

# ***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” (part 2)*



# *The Modern Age*

- Everything seemed to be falling apart again  
1939 World War II began  
(Remember that whole wacky “1939 invasion of Poland” thing from the other week?)  
(England and France then declared war on Germany in 1939, in defense of their mutual ally, Poland—and everyone else joined in... it's just that *America* decided to sit this one out)

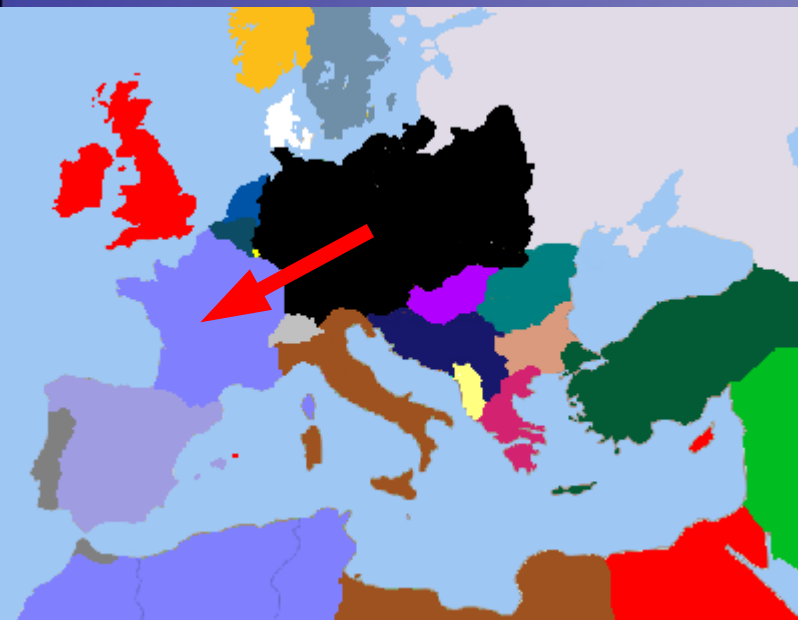
World War II  
1939 - 1945





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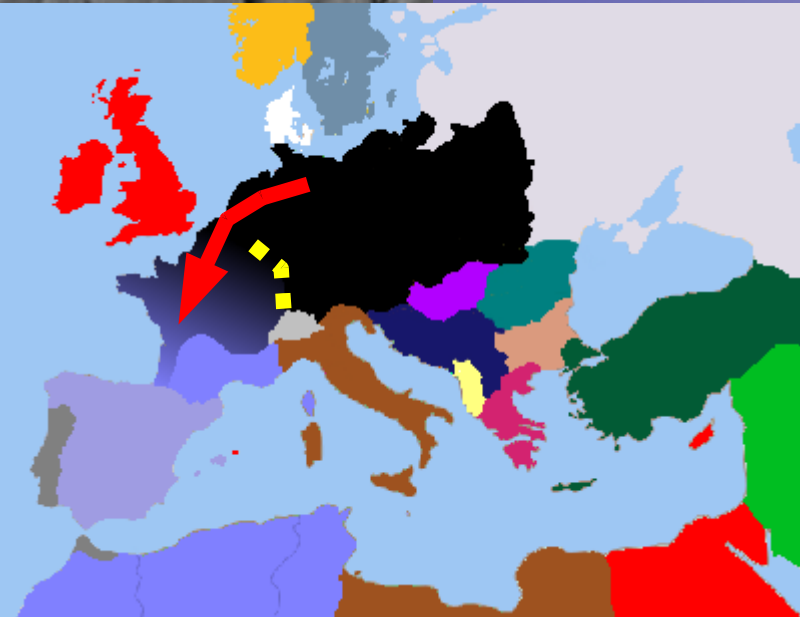
# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Of course, Germany *couldn't* invade France, because France isn't stupid
  - The French remembered how the German army and their trenches had scarred them during World War I so French Minister of War André Maginot had built an impregnable string of forts along the border of France and Germany—known popularly as the “Maginot Line” and since Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland were all neutral, then the Germans were effectively blocked from being able to invade France
  - Troops who served on the Maginot Line wore unit shoulder patches saying, “*On ne passe pas!*” (“They shall not pass!”—again, echoing the cry at Verdun from the Great War)



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    - But Hitler—*being* Hitler—didn't care about neutralities unless they ultimately benefited his own goals
      - So he ignored the neutrality of Belgium and the Netherlands and marched right through them, by-passing the Maginot Line completely
      - The French had spent nine years and 3 billion francs building a defense that was never even used, because they didn't understand the nature of their enemy and Paris fell within a month of the invasion
        - What can we learn from this?





