

# ***Church History***



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- *Introduction to Church History*
- *The Ancient Church* AD 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries
- *The Rise of Christendom* AD 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Early Middle Ages* AD 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Age of Crusades* AD 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Renaissance* AD 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *Conquest and Reformation* AD 16<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Age of Enlightenment* AD 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Age of Revolution* AD 19<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Modern Age* AD 20<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Postmodern Age* AD 21<sup>st</sup> century



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- *The Age of Revolution* AD 19<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Modern Age* AD 20<sup>th</sup> century
  - *Modern Empire-Building*
  - *Post-War Religion*
  - *Conflicts of the “Greatest Generation”*



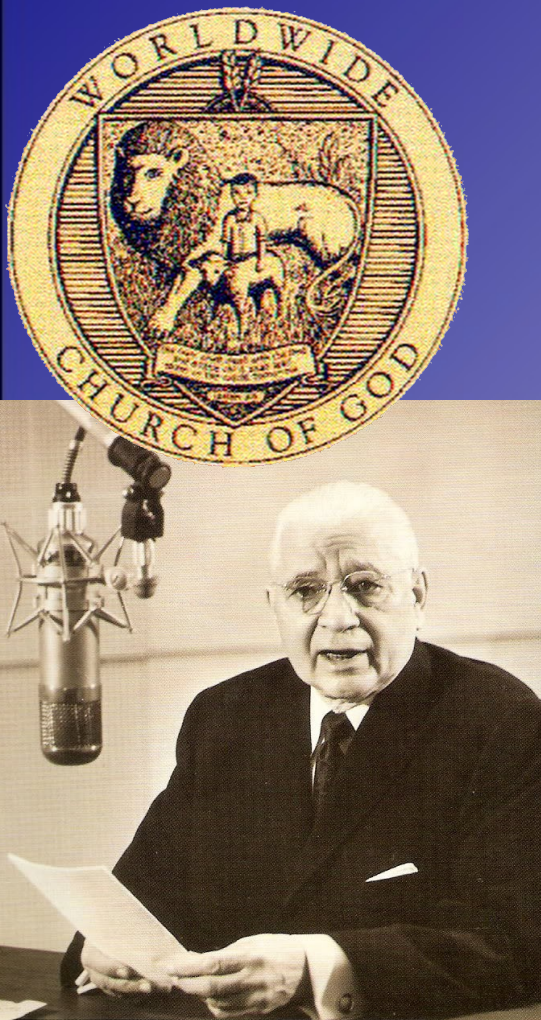


# *The Modern Age*

- Technology helps create a new church...

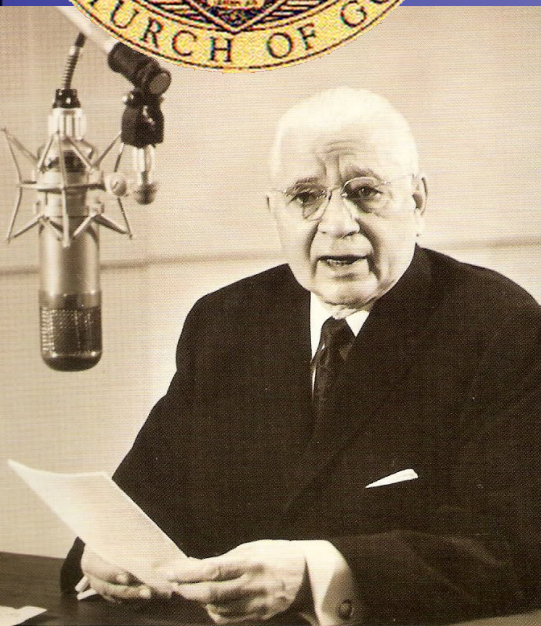
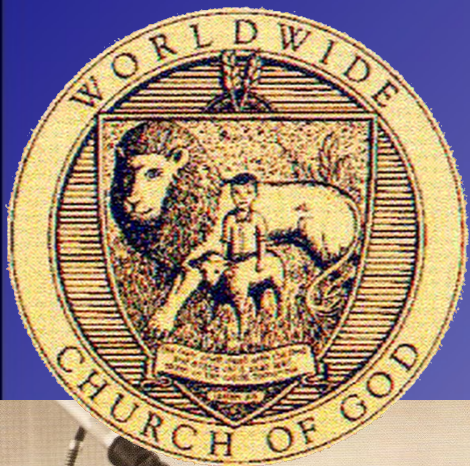
1934

