
The Church of Scotland
Westminster Assembly of Divines
1643-1647
Ulster Plantations
Northern Ireland
The New World
250,000 Ulster immigrants 1700-1775
Great Wagon Road
Scots-Irish Presbyterianism into Upper South Carolina
Nazareth Presbyterian Church
Spartanburg, SC established 1765

OUR GREAT-GRANDMOTHER CHURCH
Mother Church of Presbyterianism in Spartanburg County
Fairview Presbyterian Church
Fountain Inn, SC established 1786

OUR GRANDMOTHER CHURCH
Mother Church of Presbyterianism in Greenville County
First Presbyterian Church
Greenville, SC established 1848

OUR MOTHER CHURCH
A Leading Church in Greenville County
Second Presbyterian Church
Greenville, SC established 1892
Our Daughter Churches
Francis Makemie
Father of American Presbyterianism
Planting Presbyterianism in the New World

• Early movements toward Presbyterianism
  • New York (1640)
  • Edisto Island, SC (1685)
  • Philadelphia (1698)

• Immigration: Scots/Scots Irish (Pennsylvania “South then West”)
• Pioneers and Presbyterian

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s On Being Presbyterian presentation
Planting Presbyterian in the New World

- Francis Makemie (Ma-Kim-E) (1658-1708)
  - Planted several churches in northern neck of VA
  - Helped to organize 1st presbytery in 1706: seven ministers, all Scots or Scots Irish from Maryland, Delaware, PA, and VA
    - agree to meet annually “to consult the most proper measures, for advancing religion and propagating Christianity, in our Various Stations, and to maintain Such a Correspondence as may conduce to the improvement of our Ministerial ability.” The presbytery also took to itself the function of examining and licensing ministers.

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s On Being Presbyterian presentation
First Presbytery 1706

• In presbyterianism, congregations are united in accountability to a regional body called the *presbytery*, Presbyteries are made up of the minister and an elder 'commissioned' from each parish, as well as other clergy, such as theological college professors or missionaries.
First American Synod 1716

• Synods are an intermediate body with an often judicial or institutional function between a Presbytery and a General Assembly.

• PCA has no intermediate court between the presbytery and the general assembly.
First Denomination -1789

- The solution: divide the church into sixteen presbyteries, which would meet semi-regularly in three synods, which would then convene in one delegated General Assembly.

- In connection with this structure, John Witherspoon and others helped to create the first *Book of Church Order* for the Presbyterian Church in this country.

- After three years of intense debate within synod and less than full interest from the existing presbyteries, the plan was adopted, issuing in the first *Book of Church Order*, published in 1788. The first General Assembly met in Philadelphia in 1789.
Early Conflicts and Choosing “Sides”

18th Century
- Theological Education
- Impact of Great Awakening
- Church Organization, Church Discipline

19th Century
- Plan of Union
- Old School / New School Division
- American Civil War

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s *On Being Presbyterian* presentation
THE PRESBYTERIAN FAMILY CONNECTIONS

WELSH CALVINISTIC METH.

PRESBYTERIAN U.S.A.

FREE PRES.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.

ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PRES CH.

CHURCH

CONFED. STATES

1851-1855

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN

1826

OLD SCHOOL

1853

NEW SCHOOL

UNITED SYNOD

1854

ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF N.A.

1858

ASSOCIATE REF. PRES. OF THE SOUTH

1793

REF. SYNOD

1782

ASSOC. PRESY

1753

REF. PRESY

1774

1706 First Presbytery
1717 First Synod
1789 General Assembly

1739 Unions

1741 Separations

1863

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN

SECOND CUMB. PRES.

1906

(OLD LIGHT) SYNOD REFORMED PRES.

(NEW LIGHT) GENERAL SYNOD REFORMED

ASSOCIATE REF. PRES. OF THE SOUTH

1822

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN OF NO. AMERICA

ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NO. AMERICA

1858
The Division of 1837

• Four key issues that led to the growing divide in the church, as represented by men like Charles Finney:
  1. “new measures” revivalism
  2. Interdenominational v. denominational consciousness
  3. Social Reform (the Evangelical United Front)
  4. Doctrinal issues (the New Divinity):
     • Human depravity (imputation)
     • Freedom of the will
     • Regeneration
     • Holiness

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s *On Being Presbyterian* presentation
The Division of 1837

• Those who sided with Finney came to be called “the New School” within the church; esp. Lyman Beecher and Albert Barnes. Many of these leaders were associated with churches planted under the Plan of Union.

• Those who opposed the plan were the “Old School” (Philadelphia conservatives and southerners, with Princeton)

• Between 1832-35, several prominent heresy trials; all the New School men were acquitted.