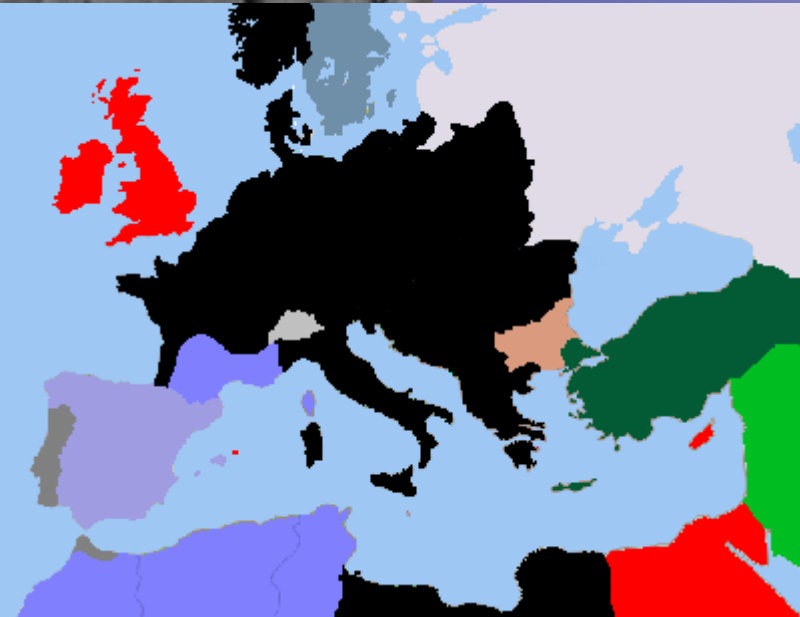
# The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—

- Of course, Germany *couldn't* invade France, because France isn't stupid

Germany immediately capitalized on their easy victory in France by invading the other, weaker nations in Europe

- Within a little over a year after the beginning of World War II, Germany had more than tripled in size, with no other armies standing in opposition against them
- In fact, if we include the other members of Hitler's "Axis of Power" in this map, here's what Europe looked like at this point in history, a little over a year into the war
  - It's no wonder that Hitler would so confidently boast to his people—  
"It is our will that this state shall endure for a thousand years. We are happy to know that the future is ours entirely!"





# The Modern Age

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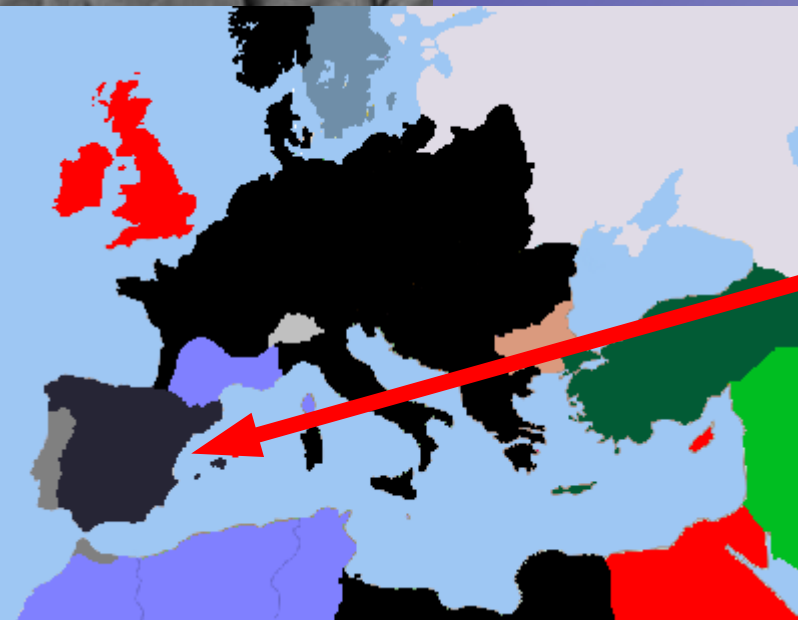
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- It's no wonder that Hitler would so confidently boast to his people
- England—in all of Europe—now stood all alone against Hitler's German seemingly unstoppable onslaught

(NOTE: And since a more or less fascist regime had just won the Spanish Civil War, we could even color Europe this way...)

