

Unit 19 from

Exploring America

by Ray Notgrass

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Unit 19



The Triumph of Progressivism

Theodore Roosevelt was a progressive Republican who wanted to use the power of the Federal government for the good of the nation. He began a trend of progressive reforms that continued into the Taft and Wilson administrations. The late nineteenth century and early twentieth century was a period of tremendous innovation and change. One key example of this was the construction of the Panama Canal. The division in society between conservative and liberal, traditional versus modern, extended into churches, with the result that several groups suffered splits and Christendom became even more divided.

Lessons in This Unit

Lesson 91—America in 1900

Lesson 92—T. R. and Taft

Lesson 93—A Time of Invention

Lesson 94—The Panama Canal

Lesson 95—Bible Study: Liberal and Conservative

Memory Verse

Memorize 1 Timothy 6:20-21 by the end of this unit.

Books Used

- The Bible
- *American Voices*
- *Mama's Bank Account*

Writing

Choose one of the following writing assignments:

- What is the Christian's responsibility toward the environment? What is the proper Biblical balance between taking God's creation for granted and worshiping it as a deity? Write a two-page essay on this.
- Write a two-page essay on political third parties. Are they hopeless, bothersome efforts that sometimes wind up letting the wrong candidate win, or are they the best chance ever to get the Democratic and Republican Parties to respond to the desires of the people? What does someone sacrifice by supporting one of the major parties, and what does a person sacrifice by supporting a third party? What does someone gain by supporting either? Try to talk with someone who supports a third party (Constitution, Green, Libertarian, Reform, etc.) to get his or her ideas.
- What concerns you about the liberal versus conservative division among believers? How can people with differing religious beliefs be unified? Suggest some answers in a two-page essay.

Mama's Bank Account

In this book, Katherine Forbes tells stories about her Norwegian immigrant family in San Francisco in the early 1900s. The incidents that Forbes relates are funny, touching, and thought-provoking; but they always weave their way back to her mother, the most special person in her life. We see something of the subculture in which immigrants lived as they tried to make a new life in America. The book was published in 1943. It was adapted into a Broadway play the next year and made into an excellent movie in 1948. The theatrical and movie versions were entitled *I Remember Mama*. The movie is available on DVD. Plan to finish the book by the end of this unit.

Lesson 91

America in 1900

As the nineteenth century came to a close in 1900, the United States stretched from coast to coast and consisted of forty-five states. Utah was the last state to have entered the Union, having been admitted in 1896. Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico, Alaska, and Hawaii were still territories. The U.S. census and other sources of statistical information offer us some insights into the nature of American life in that landmark year.

Population

The official population of the United States in 1900 was 76,212,168. A century earlier, the nation had been home to about 5.3 million persons. Today, over three hundred million people reside in this country.

The 1900 population figure was an indication of the period's rapid growth. The 1900 number reflected a 21% increase over the 1890 census. The 1890 total was 25% higher than the 1880 count, which in turn was 26% more than the 1870 figure. This growth was based primarily on three factors: more women were giving birth to babies, more of those babies survived infancy, and the influx of immigrants into the country was significant. The racial makeup of the American population included 66.8 million whites and 8.8 million blacks. Just under a quarter million residents were Native Americans, and about 115,000 were of Asian descent.

About one-third of the U.S. population in 1900 was either foreign-born or the children of those who were born in another country. Some 13.6% of the population (or about one out of every seven persons) had been born in another land. This indicates the profound impact that immigration was having on the nation.

In 1900 the United States was still predominantly a rural nation. Sixty percent of the population lived in communities of 2,500 or less. The population of five states was over 90% rural. However, as we indicated in an earlier lesson, cities were becoming the defining feature of American life. This can be seen by the fact that in 1860, 83% of the population had lived in communities of 2,500 population or smaller. Between 1880 and 1900, the country's rural

The estimated world population in 1900 was 1.6 billion. Today, that figure is estimated to be over 6.5 billion.



Children in New York City, c. 1910

population increased by just under ten million persons, while urban population during the same period increased by over sixteen million.

Only three U.S. cities had a population greater than one million in 1900. The five largest cities were New York City (3.4 million), Chicago (1.7 million), Philadelphia (1.3 million), St. Louis (575,238), and Boston (560,892). Los Angeles registered 102,479 residents in the 1900 census.

The life expectancy for the average American in 1900 was only 47.3 years, which reflects the significant impact of disease, infant mortality, and dangerous work conditions. The life expectancy in America today is about 77.5 years. In 1900 about 4% of the population was 65 and over. Today that figure is 12%.

The Working World

In 1900 the United States had the largest industrial output of any country in the world. The nation had achieved this status in 1894, having grown rapidly since the end of the Civil War. A major factor in this growth was the production of steel, which proved to be a superior product to iron. Steel was important in many aspects of the growing American economy, including the building of railroads (both rail lines and rail cars), girders for the construction of buildings, and the rapidly expanding market for urban streetcars. In 1865 the country had about 35,000 miles of railroad track. By 1900 that total had increased to 193,000 miles. In 1920 the total track mileage in the country reached its high point of 260,000 miles.