- The Radio Church of God was founded
  - Originally a radio program in Eugene, Oregon, produced by the Church of God (Adventist), the Radio Church of God quickly became the primary teaching ministry of its own, new denomination led by Herbert W. Armstrong
    - As time went on, Armstrong began distancing himself from orthodox Christian beliefs more and more, claiming divine revelation for his doctrines—while assuring listeners that these doctrines are clear to anyone reading the Bible for themselves
      - He would regularly deluge his audiences with Bible verses, giving odd and out-of-context interpretations of them that made an amazing number of people believe him as an incredibly learned Bible scholar whose wisdom was simply beyond them
      - The church grew, and was renamed the Worldwide Church of God (WCG)



# *The Modern Age*

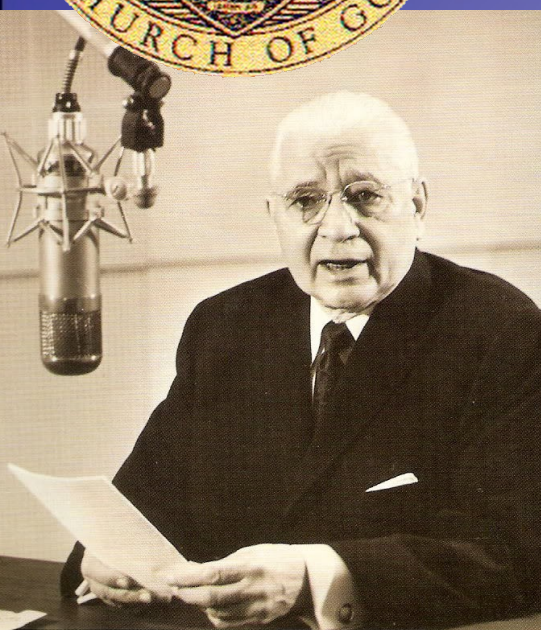
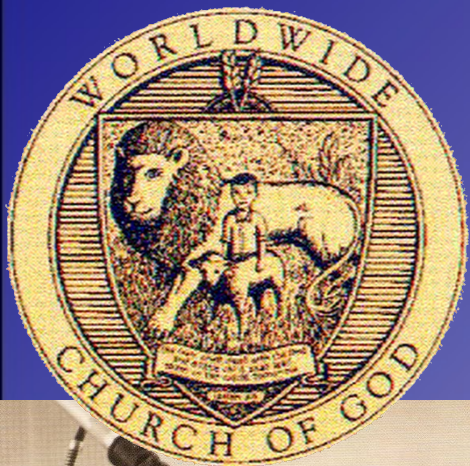
- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Increasingly, Armstrong adopted idiosyncratic beliefs, calling all other “Christian” churches “apostates”
  - To be a *true* Christian, Armstrong argued, one must follow all of the Ten Commandments to the letter—faith in Christ alone cannot save a person  
(NOTE: That includes strictly following the Sabbath—which is Saturday, not Sunday—abstaining from unclean meats, paying the requisite tithes to the church, following the Jewish Holy Days and refusing to celebrate pagan holidays like Easter or Christmas, etc.)





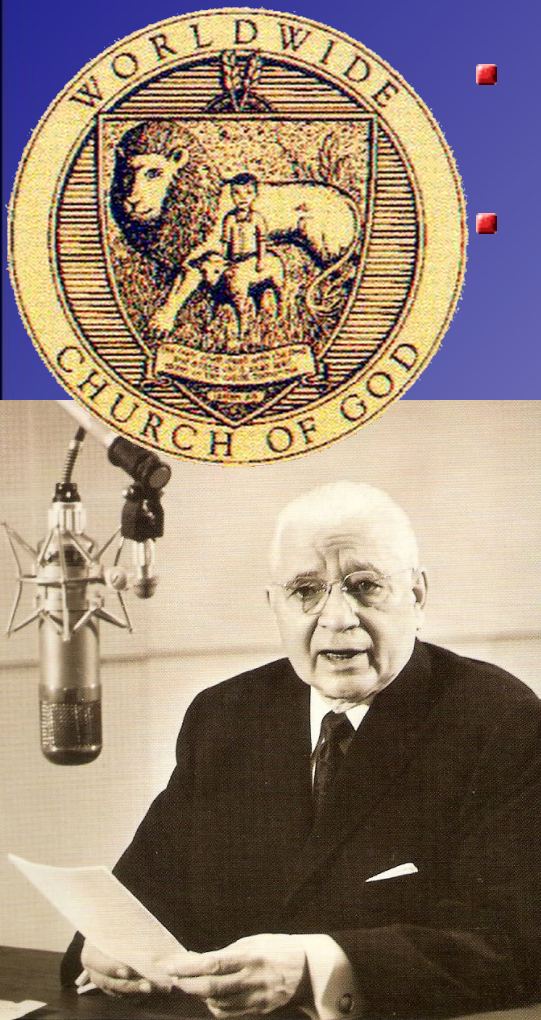
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  - There is no “immortal soul” in human beings—instead, when we die, we enter into a sleep, to be awakened at the Second Coming  
(NOTE: Thus, death is not something to be worried about, since it's all in God's hands—which is why you should just pray for healing, instead of following the example of apostates who heretically allow themselves to be treated by doctors and medicines)