- (NOTE<sup>2</sup>: Remember from last week just how close Britain herself had come to becoming a fascist state as well...)



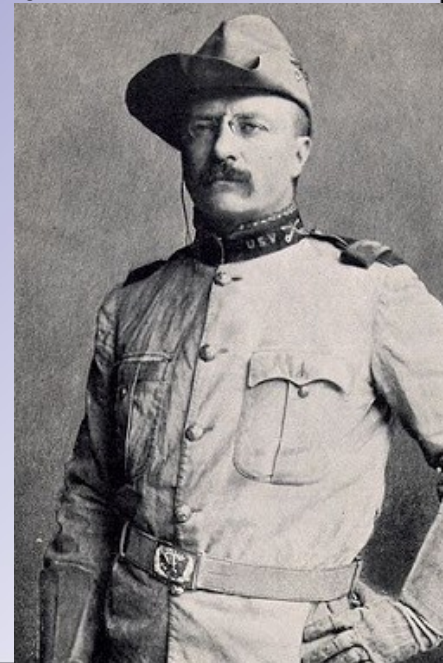
# *The Modern Age*

- Everything seemed to be falling apart again
  - 1939 World War II began
  - 1940 Germany invaded France
  - Chamberlain resigned as Prime Minister
  - Neville Chamberlain realized that Hitler wouldn't honor any of the agreements that he'd ever made and that he was thus out of his depth in dealing with someone like that
    - So on the eve of the German invasion of France, soon after declaring war against Germany, he stepped down from his position as Prime Minister and named as his successor the First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill



# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Remember—Churchill was already something of a war hero in the British consciousness
  - He'd served with distinction in India and in the Boer War and then had risen to become President of the Board of Trade, Home Secretary, and First Lord of the Admiralty until World War I rolled around, and he resigned all of that to serve on the Western Front as commander of the 6th Battalion of the Royal Scots Fusiliers
  - So, basically, he was the British version of Teddy Roosevelt over here—even down to being crazy smart and the author of several scholarly texts





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  - After World War I, he served as Minister of Munitions, Secretary of State for War, Secretary of State for Air, and First Lord of the Admiralty again
    - So when Chamberlain hand-picked Churchill—who had made a number of political enemies within the British government already—to be his successor, he was essentially telling the British people to dig in and prepare for a hard-fought war
    - Churchill's ruthlessly absolute commitment to victory held the United Kingdom together through rousing motivational speeches, making secret deals with various nations, starving the civilians of India to feed British troops, and even lauding the anti-Semitism of Germany and Italy
    - Churchill made it clear that he would do absolutely anything to win the war...





# *The Modern Age*

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
  - Remember—Churchill was already something of a war hero in the British consciousness
  - **In a famous speech in 1940, Churchill addressed a terrified House of Commons, saying,**  
“There never has been, I suppose, in all the world, in all the history of war, such an opportunity for youth. The Knights of the Round Table, the Crusaders, all fall back into the past—not only distant but prosaic; these young men, going forth every morn to guard their native land and all that we stand for, holding in their hands these instruments of colossal and shattering power, of whom it may be said that ‘Every morn brought forth a noble chance, and every chance brought forth a noble knight...’ I have, myself, full confidence that if all do their duty, if nothing is neglected, and if the best arrangements are made, as they are being made, we shall prove ourselves once again able to defend our Island home, to ride out the storm of war, and to outlive the menace of tyranny, if necessary for years, if necessary alone... We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender...”