Another growing industry was petroleum. Oil drawn from the ground was refined to produce kerosene, a widely-used lighting and heating product. In the early twentieth century, the combination of steel production, the refining of gasoline from oil, and the manufacturing of automobiles would bring about explosive growth in these and related industries.

The barons of industry profited greatly from this growth in the American economy. The opportunity for work and the average wage that workers earned were increasing in the boom. The standard of living was getting higher for many Americans. However, the workers did not share in the bounty as much as they would have liked. It was not uncommon for steel mill workers to put in 84-hour weeks (working six days per week, fourteen hours per day). Other factory workers usually worked twelve-hour days and 60-hour work weeks. Construction workers usually were expected to work 48 hours per week.

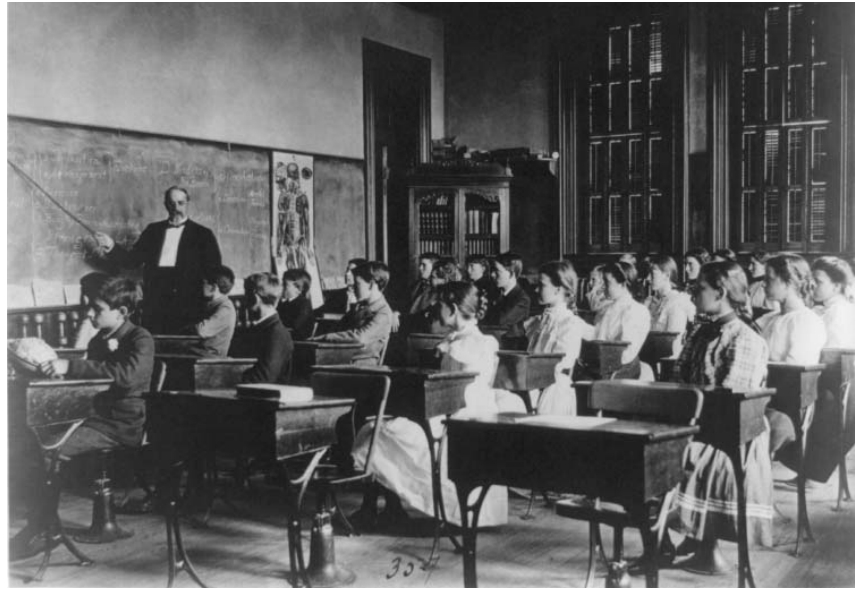
Despite these long hours, the average annual income for non-farm workers was \$490.00. This average includes clerical and all other positions, many of which paid less than factory jobs. The cost of living in 1900 was about one-twentieth what it is today, so a \$490.00 annual income in 1900 would be approximately the same as an income of \$9,800.00 in today's dollars. This is about what the Federal government today considers the poverty level to be for an individual, and it is about one-half of the current poverty level income for a family of four. In addition, workers in 1900 had few benefits. Social Security did not exist, and practically no companies offered retirement plans or health insurance benefits for the average worker. This meant that many families faced hard decisions. Either they did without, or the father worked two jobs, or the wife and children had to contribute to the family's income. Unions had not become strong enough to have much of an impact on the pay and working conditions of most Americans.

Education

Americans showed an increased interest in public education during this period. The push was influenced by the desire to teach new immigrants and to prepare the next generation for the changing world around them. The biggest change came with the increase in the number

of public high schools. Before 1900 most public schooling ended with the eighth grade, and high schools were rare. State funding for public education was the exception, not the rule. During the early twentieth century, state funding for education became the norm.

An emerging leader in this new push for education was John Dewey. Dewey was born in 1859. He received a doctorate from Johns Hopkins University in 1884 and began teaching at the University of Chicago in 1894. In 1904 he



School in Washington, D.C., c. 1900

began a career at Columbia University in New York. His first major work on education was *The School and Society*, published in 1899. Many Americans at the time were attracted to the philosophy of pragmatism, which holds that people should do whatever works in order to achieve their stated goals. The more extreme proponents of pragmatism reject absolute truth and believe that whatever works should be considered true. John Dewey wanted to move education away from classical academic studies and to make more of a connection between education and life because he believed that this was pragmatically the best thing to do given that day and time. Dewey was one of the first proponents of a school-to-work approach to education. The traditional educational approach attempted to prepare a person for living a well-rounded, values-based, responsible adult life. Dewey's method was based more on expedience. A major emphasis among educators became the designing of pragmatic educational programs that would equip students to hold jobs in the American workplace rather than to teach students to think for themselves and to become independent businessmen, civic leaders, and homemakers. Dewey's philosophy had a profound influence on American education in the twentieth century.

The increased demand for more and better trained public school teachers was an impetus for the founding of more colleges and universities. Before this time, most universities had specialized in teaching the classic liberal arts curriculum that nearly all students at the university took. Now, colleges broadened their offerings; and students created their own programs of study by choosing electives. Women were permitted to enroll in more colleges, and universities specifically for women were begun.

