

6.4

A Religious Awakening Sparks Reform



As a Young Historian, I will be able to...

- Explain how the Second Great Awakening affected the United States.
- Describe the discrimination that some religious groups suffered from in the mid-1800s.
- Trace the emergence of the utopian and transcendentalism movements.
- Analyze the goals and methods of the public school movement.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the prison reform and temperance movement.

A Religious Awakening Sparks Reform

The Second Great Awakening- Religious movement in the 1800s

Revivalists- Preachers who wanted to “revive” or reenergize the role of religion in America

The message was that people could improve themselves & their souls by individual responsibility

Church membership skyrocketed & the movement focused on improving society as well

Religious Reforms

Outdoor services would spread through the North & South in events called “revivals” or camps”

Charles Grandison Finney- Revivalists who dramatically proclaimed his own faith & encouraged followers

Evangelical Worship- Worship that consisted of strong emotions & songs to convert followers

Revivalists spread the idea that the U.S. was leading the world into a second millennium for the second coming of Christ

Role of Religion

People believed it was up to the government to encourage public morality by religion

Sabbatarians, for example, wanted to ban all commerce on Sundays

Richard Allen- Former slave who formed his own church, eventually leading to the African Methodist Church

Believed that religion would lead to eternal freedom after a lifetime of bondage

Mormons

Joseph Smith- Leader who wrote about visions to create a new religious group based on the words of the angel Moroni

Mormons- Followers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Unitarians- Believed that God should be seen as a single divine being rather than the “Trinity”

Discrimination & Intolerance

Mormons would isolate themselves into small communities & followed the practice of having more than 1 wife

Mormons would vote as a group, which angered their neighbors due to political power

Smith is eventually murdered & Brigham Young leads the Mormons to Salt Lake City, Utah

Nativists would discriminate against the Catholics & Jews

Utopias & Transcendentalism

Some communities would distance themselves from society by setting up communities of shared beliefs

Utopian Communities- “Utopias” where people aspired to build perfect communities

The Shakers- United Society of Believers in Christs
Second Appearing had men & women live separately & had no children

Transcendentalism

Transcendentalists- Believed that people could transcend logic or tradition to reach the truth

Ralph Waldo Emerson- wrote sermons, essays, & poems about the interplay between people & the universe

Henry David Thoreau- created the philosophy of “Civil Disobedience” that a person must be true to their conscious even if it breaks the law

Public Education Reform

People began to argue that education belonged to all
& it was up to the public to improve life

Public School Movement- Common school movement
to establish a system of tax-supported public
schools

Horace Mann- fought for laws that forced education,
create funding, & create training for future
schools

Women would find a new job opportunity working
as teachers in Public Education

Social Reform

Dorothea Dix- Fought to reform hospitals across the nation & provide mental health facilities

Penitentiary Movement- Update the prison system to solitary confinement or the Auburn model of work together during the day, locked in cells at night

Temperance Movement- Effort to end the sale & consumption of alcohol in the nation

Neal Dow- creates the Maine Law that restricted the sale of alcohol. Other states adopt afterwards