# *The Modern Age*

- Everything seemed to be falling apart again

1939 World War II began

1940 Germany invaded France

Chamberlain resigned as Prime Minister

1941 America was only *sorta* neutral

- We began supplying China with oil, food, medical supplies, etc., and we began embargoing Japan and we did the same thing to help England and the free bits of France, while censuring Germany

- FDR began calling on Americans to consider our nation an “arsenal of democracy,” lending/leasing even warships and weapons to our Allies

- We even “unofficially” allowed 100 volunteers from the Army and Navy Air Corps to travel to Asia and form the 1st American Volunteer Group of the Chinese Air Force

(AKA the famous “Flying Tigers”—one of whom later on was my own Uncle Shelly, who flew in Shanghai)





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- **To lift the embargo, we demanded that Japan withdraw from China and sign non-aggression pacts with all of her neighbors**

- Amazingly, Japan didn't feel like doing that, and instead, opted to take us out of the equation

- They planned to invade all U.S. holdings in the South Pacific immediately following the crippling of the U.S. Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor immediately following a formal declaration of war against America

- The plan—devised by Harvard-educated Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto—relied on careful timing to essentially end the war with the U.S. before it had barely begun, thus demoralizing us



# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Unfortunately, the Japanese government decided that Yamamoto's plan was missing a certain degree of... sneakiness
    - So they amended the timetable somewhat, and made sure that the final translation of the declaration of war wasn't actually ready by the time that the first attack hit Pearl Harbor, so that America wouldn't be expecting it
    - (NOTE: We'd intercepted communiqués that had suggested that something was going to happen soon, but nothing was certain, and no declaration of war had been sent, so...)





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- But five battleships and two cruisers ended up being salvaged—and the U.S.'s aircraft carriers weren't even touched in the attack
- Instead of being demoralized, the “sneaky” timetable of the attack just served to galvanize the American people, who up until that moment had mostly resisted the idea of joining in another World War



# *The Modern Age*

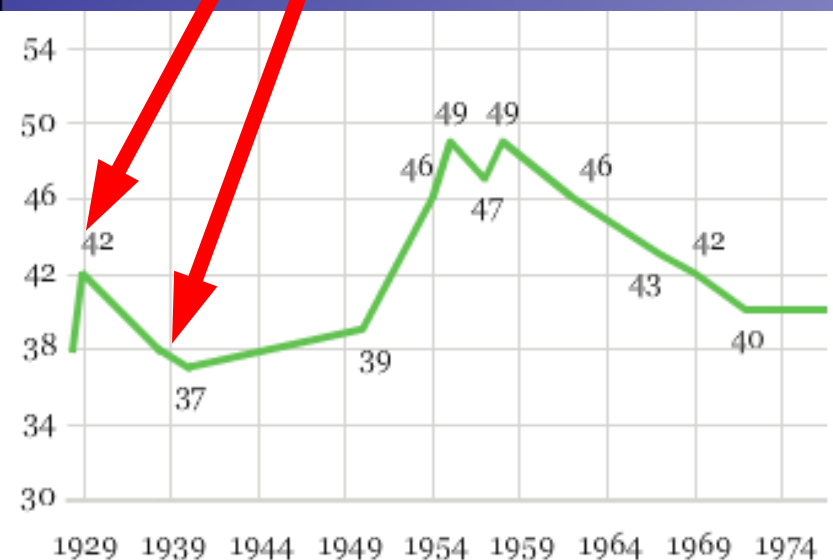
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- The United States was at war with Japan—and not quite as crippled as Yamamoto's plan had intended—and Great Britain immediately declared war against Japan as well leading Germany to declare war against America by default
- Yamamoto was credited as having written in his diary, “I fear all we have done is to awaken a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve...”

# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment<sup>2</sup>—
  - All of this had an interesting effect on American churches
  - Church attendance had spiked during the beginning of the Great Depression, as all of those disillusioned post-World War I Americans started going back to churches when their lives started to crumble out from under them but then, as the Depression wore on, they started fizzling in their involvement
  - Why is that, do you think (what kind of church or God were people looking for)—and what can we learn about that today?