Graduate education also received increased attention, based largely on the model of German universities. Johns Hopkins University, which opened in 1876, was dedicated to research and graduate studies. Colleges also began professional training programs in fields such as medicine and architecture. These programs helped the public identify professionals who had received adequate training. They also helped professionals by controlling the number of people who entered those fields.

The Chautauqua Movement and efforts similar to it brought education to the general public. In the summer of 1874, a businessman and minister organized a two-week program of sermons, Bible lessons, and uplifting messages for Sunday School teachers at Lake

Chautauqua in New York State. The event was so popular that it was repeated in succeeding years and expanded to include presentations on science, economics, and literature. The Chautauqua Reading Circle became a national organization, and Chautauqua speakers and similar programs spread around the country. By 1900 some 200 groups sent speakers into many communities, where people eagerly turned out to hear lectures on various subjects or to be entertained with humor and music.

The total circulation of newspapers increased faster than the growth of the population during this period. Inventions such as the linotype machine and improved printing presses as well as businesses wanting to advertise their products in newspapers helped spur the growth. William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer built financially successful newspapers and newspaper chains that specialized in playing up sensational human interest stories and scandals. News services such as the Associated Press supplied national and world news to local papers. Improved communication enabled newspaper chains to use the same national news stories in papers across the country. Popular magazines such as the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Ladies' Home Journal* also grew in circulation.

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and
reaching forward to what lies ahead,
I press on toward the goal for the prize
of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 3:13-14*

Assignments for Lesson 91

English

- Begin reading *Mama's Bank Account*. Plan to finish it by the end of this unit.

Bible

- In this unit we will look at the liberal versus conservative controversy that characterized American Christianity around the beginning of the twentieth century. Read 2 Timothy 1:13-14. What are some central Christians doctrines and what are some matters of opinion? Give Scriptures to support your answer.
- Read "This Is My Father's World" by Maltbie Babcock (*American Voices*, page 284).
- Begin memorizing 1 Timothy 6:20-21.

If you are using the optional Quiz and Exam Book, answer the questions for Lesson 91.

Lesson 92

T. R. and Taft

Six months after William McKinley's second inauguration, the President visited the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, which was a celebration of the new twentieth century. As he received visitors at a reception on September 6, 1901, an anarchist, Leon Czolgosz, approached. His heavily bandaged right hand concealed a gun. Czolgosz shot McKinley, and the President died eight days later.

For the third time in 36 years, America was plunged into mourning over the assassination of a chief executive. The new President, Theodore Roosevelt, was 42 years old when he took office, the youngest man ever to do so. He continued the Republican dynasty; but his personality, policies, and perspectives brought a new style to Washington and ushered in the heyday of the Progressive Era.



After William McKinley had been shot, he saw people subduing his attacker and called out, "Don't let them hurt him."

Roosevelt's Background

Theodore Roosevelt was born in 1858 to a wealthy family in New York City. Sickly with asthma as a youth, he built up his physical strength by the strength of his will. He studied at Harvard and became fascinated with history and politics. Roosevelt eventually wrote several books on those subjects. While he was serving in the New York state legislature, tragedy struck. Within hours, in the same house, his mother died and then his wife died after giving birth to a daughter. Roosevelt's father had died while Theodore was a student at Harvard.

Roosevelt left it all and lived on a cattle ranch in the Dakota Territory for most of the next two years, enjoying the strenuous life he yearned for and idealized. He then returned to New York, remarried, ran for mayor of New York City, and lost. President Harrison appointed him to the U.S. Civil Service Commission. Following this, he was New York City Police Commissioner (when he would sometimes roam the streets with police patrols at night in a dark cloak) and then became Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Roosevelt left his job in the Navy Department in 1898 to organize the Rough Riders cavalry unit that fought in Cuba during the Spanish-American War.

Later in 1898, Roosevelt was elected governor of New York. In 1900 the Republican party tapped him to be William McKinley's running mate as their vice-presidential nominee. In September 1901, Roosevelt became president upon McKinley's death.

Roosevelt was energetic, eloquent, bold, and zealous for what he believed to be right. He was also a classic politician who was willing to compromise to get at least half a loaf rather than nothing. His presidency gave the Progressive movement a strong national leader.

Labor Unions

Less than a year after Roosevelt took office, the United Mine Workers union struck coal mines in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. They demanded a nine-hour workday (down from the prevailing ten hours), a 20% wage increase, better working conditions, and the right to be recognized and negotiate contracts as a union. Management, however, refused to negotiate.

As the strike dragged on through 1902, many Americans feared a coal shortage for the coming winter. Coal prices went from \$5.00 per ton to \$30.00 per ton. The President came under intense pressure to break the strike with Federal troops the way Cleveland had



Coal Miner, early twentieth century

handled the Pullman Strike in 1894; but Roosevelt refused. Instead, he called both sides to the White House to suggest binding arbitration to settle the dispute. The management representative refused to speak to the union representative, which infuriated Roosevelt. The President threatened to send in Army troops, not to break the strike but to operate the mines for the good of the nation. With that threat, management finally agreed to negotiate. Mine owners accepted the nine-hour workday and offered a 10%

raise, but they refused to budge on other demands. The union accepted the offer and went back to work.