# The Modern Age

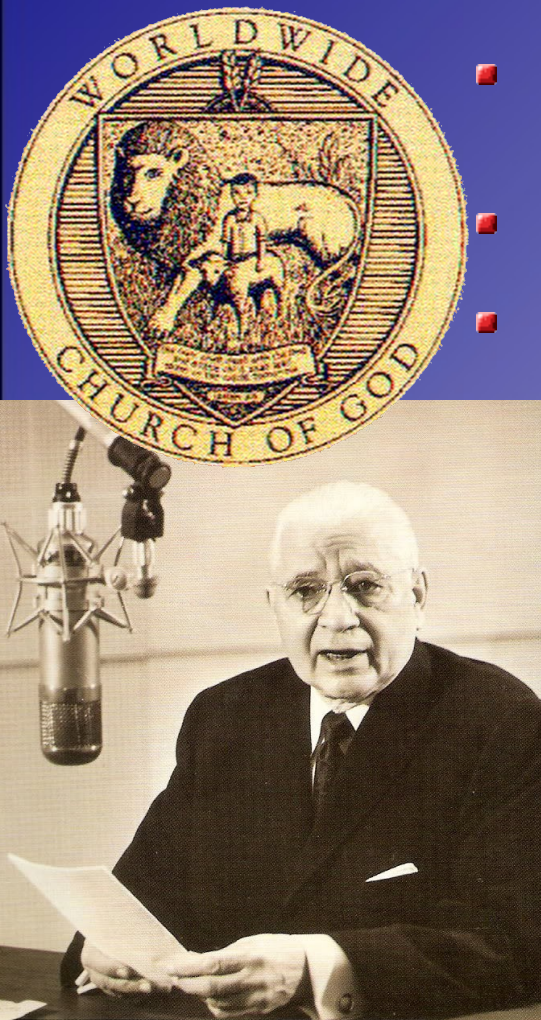
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    - There is no “immortal soul” in human beings—instead, when we die, we enter into a sleep, to be awakened at the Second Coming
    - But everyone on earth is a potential member of the “God Family”—at the Second Coming, those who have lived their lives well enough will be re-awakened into eternal life with God as His literal, physical children while those who *hadn't* been righteous enough will simply never re-awaken at all  
(NOTE: Well, there's arguably an in-between group, which was neither good enough for salvation nor bad enough for annihilation, so they'll be awakened to have the chance to learn enough about God to make a decision to start following Him then)





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      - There is no “immortal soul” in human beings—instead, when we die, we enter into a sleep, to be awakened at the Second Coming
      - But everyone on earth is a potential member of the “God Family”
      - Britain and America clearly have a crucial role to play in Biblical prophecies like Daniel and The Revelation—primarily because the population of Britain (and by extrapolation, its daughter-nation, America) are the direct descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, and thus the *true* people of God
- (NOTE: As is clearly demonstrated in Scripture, all Germans are descended from the Assyrians, and thus are genetically predisposed to being the mortal enemies of the British and American people of God and should therefore be destroyed, as the Old Testament commands us)



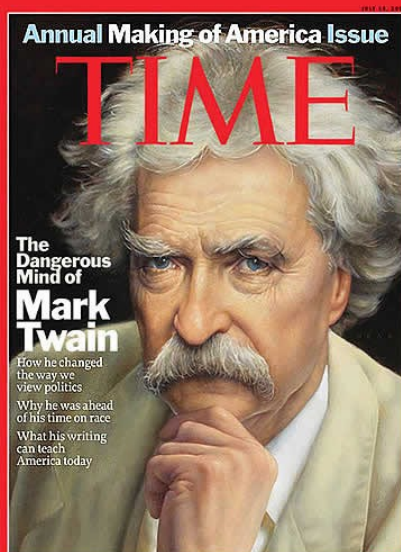


# The Modern Age

- Technology helps create a new church...