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s On Being Presbyterian presentation
The New and Old Schools

The New School

- Mainly a northern church; small southern presence
  - *Doctrinal*: In 1837, defended themselves with the “Auburn Declaration”: in 16 points, the New School sought to establish their interpretation of the Westminster Standards as allowable within the bounds of orthodoxy
  - *Polity*: Began to withdraw from alliances with Congregationalists and establish “denominational concerns”
  - *Social reform*: did not take an official position on slavery until 1857
- Most important institution: Union Theological Seminary in New York City
- Most important theologian: Henry Boynton Smith

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s *On Being Presbyterian* presentation
The New and Old Schools

**The Old School**

- Was a “national” church with strength from Philadelphia to South Carolina and west to Missouri.

- Key theologians:
  - Charles Hodge (1797-1878)
    - Theologian; Educator; Churchman (moderator of GA, 1846)
  - James Henley Thornwell (1812-62)
    - Pastor and professor at South Carolina College and Columbia Seminary; Churchman (moderator of GA, 1847)
  - Hodge-Thornwell debates: Church boards; Ruling elders; Revised Book of Discipline

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s *On Being Presbyterian* presentation
A Nation and a Church
Divided and Reunited

• The *Old School* divided in 1861
  • In May 1861, the Old School General Assembly met in Philadelphia minus a large number of southern commissioners.
  • Gardiner Spring, minister at the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York City, proposed a resolution that committed the church to “do all in their power to strengthen, uphold, and encourage the federal government.”
  • Southerners met at First Presbyterian Church, Augusta, GA on December 4, 1861 to form the PCCSA; B. M. Palmer was the first moderator
• Was the division about politics or slavery? Yes.

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s *On Being Presbyterian* presentation
Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy: North

• The 20th Century featured a developing conflict between theological liberalism (modernism) and conservatism (fundamentalism)
  • Liberalism (modernism)
    • Divide between science (phenomenon) and faith
    • Increasing skepticism about theological propositions (Dogma and faith)
  • Development and progress
  • Theological propositions recast in the light of modern “knowledge” — abiding truths in changing categories

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s *On Being Presbyterian* presentation
Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy: North

- Conservatism (fundamentalism)
  - The key theological truth that conservatives championed was biblical inerrancy.
  - Beyond that commitment, fundamentalism was an alliance of conservative evangelicals who were committed to a core of doctrines:
    - Virgin birth of Jesus; Substitutionary atonement; Bodily resurrection of Jesus; Reality of miracles
  - However, there were other commitments that some fundamentalists held that could prove more important than these core doctrinal commitments (dispensational premillennialism and the “separated life”)

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s *On Being Presbyterian* presentation
Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy: North

- J. Gresham Machen and the Creation of the OPC
  - *Christianity and Liberalism* (1923)
  - Reorganization of Princeton Seminary and creation of Westminster Seminary (1929)
  - Creation of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (1932)
  - Creation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (1936)

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s *On Being Presbyterian* presentation.
Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy: South

• This same conflict between fundamentalism and modernism developed in the South:
  • Evolution
  • Social Gospel
  • “Neo-orthodoxy”

• Conservatives in the church failed to stem the tide throughout the 1930s
  • Hay Watson Smith (1929-34)
  • Confessional Revision (1934-42)
  • Thompson-Glasgow affair (1939-41)

This slide was adapted from Sean Lucas’s *On Being Presbyterian* presentation
In order to continue to advocate within the church, conservatives created a number of organizations:
- Southern Presbyterian Journal (1942)
- Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship (1963)
- Concerned Presbyterians (1965)
- Presbyterian Churchmen United (1969)

Their main concern was to avoid merger with the northern mainline church
- Defeated merger in 1954
Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy: South

• By the late 1960s, it was clear that conservatives were failing in their efforts to preserve their church and avoid merger.

• As a result, in 1971, several key leaders announced plans for “The Continuing Presbyterian Church”
  • “Sooners”; “Keepers”; “Planners”

• When it was clear in 1973 that the merger plan would not provide an escape clause, the Presbyterian Church in America was formed on December 4, 1973, at Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Birmingham.
Presbyterian Church in America

Faithful to the Scriptures, True to the Reformed Faith and Obedient to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.
"Those portions of Britain which are inaccessible to the Romans had submitted to Christ."
Tertullian 2nd Century AD

"Lord, give me Scotland"
John Knox

"One generation shall praise Your works to another"
Psalm 145:4

"Dr. B.M. Palmer came to Greenville and preached during the summer of 1847. He later would become the first moderator of the Southern Presbyterian Church."
H.B. McKoy

"The Second Church owes it organization, by the help of God, to the efforts of nine godly women who met to engage in the formation of the "Ladies Working Society."
Dudley Jones

"The men who later were to become the founders of Fairview...filled their powder horns, gathered a bit a food, shouldered their muskets and joined the fight for freedom"
History of Fairview

"The Irish Articles were the chief basis of the Westminster Confession"
Phillip Schaff

"That man is little to be envied whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona"
Dr. Samuel Johnson

"These first settlers were full of reverence for God's Word and no sooner had they established their homes in the forest of the New World than they made the best arrangements for the public worship of the God of their Fathers."
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