The significance of the coal strike settlement was that, for the first time, the Federal government had acted on behalf of union interests as well as on behalf of management. Roosevelt's summoning of the UMW representative to the White House was tacit recognition of the union's right to exist.

Working Americans made definite progress during the Roosevelt years. Between 1897 and 1914, wages rose 37% and the average workweek fell from sixty hours to fifty. However, unions did suffer some defeats. For instance, the hatters union called for a nationwide boycott against a hatmaker in Danbury, Connecticut. The company sued the union, saying that the boycott was a restraint of trade and violated the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. In 1908 the U.S. Supreme Court said that the boycott did indeed restrain trade and ordered the union to pay damages to the company.

The American Federation of Labor was strongly opposed by the National Association of Manufacturers, which was made up mostly of smaller companies who wanted to resist hiring union workers. Some companies even used intimidation and violence to limit the influence of unions. Labor unions wanted the protection of Federal law to organize and to engage in other tactics, but such legislation was not forthcoming.

Business

Meanwhile, business also suffered some setbacks. The Elkins Act (1903) made it illegal for a company to accept a rebate from a railroad. The Supreme Court in 1904 said that the Northern Securities Company, a holding company for three railroads between Lake Michigan and the Pacific Northwest, was an illegal restraint of trade and ordered that it be broken up. The next year, the Court said that the Swift Meat Company held an illegal monopoly in the meat packing industry. Previously, the Court had said that a particular industry was generally intrastate commerce since it was located within a state. With the Swift ruling, however, the Court established the stream of commerce doctrine that said the Swift company controlled too many aspects of the entire process (production, shipping, distribution, etc.) and thus did restrain interstate trade.

Encouraged by the Northern Securities decision, Roosevelt went after other trusts by having the Justice Department file lawsuits that were called trust-busting efforts. Not all of these came to trial, however, and heads of corporations still made secret gentlemen's agreements to avoid having legal action taken against them. Roosevelt tried to apply the rule of reason to his trust-busting activities. He said that big was not necessarily bad. His test was whether a monopoly or trust had a negative effect on business and the public. He preferred greater government regulation over trying to break up monopolies altogether.

In 1903 Congress created the Department of Commerce and Labor as a new part of the President's cabinet. Whenever a new cabinet-level department is created, this means that the Federal government is giving increased attention to a subject. Since these two areas (commerce and labor) were often in conflict, the department divided in 1913 into the separate Departments of Commerce and of Labor.

1904 Re-Election

Roosevelt was eager to be elected in his own right in order to continue the program he had begun. He was opposed by conservatives within the Republican party but easily won renomination. Roosevelt promised a square deal for every American. The Democrats nominated Alton Parker, chief justice of the New York State Supreme Court. Parker had ruled for labor in some cases that came before him, but he supported the gold standard and had other conservative positions. The Democrats tried to portray Parker not as more progressive than Roosevelt but as more conservative and reliable. It didn't work. Roosevelt got over 57% of the popular vote, a 336 to 140 electoral majority, and carried every state outside of the South, including Missouri, which had not voted for a Republican presidential nominee since 1868.

On election night, Roosevelt accepted victory and pledged that he would not run again. This was a decision he later regretted. It weakened his position as President and ran against his competitive spirit.



Roosevelt Delivering a Campaign Speech in Wyoming

Second Term Reforms

Roosevelt had to fight against the conservative Old Guard Republicans in Congress who thought he went too far as well as Progressives who thought he didn't go far enough. Despite his announcement that he would not seek re-election in 1908, Roosevelt had enough influence to see significant changes take place in the first part of his second term. His cause was helped by several muckraking writers who exposed corruption and betrayal of the public trust by various industries. The 1906 Hepburn Act gave more power to the Interstate Commerce Commission by allowing it to investigate railroad rate fixing and to take other steps to regulate business practices.

Another area of concern was the packaging of food products and the manufacture and promotion of drugs. In 1906 Upton Sinclair published *The Jungle*, his shocking novel that



Chicago Meat Packing House, c. 1906

described unsanitary practices of the meat packing industry. He wrote, among other things, that the processing plants were dirty and used spoiled meat in what they packaged and sold. Roosevelt read the pre-publication proofs of *The Jungle* and ordered an immediate investigation. Another commission reported that patent medicines were often either ineffective or harmful. The result of these investigations was the passage, on the same day in 1906, of the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act. Meat packers had opposed any regulation; but after sales dropped in Europe following publication of the investigation, the processors decided to support legislation.

Conservation

During the increased industrialization of the late nineteenth century, little had been done to regulate the use of natural resources or to protect the environment and natural beauty of the country. Businesses, as well as many Americans, assumed that the supply of natural resources was endless and that the environment was not an issue.