1934 The Radio Church of God was founded

- Originally a radio program in Eugene, Oregon, produced by the Church of God (Adventist), the Radio Church of God quickly became the primary teaching ministry of its own, new denomination led by Herbert W. Armstrong
- The Radio Church of God also began publishing the magazine, *The Plain Truth*, in 1934
  - Distributed as a free periodical around the world, the cult's magazine grew to have nearly double the circulation that the popular *Time* magazine enjoyed and shared Armstrong's doctrines to people who had no idea that it was an appendage of his cult (including the later doctrine that the world would be destroyed by nuclear war in 1975)
  - Neither *The Plain Truth* nor WCG ministers were allowed to promote any teachings (or lead any Bible studies) that disagreed with Armstrong's personally-directed outlines and notes (which is often a sign of a church actually being more of a cult)



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- In 1947, the WCG founded the opulent Ambassador College campus in Pasadena



- At its zenith, the cult boasted about as many members as the Evangelical Covenant Church has today...





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1934

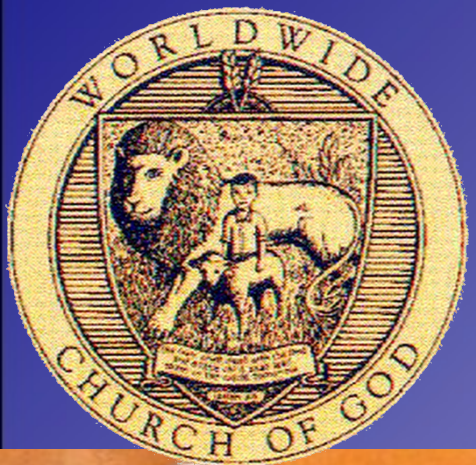
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- In 1947, the WCG founded the opulent Ambassador College campus in Pasadena
- By the 1950s, Armstrong's *The World Tomorrow* broadcast started being aired on television, reaching millions of viewers until 1994
  - (NOTE: Armstrong himself died in 1986 at the age of 93, but his son, Garner Ted Armstrong, had led the ministry and taught on the TV program for years... until Garner Ted's frequent, extra-marital sex with Ambassador College co-eds and even wackier, more overtly "give-me-money-televangelist" teachings forced Herbert to excommunicate him in 1978 —after which the church just started airing old re-runs of Herbert...)



# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - In an historically unprecedented move, after Herbert's death, the Worldwide Church of God morphed itself from a textbook cult to an arguably Evangelical church
  - Armstrong named Joseph Tkach as his chosen successor (in part to sidestep Garner Ted's claims) and slowly, Tkach began to shift the church's theology more toward the mainstream, encouraging ministers to study the Bible themselves, without just following Armstrong's guides—and suggesting some changes...
    - Maybe going to doctors isn't technically heresy...
    - Maybe it's okay for women to wear makeup...
    - Maybe interracial marriage is actually okay...
    - Maybe there's more to Bible study than just how Britain and America fulfill prophecies...
    - Maybe that whole Trinity thing makes some sense...
    - Maybe other churches can be Christians, too...
    - Maybe the Worldwide Church of God is a New Covenant church, instead of just an Old Covenant church, dedicated to following the Jewish law... which means that we are saved by faith in Christ, and not by works...





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    - Tkach died in 1995, and was succeeded by his son, Joseph Tkach, Jr.
      - But it's a testimony to his legacy that in 1997, the Worldwide Church of God was admitted into the National Association of Evangelicals...
- (NOTE: The National Association of Evangelicals itself was founded in 1942—but more on that *next week...*)



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    - In fact, in 2009, to make a clean break from its well-documented screwy-ness in the past, the church officially changed its name to Grace Communion International...
    - What can we learn from all of that today?



GRACE  
COMMUNION  
INTERNATIONAL

*Living and Sharing the Gospel*





# *The Modern Age*

- Technology helps create a new church...

1934 The Radio Church of God was founded

1936 Public Order Act 1936 was passed in Britain

- In an attempt to prevent the growth of the Nazis (or Nazi-like, fascist groups) in Britain, Parliament passed Public Order Act 1936, banning the wearing of “political uniforms” in public (functionally, a ban on paramilitary political parties like the German or Italian or Spanish fascists altogether)



# The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - So let me ask you good Americans: whom would you support in this case—the pro-Nazi fascists, or the democratic government preventing their rise?
  - Or, to put it another way, are you comfortable with a democracy that officially *bans* the freedom of speech of people who *look* and *sound* like people whom you've decided (maybe even for very good reasons) that you don't really like?
  - Stick a pin in your answer to that question and fast-forward three years to 1939, when Defence Regulation 18B allowed for the internment of any members of a fascist party or anyone even *suspected* of being a Nazi (suspending the right of *habeas corpus*—the right to report an illegal detention or imprisonment to a lawful authority) (i.e.; the government can now lock you up with no warrant or trial, and you would have no opportunity to contact a lawyer, defend yourself before a judge, etc.) (but isn't that what *had* to be done with those with kinship to the Nazis, to prevent an even worse situation in the nation?)