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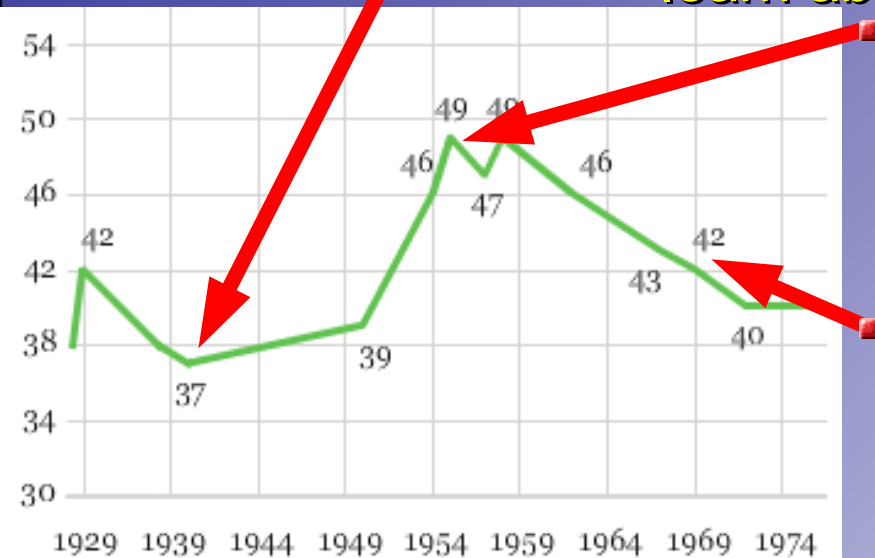
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But at the beginning of World War II, people started attending church again

- Again, why is that, do you think (what kind of church or God were people looking for)—and what can we learn about that today?

(NOTE: But church attendance didn't really spike again until the post-World War II affluence of the mid-1950s... so what kind of church or God were people looking for *then*—and what can we learn about that today?)

(NOTE<sup>2</sup>: But then church attendance has steadily declined since the 1960s... so how are we living in the shadow of those dueling perspectives on what kind of God people liked?)





# The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment<sup>2</sup>—
  - All of this had an interesting effect on American churches
  - Pastors began leading their congregations in more and more prayer services, preaching about the evils of the Germans and the Japanese, and calling the faithful to circle the wagons, both nationalistically and theologically
  - The gulf between the Fundamentalists and the Liberals began widening even further as *both* camps began to grow in popularity
  - So how would *you* summarize the differences between the Fundamentalist and Liberal versions of the Christian Church at this point in history?



# *The Modern Age*

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Chamberlain resigned as Prime Minister
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  - 1942 **National Association of Evangelicals began**
    - Radio preachers were popping up like dandelions, and even the conservative ones had little to no accountability, and no connection to one another
      - In 1929, Pentecostal preacher J. Elwin Wright created the New England Fellowship to try to pull together conservatives of all kinds to produce a strong, consistent, activist voice in the nation—but one with a different tone to the increasingly negative and isolationist Fundamentalists
        - Remember, the Fundamentalists were primarily focused on combating what they saw as the dangers of Modernity, and were becoming more militant and judgemental with every year
        - This new group of conservatives wanted to focus on promoting conservative Christianity rather than tearing down other versions, and emphasized trying to make a *positive* difference in the world for Christ





# ***The Modern Age***

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
  - For those keeping track of the main priorities of “conservative Christianity” at various points in history, the Evangelicals basically emphasized five points:
    - 1) Conversionism  
(the belief that lives need to be transformed through a “born-again” experience and a life-long process of following Jesus)
    - 2) Activism  
(the expression and demonstration of the Gospel in missionary and social reform efforts)
    - 3) Biblicism  
(a high regard for and obedience to the Bible as the ultimate authority)
    - 4) Crucicentrism  
(a stress on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as making possible the redemption of humanity)
    - 5) Scholasticism  
(the emphasis on well-considered research and study to make sure that doctrines and applications adhere as closely as possible to the intents of the original text of Scripture)



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      - The movement caught on and spread across the country, and by 1941, the first National Conference for United Action Among Evangelicals was convened in St. Louis
        - Increasingly seeing “Fundamentalism” as “an embarrassment instead of a badge of honor” (according to Kenneth Kantzer—an evangelical scholar, and the founding Dean of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School)