Logging companies cleared lands of forests without any thought of replanting or of the environmental impact of what they did. By 1900 only about one-fourth of the country's virgin forests remained (200 million acres out of a previous total of 800 million acres). Eighty percent of the timber was owned by private companies or individuals. The government had given away huge amounts of public lands to railroads and had sold still more land to other businesses. Cattle ranchers overgrazed semiarid lands, creating huge dust bowls. Coal companies often took the coal that was easiest to mine and then abandoned the site. Natural gas was allowed to escape into the air, and cities had badly polluted air and streams.

A few steps were taken in the late 1800s when some forest lands were made into public reserves and the Forest Service was created within the Agriculture Department in 1887. Theodore Roosevelt, with his love of the outdoors and his experiences on the western plains,

wanted to protect the land and insure that its benefits would be available to later generations. Roosevelt helped the American public become more aware of the need for conservation.

The president appointed activist Gifford Pinchot as head of Forest Service. Roosevelt withdrew forest land and coal and phosphate mines from sale; he vetoed the private development of a dam and hydroelectric plant at Muscle Shoals, Alabama; and he urged Congress to create more national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. During his tenure five national parks were created (doubling the number in existence), along with sixteen national monument areas and 51 wildlife refuges.

In 1902 the Newlands Reclamation Act (named for a senator from Nevada) authorized money from the sale of public land to be used for irrigation projects in western wastelands. Twenty-eight such projects were begun by 1906. The Shoshone Dam in Wyoming and the Roosevelt Dam in Arizona were completed by 1911, the latter enabling the irrigation of 200,000 acres of desert.

Roosevelt also used what he called the “bully pulpit” of the presidency to convene conservation conferences, appoint investigative commissions, and influence public opinion. His was an activist presidency, during which he pushed hard for causes in which he believed.

In a speech at the Minnesota State Fair in 1901, Roosevelt said, “There is a homely adage which runs, ‘Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far.’ If the American nation will speak softly and yet build and keep at a pitch of the highest training a thoroughly efficient navy, the Monroe Doctrine will go far.” Roosevelt’s foreign policy was often summarized by the statement, “Speak softly and carry a big stick.”

Japan

Theodore Roosevelt faced issues on the international scene as well. The island nation of Japan lived in virtual isolation from the world until 1853, when American Commodore Matthew Perry sailed into Japanese waters and demanded to meet with government officials. This contact led to a treaty of friendship and trade between the U.S. and Japan. The American visitors introduced Japan to the latest technological advances, including the railroad, modern guns, and the telegraph. A group of younger Japanese wanted to modernize the country as rapidly as possible to benefit from western inventions and manufacturing.

This introduction to the world outside of Japan led to a desire within Japan for more raw materials to use in manufacturing than could be found within its own borders. In addition, as Japan had contact with other nations, it saw the efforts of European nations in colonizing China and wanted a piece of the action to improve life for its growing population. Japan attacked China in 1894 and began the Sino-Japanese War (Sino is from the French word for China). Japan acquired the island of Taiwan, the Korean peninsula, and other land from China as a result of the war.

Conflicting interests between Russia and Japan led to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, fought in China and on the Pacific Ocean. The war threatened the stability of China and American trading interests there. President Theodore Roosevelt warned Germany and France not to get involved in the war. He said that the U.S. would enter the war on the side of Japan if those nations helped Russia. Roosevelt called representatives from Russia and Japan to a meeting at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1905 that resulted in an end to the war. Japanese authority over Manchuria, Korea, and the southern half of Sakhalin Island was recognized; but Russia refused to pay a cash indemnity to Japan. Roosevelt received the 1906 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in negotiating the treaty that ended the war.



This postcard was created to commemorate "The Portsmouth Drama" of 1905.

The Roosevelt Corollary

The Monroe Doctrine had declared that European countries should stay out of the western hemisphere, but the doctrine had only been seriously tested twice since it was announced in 1823. Napoleon III of France attempted to create a French empire in Mexico in the 1860s, but the attempt was short-lived. Then Great Britain and Venezuela had a boundary dispute in 1895 concerning British Guyana, and the British government eventually accepted American arbitration to help resolve the matter instead of taking direct military action against Venezuela.

Although European countries did not become militarily involved in the western hemisphere, they did become economically involved there. Part of that involvement included making loans to poorer nations. In the early 1900s, the United States wanted to prevent European nations from taking action against Caribbean nations that defaulted on loans. Great

In 1907 President Roosevelt sent the entire American naval fleet on a tour around the world. The trip was intended to show American power and America's willingness to fight anywhere its interests might be threatened. Roosevelt especially wanted to rattle a saber at Japan. The fleet, which was the second largest in the world behind Great Britain's, was welcomed warmly everywhere it docked. The fleet returned in early 1909, just before Roosevelt left office.

