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## Hebron Baptist Church

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### *Baptists and Liberalism*

Following the Civil War, a period of industrialization and urbanization exploded in America. Between 1870 and 1900, more than 12 million immigrants arrived through the East coast portals. The majority came from Europe – primarily Germany, Ireland, and Italy. Many of them settled in the North's major cities and began working in the factories – competing with Americans for jobs, housing, and social services.

While Southern Baptists dominated the segregated South, Northern Baptists remained a loose structure of autonomous societies. Now facing the challenges created by the mass influx of immigrants who were seeking political, economic, and religious freedom, churches began to compromise.

The Northern Baptists made some fatal errors. They changed their evangelistic strategy, adopting a Social Gospel. And, they became enamored with the educated German liberals and their philosophy and theology. Many Baptist seminarians traveled to Germany to receive their education, then returned to American pulpits with their newly-acquired theological liberalism.

The Social Gospel also spread to some parts of the South; especially in the more industrialized regions. The Women's Missionary Union (WMU) even engaged in Social Gospel efforts. They provided English language training, sewing classes, medical services, and a variety of other programs for immigrants.

As an interdenominational movement, the Social Gospel embodied the progressivism of the latter-1800s. There was a belief that if Protestant denominations would set aside their differences and work together, they could change the world. Such ecumenical efforts created controversy among Northern Baptists, often dividing conservatives from moderate and liberal Baptists.

Before the turn of the twentieth century, five Baptist seminaries in the North were teaching liberal theology – Andover Newton (MA), Colgate (NY), Rochester (NY), Cozer (PA), and The University of Chicago Divinity School.

Sources: Kidd & Hankins, *Baptists in America*; David Beale, *Baptist History in England and America*, The Northern Baptist Convention online

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### *Who was St. Patrick?*



St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, was not actually a Saint. He lived during the first millennium before the Catholic Church began the canonization process. After his work spreading Christianity throughout Ireland, he was likely proclaimed a saint by the Irish people.

Patrick was born in Britain around 386 A.D. According to his autobiography (the *Confessio*), he was captured by Irish raiders when he was 16. Patrick was taken as a slave to Ireland to work as a herdsman. After six years, he was able to escape and return to his family in Britain.

Patrick recounted a vision he had a few years after returning home. He heard the voice of the Irish calling him to “come and walk among us.” Patrick studied in Europe then, acting on his vision, he returned to Ireland as a Christian missionary.

March 17 (St. Patrick's Day) is the supposed date of his death in circa 461.

## Is God Awakening America?



The events that took place in February have many Christians wondering if America is about to see a Fifth Great Awakening.

The first event broke out on the campus of Asbury University in Wilmore, KY, on February 8. It was a 16-day spiritual revival of prayer, praise, and worship. Unplanned and student-led, what was happening at Asbury spread across America and all over the world on social media and drew tens of thousands to the small town of Wilmore. Other Christian colleges began to experience the same moving of the Holy Spirit. The Asbury revival was moved off campus on February 24 to larger venues, such as Rupp Arena in Lexington.

The second event began on Friday, the 24<sup>th</sup>, with the nationwide release of the movie *Jesus Revolution*. There were nineteen other new releases on that date and over the three-day weekend, *Jesus Revolution* came in third place and brought in \$15.5 million (more than twice the amount predicted).

Based on a true story, the movie is about Chuck Smith, a middle-aged pastor in Southern California, who teamed up with Lonnie Frisbee, an artist, charismatic evangelist, and the original “hippie preacher.” God used Smith and Frisbee to start a movement to convert hippies to Christianity in the 1970s.

The result was the Fourth Great Awakening in American history; a countercultural movement that continues to impact society and the Church today.

## Jews Finding Their Messiah



“A great spiritual awakening is underway in the Jewish community worldwide, but particularly in the United States. It’s not being reported in the Jewish press. Nor is much of the Christian media aware of it, or reporting on it. Indeed, in many ways this is the biggest untold story in the Jewish world,” said Joel Rosenberg.\*

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the number of Jews in Europe who accepted Jesus as their Messiah was around 230,000. Sadly, most of the believers were killed during WWII, the Holocaust, and under the Soviet Union. By the 1950s, there were only a few thousand Jews for Jesus remaining.

Things changed dramatically after the Six-Day War and reunification of Jerusalem (1967), and the “Jesus Movement” that swept the U.S. in the 1970s.

A half-century later, there are now approximately one million Jews in the world who believe that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah, the Son of God. The vast majority of these believers live in the U.S.

According to a LifeWay study, there are 871,000 Americans of Jewish descent who hold the same theological beliefs as Evangelical Christians.

A separate study conducted by Dr. Erez Soref, president of Israel College of the Bible, found that there are approximately 30,000 Jewish Israelis who believe in Yeshua – Jesus the Messiah.

\*Joel Rosenberg, The Rosenberg Report on TBN, November 28, 2022