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      - The movement caught on and spread across the country, and by 1941, the first National Conference for United Action Among Evangelicals was convened in St. Louis
        - Increasingly seeing “Fundamentalism” as “an embarrassment instead of a badge of honor” Evangelicals began to distance themselves from their insular and dogmatic brothers (who also then distanced themselves from the Evangelicals)



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    - **Soon, the term “Fundamentalist” had become more or less synonymous with “closed-minded Bible-thumper”**  
(to pretty much everyone in America other than the Fundamentalists)





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- **Soon, the term “Fundamentalist” had become more or less synonymous with “closed-minded Bible-thumper” and “Evangelical” became synonymous with “open-minded conservative Christian”**

(to pretty much everyone in America other than the Fundamentalists, who saw the new group as being overly liberal in their acceptance of even other conservatives who didn't agree on every point, and as being overly concerned with being seen as intellectually and scholarly respectable by their liberal and secular opponents)





# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - That's an interesting point worth commenting on...
  - Evangelicals began with the mission “to honor God by connecting and representing evangelical Christians” and to do so *within* the existing educational and political structures of the day
  - The whole idea was to show that conservative Christians weren't anti-science or anti-intellectual, but rather that a legitimate intellect and scientific inquiry should logically lead people to embrace a conservative Christianity  
(again, to be pro-conservative more than anti-liberal)



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    - But even when I was in seminary in the 1990s, my wife's theologically liberal uncle argued that Evangelicals were all anti-scholarship and against free thought (even though I cited multiple famous Evangelical scholars to refute that notion)
      - But over the years—at least in the minds of most liberals—Evangelicals had become essentially synonymous with Fundamentalists
        - Why is that, do you think?



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  - But over the years—at least in the minds of most liberals—Evangelicals had become essentially synonymous with Fundamentalists
  - I even ran into that with the teachers of the classes that were intended to introduce me to the Evangelical Covenant Church—teachers who used the term “Evangelical” as a perjorative term for people who are just too conservative in their views





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    - Today, would you argue that Evangelicals are seen as standing for a positive, scholarly Christianity, or as taking a *negative* stand *against* secularist education, morals, and culture?
      - Why might Evangelicalism have morphed over the decades, and what can we learn from that?



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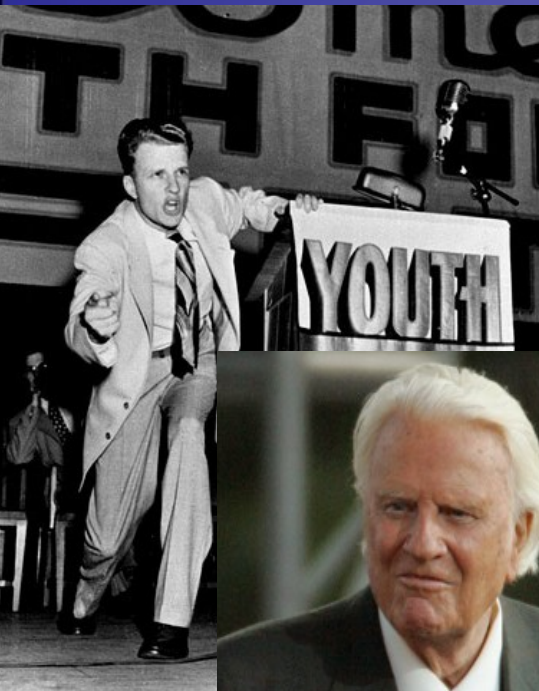
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- In general, during World War II, Fundamentalists dug in and isolated themselves from others, while Evangelicals reached out to create a positive consensus of Bible-believing churches

- Evangelical preacher Billy Graham even reached out to *Catholics*, annoying Fundamentalists no end (but then he annoyed Evangelicals in 1997 when he said that, “whether they come from the Muslim world, or the Buddhist world, or the Christian world or the non-believing world,” people “may not even know the name of Jesus, but they know in their hearts that they need something that they don’t have, and they turn to the only light that they have, and I think that they are saved, and that they’re going to be with us in heaven...”)

- So is that Universalism?

- What do you think?





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