Britain and Germany blockaded the Venezuelan coast in 1902 in response to such a default. Roosevelt insisted that the countries involved submit to arbitration, which they did. In his annual message to Congress in 1904, President Roosevelt declared that if intervention were needed in any Latin American country, the U.S. would do it instead of a European country. He claimed the right of America to exercise "an international police power" in such situations. This statement of policy was called the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.

The first test of the Corollary came in 1905. European nations demanded that the Dominican Republic either arrange for the payment of its debts or face an invasion. The republic turned to the U.S. for protection. Roosevelt agreed to defend the territorial integrity of the Dominican Republic, but for this protection the republic

had to agree to let the U.S. collect customs duties and apportion it among the Dominicans and its creditors.

The Dominicans wanted to end the protectorate in 1916; but the United States was not ready to do so at that point. The U.S. dispatched an invasion force there, suspended the Dominican legislature, and ruled by military dictatorship until 1924. The American military was removed that year, but the Dominican Republic remained a U.S. protectorate until 1940. A similar intervention by the U.S. occurred in Haiti in 1914.

The Tenure of Taft

In 1908 Theodore Roosevelt hand-picked his good friend and Secretary of War William Howard Taft to be the Republican presidential nominee. Taft's first love was the law. He spent many years in public service, first in his native Ohio and then as U.S. solicitor general, arguing the government's cases before the Supreme Court, and as a Federal circuit judge. He was named as civil governor of the Philippines when that country was taken over from Spain after the Spanish-American War, and his work in that role was exemplary. Theodore Roosevelt named him as his Secretary of War, and as such Taft was Roosevelt's troubleshooter and close advisor.

Taft was elected over the Democratic candidate, William Jennings Bryan, though his margin of victory was smaller than Roosevelt's had been in 1904. The Republicans also maintained control of Congress as a result of the election. The American Federation of Labor broke with its previous neutrality and endorsed Bryan in the campaign, but this support did not make the difference Bryan needed.

William Howard Taft was intelligent, good-humored, and generally sympathetic to Progressive ideas. He was a capable and dedicated public servant. However, he had the misfortune of serving as President directly after the activist Theodore Roosevelt. Taft did not have the energy, skill, and boldness that Roosevelt did. Moreover, Taft was not a political man and he hated political battles. He was more concerned with the strict legal aspects of issues than with molding public opinion and breaking new ground. Taft saw his role as consolidating the changes that had taken place under Roosevelt, not striking out on new initiatives. Because of this, he was generally perceived as being more conservative than Roosevelt. His record in office was better than he is often given credit for, although it was not what Roosevelt and other Progressives would have liked.

Tariff Changes

During the 1908 campaign, Taft promised to push for tariff reductions. He called a special session of Congress less than two weeks after he was inaugurated to push for the



William Howard Taft, 1908

reductions. A bill cutting tariffs easily passed the House; but the Senate made some 800 changes, many of which raised rates on some items. Taft at first wanted to see the bill defeated; but then he backed down and accepted a compromise that was far from what he had originally proposed. When he signed the Payne-Aldrich Tariff, he called it the best tariff that Republicans had ever passed. This hurt Taft's popularity with the Progressive wing of the party.

New Regulations

However, the Taft Administration oversaw several reforms that embodied Progressive ideals. The Mann-Elkins Act of 1910 put telephone, telegraph, cable, and wireless services under the Interstate Commerce Commission. The next year, Congress made it illegal to use false labels on products being sold in interstate commerce. Another law made the eight-hour day mandatory for workers on Federal projects. (Such laws about Federal working conditions have often set the standard for the rest of working Americans.) New legislation required political parties to make public the sources of their contributions and the amounts of their expenditures. President Taft added many Federal jobs to the list of those protected by civil service regulations.

Congress created the Bureau of Mines in the Interior Department and the Children's Bureau in the Department of Labor. Under Taft, the Justice Department actually initiated more antitrust suits than were begun under Roosevelt. Congress created the postal savings system, which made every local post office a savings bank, and parcel post delivery, which made more accessible a service that had previously been carried out by private companies. The Sixteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, allowing a Federal income tax, and the Seventeenth Amendment, calling for the popular election of U.S. Senators, both of which were major Progressive issues, passed Congress during Taft's term; and both were ratified in 1913.

A political battle erupted in the House of Representatives when insurgent Republicans sought to curtail the power of the Speaker of the House, Joe Cannon of Illinois. House rules had allowed the Speaker to become a virtual dictator in naming the Rules Committee, deciding what legislation would be considered on the floor of the House, and even in recognizing members to speak. The first attempt at curbing the powers of the Speaker failed in 1909; but after a fierce debate, enough Democrats joined with progressive Republicans in 1910 to make rule changes that lessened the Speaker's authority. Taft did not endorse the insurgents' effort, which cast him as a supporter of the Old Guard.

President Taft weighed about 350 pounds. He had a special bathtub built for him in the White House.

First Lady Nellie Taft loved the cherry trees that she saw in Japan on her family's travels. She was responsible for cherry trees being planted by the Tidal Basin in Washington, D.C. This was the origin of the Cherry Blossom Festival held in Washington every spring.