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    - Or to put it yet *another* way, from 1942 to 1946, FDR's Executive Order 9066 allowed for the internment of people clearly descended from America's current enemy states, due to problems with Fifth Columnists
    - Thus, 10,000 German- and Italian-American citizens were interned in DOJ camps, as were 120,000 Japanese-Americans
- (NOTE: The camps themselves were almost *nothing* like the horrors of the concentration camps of the Nazis, but that's not really the point—was Executive Order 9066 morally or constitutionally justified?)



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    - Thus, 10,000 German- and Italian-American citizens were interned in DOJ camps, as were 120,000 Japanese-Americans
    - Most Americans today support Britain's internment of *fascists* (even those who had broken no laws), while condemning America's internment of *ethnicities* who had broken no laws...
      - When is internment of non-criminals okay?





# *The Modern Age*

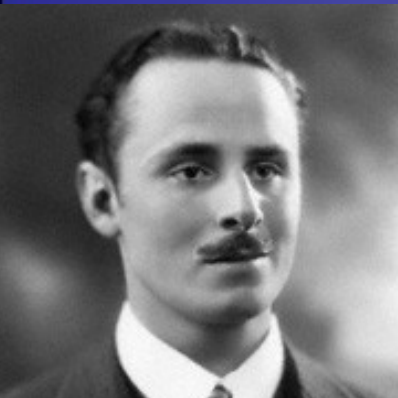
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(NOTE: For the record, Canada did exactly the same thing, interning *everyone* of Japanese descent in Canada from 1941 to 1949...)



# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—

- So let me ask you good Americans: whom would you support in this case—the pro-Nazi fascists, or the democratic government preventing their rise?
- So *why* did England take such a hard-line stance?
  - In 1936, the fastest-growing political party in the United Kingdom was the British Union of Fascists (the BUF) led by the wildly popular Sir Oswald Mosley, the youngest Conservative MP ever elected
  - Ironically, part of his popularity came from his disdain for the brutality against civilians of the British “Black and Tans” in putting down Irish rebellions (similar to the brutality exhibited by the Nazi stormtrooper units)

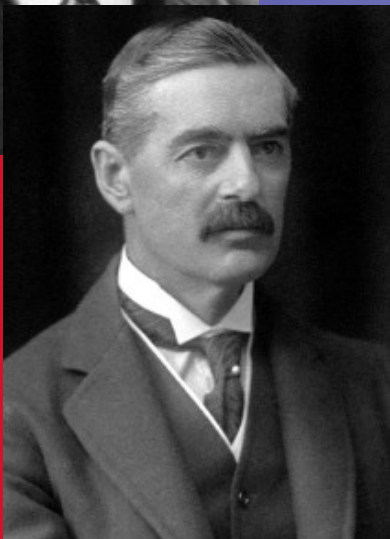




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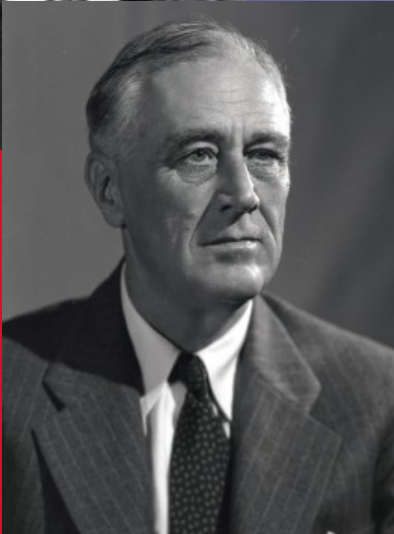
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    - Mosley moved to the Labour Party in the 1920s, promoting himself as a baronet who nonetheless actively supported the poor and downtrodden
    - In election after election, he narrowly missed attaining high public office  
(for instance, he lost to Neville Chamberlain by only 77 votes)



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    - **In election after election, he narrowly missed attaining high public office, but his party grew**
      - An outstanding orator, Mosley campaigned on a platform of fierce nationalism, a program of public works to employ the poor, the nationalization of industry, and protectionism from foreign entanglements  
(NOTE: FDR technically held most of the same political views)  
(NOTE<sup>2</sup>: So does the modern UK)





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- **So why did England take such a hard-line stance?**