The Supreme Court in 1911 ordered the Standard Oil Company and the American Tobacco Company monopolies to be broken up. The Court decided that these companies were unreasonable combinations that restrained trade—monopolies that had a negative effect on the public.

Conservation Controversy

Taft was more cautious than Roosevelt regarding conservation issues, although he limited access to more Federal land than Roosevelt did. Again, Taft was more concerned with the letter of the law; and he opposed what he saw as Roosevelt's fast and loose approach. Interior Secretary Richard Ballinger returned



William Howard Taft, c. 1908

to public sale some water-power sites that Roosevelt had withdrawn because he believed that the former President had acted illegally. Forest Service chief Gifford Pinchot protested the move. Taft sided with Pinchot, and the land was returned to the forest reserve.

Later, some public lands in Alaska were made available for sale to private interests under questionable circumstances. Pinchot again protested, but this time he was fired by Taft. Ballinger resigned in 1911, and a Congressional investigation found no evidence of wrongdoing. The land in question was returned to the government's forest reserves by the new Interior Secretary, but the public perception was that Taft had backed away from Roosevelt's commitment to the environment.

*Do not judge according to appearance,
but judge with righteous judgment.
John 7:24*

Assignments for Lesson 92

History

- Read the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (excerpts) by Theodore Roosevelt (*American Voices*, page 293).

English

- Continue reading *Mama's Bank Account*.

Bible

- Read Romans 12:2. How has the church been conformed to the world, and how has it suffered as a result?

If you are using the optional Quiz and Exam Book, answer the questions for Lesson 92.

What Was Happening In the World?

- 1901 – *Harry Houdini builds an international reputation for making daring escapes.*
- 1901 – *Queen Victoria dies after reigning since 1837.*
- 1902 – *A New York toymaker displays a political cartoon of Theodore Roosevelt refusing to shoot a bear cub next to a toy stuffed bear that he calls a Teddy Bear.*
- 1904 – *The New York City subway begins operation.*
- 1905 – *Political unrest grows in Russia.*
- 1905 – *Albert Einstein publishes his special theory of relativity and develops the equation $e=mc^2$.*
- 1906 – *The Muslim League is formed to protect the rights of Muslims in the mostly Hindu nation of India. The League eventually helps bring about a division of India to form the Muslim country of Pakistan.*
- 1907 – *The Lusitania makes its maiden voyage, crossing the Atlantic in 5 days and 54 minutes.*
- 1907 – *Hans Geiger develops the first machine to measure radioactivity, the Geiger counter.*
- 1908 – *The Gideons begin their program of placing Bibles in hotel rooms in Iron Mountain, Montana.*
- 1908 – *The vacuum cleaner is invented by James Spangler, who sells the rights to W. H. Hoover.*
- 1908 – *The Boy Scouts are founded in Britain by Sir Robert Baden-Powell. The Boy Scouts of America begin in 1910. The Girl Guides begin in Britain in 1910. Juliette Low begins Girl Scouts in the U.S. in 1912.*
- 1909 – *The first synthetic plastic (Bakelite) is produced by Leo Baekeland.*
- 1909 – *Robert Perry, his assistant Matthew Henson, and four Eskimos are the first persons to reach the North Pole.*
- 1911 – *The first airmail delivery in America takes place when a biplane carries mail a few miles between two points near New York City.*
- 1911 – *The first transcontinental airplane flight takes 82 hours and 4 minutes (the flight is not non-stop).*
- 1911 – *A revolution in China topples the Ch'ing Dynasty, ending 3,000 years of monarchy, and creates a republic.*
- 1912 – *The separable fastener is developed. It becomes known as the zipper.*
- 1912 – *American Indian athlete Jim Thorpe wins gold medals in the pentathlon and decathlon at the Stockholm Olympics, but he is stripped of them a year later because he played semipro baseball in 1909 and 1910. The medals are restored posthumously in 1982.*
- 1912 – *The supposedly unsinkable Titanic sinks off Newfoundland on its maiden voyage after striking an iceberg.*

Lesson 93

A Time of Invention

The telephone.

Recorded sound.

The light bulb.

The automobile.

Coca-Cola.

The chocolate candy bar.

Aspirin.

Radio.

The airplane.

These are things that we take for granted today. When they were invented, however, each of them was the cause for a revolution in science, business, and American life. Even more amazing is the fact that all of the inventions listed above, along with many others, came onto the American scene within a generation, over a period of less than thirty years, between 1876 and 1903.

Much has been said about the amazing changes that took place in our world between 1900 and 2000, but almost equally amazing were the changes that took place between 1800 and 1900. As the twentieth century began, technology was advancing at a rapid rate. New inventions were changing the lives of millions of Americans.