- In 1936, the fastest-growing political party in the United Kingdom was the British Union of Fascists (the BUF) led by the wildly popular Sir Oswald Mosley, the youngest Conservative MP ever elected

- **But by 1936, Mosley had begun to reflect the inevitable darker side of national-socialism**

- He traveled to Italy to learn under Mussolini directly but more pointedly, he began preaching louder and stronger against the “menace” of Jews, Anarchists, Communists, and foreigners

- He'd so enraged enough people that, when they marched on Cable Street, they were attacked

- Roughly 3,000 BUF supporters marched in a legal parade—but they picked the area of London most populated with the kinds of people whom Mosley had preached against (so he knew full well that they'd be stirring up trouble, but he wanted to prove a point about how dangerous such people were)



# *The Modern Age*

- **Funky little teaching moment—**

- So let me ask you good Americans: whom would you support in this case—the pro-Nazi fascists, or the democratic government preventing their rise?

**YOU SHALL**

**NOT PASS!**



**Why did England take such a hard-line stance?**

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- Roughly 3,000 BUF supporters marched.

- Roughly 20,000 Jews, Communists, and other anti-fascists blocked the road and physically attacked them with clubs, chair legs, etc., shouting “They shall not pass!” (echoing the rallying cry at Verdun, also used by Spanish Communists) (yes, that's where it's from...)

**20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY**



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- 6,000 policemen fought back against the protesters, and were physically attacked as well (and pelted with rotten vegetables and buckets of raw sewage)

- Mosley disbanded the march to avoid more bloodshed, refusing to allow any BUF supporters to fight back against the demonstrators



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- But by 1936, Mosley had begun to reflect the inevitable darker side of national-socialism
- Demonstrators declared it a victory against fascism and Public Order Act 1936 was passed as a direct result
- But Mosley had made his very public point—his opponents had come across as the dangerous ones, and he blamed the existing government for outlawing the only people who were following the law that day
- The fascist movement soared in popularity in England after that, in every circle other than the demographics that had attacked them
- What can we learn from that today?





- Funky little

- So let's support democracy

- So *what*

- In 1968, King led you



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- What can we learn from that today?
- Do these sorts of protests at this week's inauguration really help decrease hate in our nation, or do they make the *protesters* look like the villains?

20<sup>th</sup>  
CENTURY



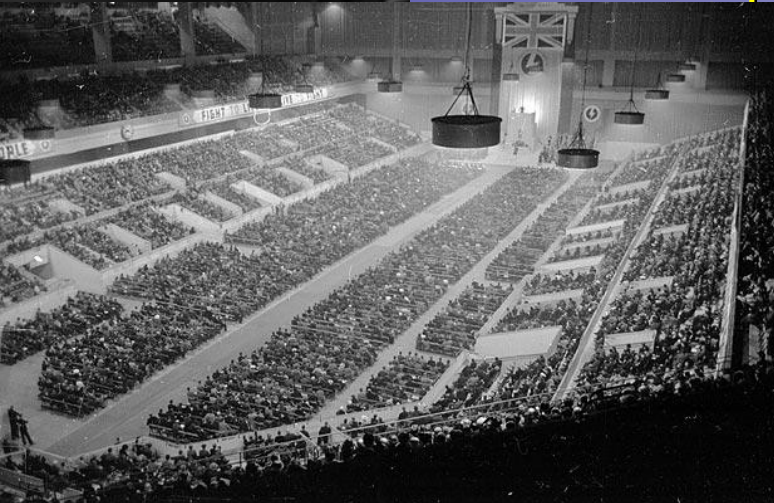
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- **Mosley held a pro-fascist rally in 1939, and it was—and still is—the “biggest indoor political rally ever held in Britain”**  
(according to the *UK Daily Mail*)





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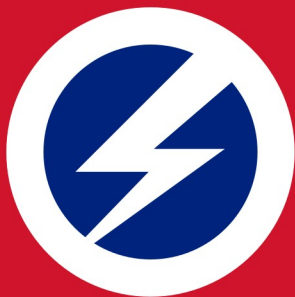
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But Mosley had hitched his star to Hitler and Mussolini, so when Britain finally declared war on Germany in 1939, Mosley and his group were interned by Defence Regulation 18B (along with his wife and newborn son)

- After the sheer horror that Hitler rained down on England in World War II, fascism never again gained such widespread acceptance (though neo-Nazi groups such as National Action are again on the rise in Great Britain today...)
- You can't kill a social movement—even a vile one—by legislating it away...



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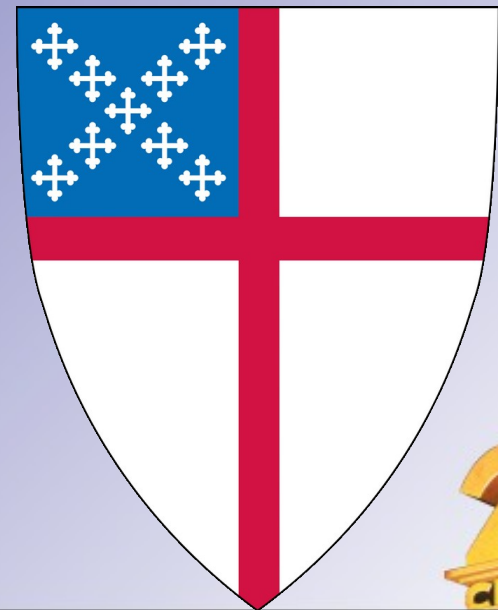
- Technology helps create a new church...

1934 The Radio Church of God was founded

1936 Public Order Act 1936 was passed in Britain

1939 The Methodist Church was founded

- Okay, you're going to argue that it had been around for hundreds of years, but you're wrong
  - Nope—the Methodist Episcopal Church had been around in North America for hundreds of years (Remember—the “Methodists” originally saw themselves as simply another “flavor” of Episcopalian, but increasingly came to feel that the Episcopal Church was moving away from them, doctrinally)





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  - Nope—the Methodist Episcopal Church had been around in North America for hundreds of years but the Methodist Protestant Church had split off from them back in 1828 because they genuinely liked the Methodist doctrinal and structural “flavor,” but no longer saw themselves as Episcopalians (in large part because they wanted a congregational form of governance instead of an Episcopal form—i.e.; with bishops)



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  - Nope—the Methodist Episcopal Church had been around in North America for hundreds of years but the Methodist Protestant Church had split off from them back in 1828 because they genuinely liked the Methodist doctrinal and structural “flavor,” but no longer saw themselves as Episcopalians and then the Methodist Episcopal Church South had split off from them back in 1844 over the issue of slavery  
(much like the Southern Baptists split off from the rest of the Baptists in 1845)





# ***The Modern Age***

- **Technology helps create a new church...**

1934 The Radio Church of God was founded

1936 Public Order Act 1936 was passed in Britain

1939 **The Methodist Church was founded**

- Okay, you're going to argue that it had been around for hundreds of years, but you're wrong

- **In 1939, all of those different versions of Methodists came together again to form simply the Methodist Church**

(NOTE: The whole point of the name was to remove any additional descriptors like "Episcopal" or "South" or "Protestant" that people might trip over in reuniting)

(Thus, this became the first time that a major denomination was created simply around the doctrinal "flavor" of Wesleyan Methodist-ness as its core)



# *The Modern Age*

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- Okay, you're going to argue that it had been around for hundreds of years, but you're wrong
- In 1939, all of those different versions of Methodists came together again to form simply the Methodist Church
- In 1968, the Methodist Church united with the similarly Wesleyan Evangelical United Brethren Church to form the United Methodist Church, which is how most of us know them today...**





# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - It's helpful as a point-counterpoint to note that at this same time, Hitler was developing and clarifying the doctrines of "Positive Christianity" in Germany for people to rally behind
  - Designed by Alfred Rosenberg (the Commissar for Supervision of Intellectual and Ideological Education of the NSDAP—AKA, the "Nazis")



# ***The Modern Age***

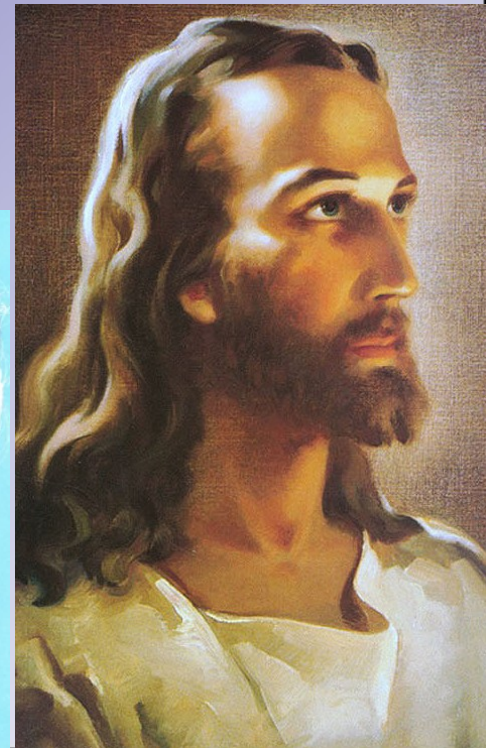
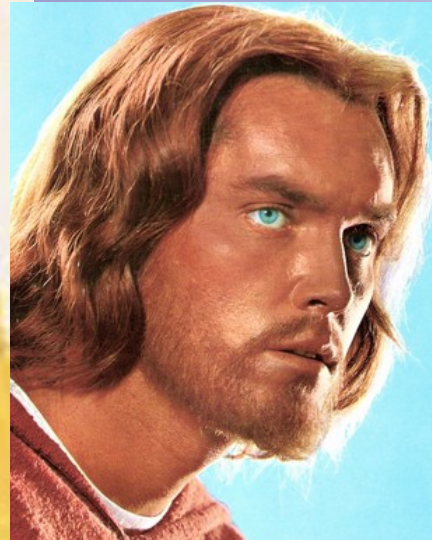
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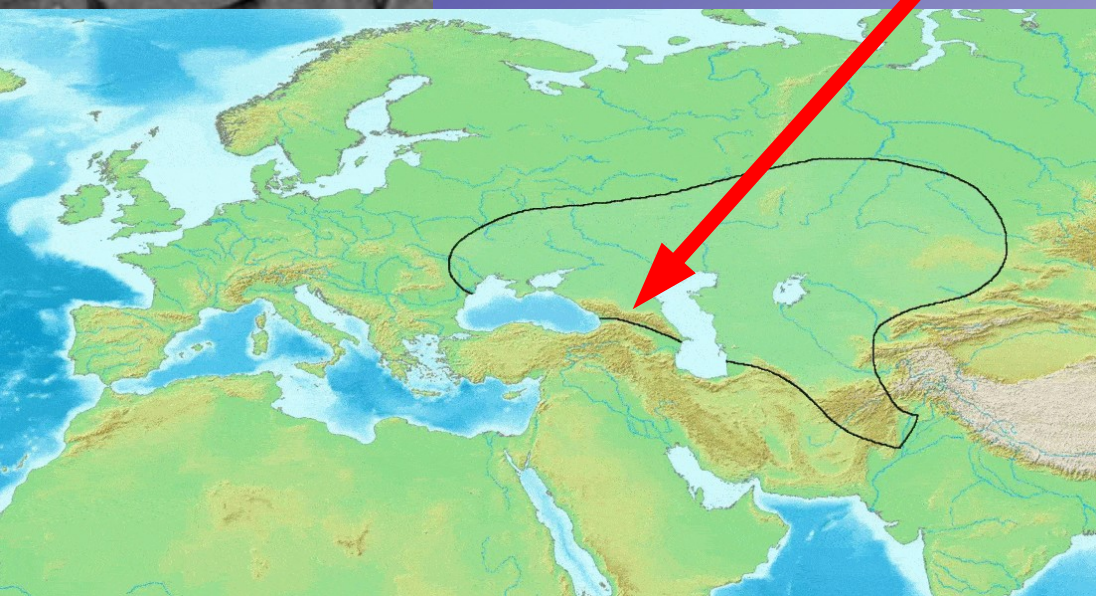
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(NOTE: Even the use of the word "Aryan" is wrong, since it technically refers to the peoples of the Iranic region of Asia who called themselves the *ārya*)

(NOTE<sup>2</sup>: This region is not known for its "Nordic" racial features)

(NOTE<sup>3</sup>: Then again, the Indo-Europeans who used that term for themselves used it to express a racial superiority over others, so maybe it's semantically valid, even if historically and genetically ridiculous...)





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- New Nazi Minister for Church Affairs Hanns Kerrl preached to clergymen in 1937,

"God's will reveals itself in German blood... Christianity is not dependent on the Apostles' Creed... *True* Christianity is represented by the party, and the German people are now called by the party and especially by the Führer to a *real* Christianity... The Führer is a herald of a new revelation!"



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- German pastors began teaching that Jehovah was really the great thunder-god of their Teutonic myths and that Jesus was the classic Teutonic ideal of the great and bloodied hero who slew the serpent with His final breaths—recreating Christ more in keeping with what the culture found attractive at the time

- Why did this actually *catch on* with people? (and what can we learn from this today?)





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  - German pastors began teaching that Jehovah was really the great thunder-god of their Teutonic myths
  - But not *all* pastors capitulated and adapted their teachings to the new, Nazi religion—about 20% spoke out against what they saw as rank heresy and were thus either imprisoned or executed (such as famous Lutheran pastor and theology professor Dietrich Bonhoeffer... but more on him next week...)