Before the steamboat, the railroad, and the telegraph were invented in the first half of the nineteenth century, people, goods, and information could be moved from one place to another only as fast as they had ever been carried throughout history: by horse, the human foot, wagon, and water transportation. With the coming of the transcontinental railroad and telegraph, people could go from one coast to the other in days instead of weeks, while information could travel that distance almost instantaneously. Other inventions improved the quality of life for almost all Americans, whether they traveled or stayed at home.

Many factors came together to make this explosion of inventions possible. First, that generation stood on the shoulders of all previous



Working with a Telegraph, c. 1909

generations; and the accumulated knowledge of mankind reached a point where material progress in many areas of life was possible at about the same time. Second, the technology involved in producing needed materials and the availability of electrical power made rapid development possible. Third, the U.S. and the world had the wealth necessary for the production and widespread distribution of these products. Inventors and manufacturers had to have wealth to produce the goods, and the public had to have enough wealth to create a market for the goods. Fourth, the U.S. and the world enjoyed relatively peaceful conditions in which a great many people were able to enjoy life and did not have to be so concerned about merely surviving.



Edison with His Dictating Machine, c. 1914

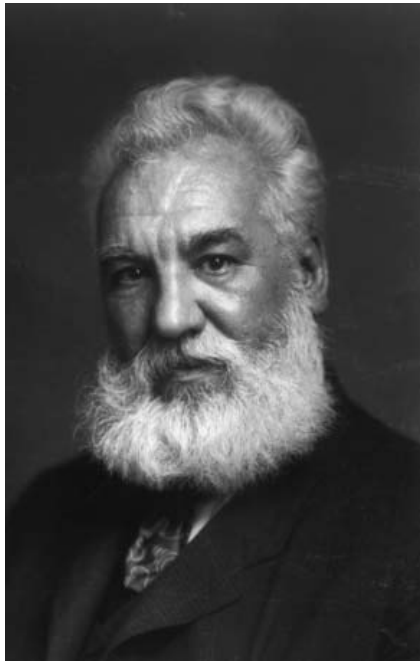
Thomas Alva Edison, Inventor and Entrepreneur (1847-1932)

Thomas Edison symbolized this period of American history in many ways. Edison was an inventive genius and shrewd entrepreneur. He patented over one thousand inventions, and his work helped begin several major industries (such as electric utilities and motion pictures). Edison received only three months of formal schooling. He was an experimenter and independent businessman from his teen years.

Edison invented the phonograph (1877), the incandescent light bulb (1879), the motion-picture camera (1891) and projector (1896), and many other items we use every day. He also took the first steps in the production and distribution of electricity to serve a wide area. Another inventor, George Westinghouse, developed the alternating current system of electrical power that replaced Edison's direct current format. This allowed even wider distribution of electric current.

Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922)

Alexander Graham Bell was not a dedicated inventor the way that Edison was; but his interests led him to use the technology of his day to invent one device, the telephone, that changed the world. Bell's interest was in speech and in the transmission of sound along wires. His grandfather and father were actors, and his father became a speech teacher. Alexander's father developed a system of written symbols to illustrate verbal sounds that he used in teaching the deaf. Alexander also became a teacher of the deaf. While experimenting with



Alexander Graham Bell, 1904

a device called a multiple telegraph (which was intended to send telegraph signals to several receivers at once), Bell hit upon a way to send sounds along electrical wires. Thus the telephone was born in 1876.

The device caught on when Bell presented a series of public demonstrations in which he sent and received vocal sounds to and from a remote location. Bell established a company to build the devices and to string connecting wires between subscribers. The company began the practice of renting telephones to subscribers instead of selling them outright, a practice that telephone companies continued until late in the twentieth century. Bell separated himself from direct involvement in the business fairly soon, but the Bell Telephone System became an American institution.

Bell's wife, who had been one of his students, was deaf. Mrs. Bell was never able to use her husband's invention directly. She always had to have someone listen on the telephone and communicate to her what the person on the other end was saying.

The Automobile

Automobiles, or horseless carriages, were developed by several different inventors about the same time. Brothers Frank and Charles Duryea built the first successful gasoline-powered car in the U.S. in 1893. They began producing it commercially in 1896, the same year that Henry Ford unveiled his first successful model.

Ransom Olds introduced mass production to the automobile industry in 1901. His company made 400 cars the first year, and they sold for \$650.00 each. Henry Ford developed mass production techniques after founding the Ford Motor Company in 1903. General Motors was organized in 1908. The Ford Model T went into production in 1908, and more than 15 million were sold over the next twenty years. The simple car (you could get any color you wanted, as long as it was black) furthered auto driving and road building more than any other single factor.

Names that have endured in the automotive industry for decades were part of its early history. David Buick built his first car in 1903. Louis Chevrolet started his motor car company in 1911. Horace and John Dodge made bicycle parts before founding the Dodge Motor Company in 1914. Other innovators, such as the Studebaker brothers and Charles Nash, started companies that lasted for a time but no longer exist.



Model T Automobiles, c. 1917

In 1914 Henry Ford made nationwide news when he announced that he was going to raise the salary of the assembly line workers at his company to the unheard of rate of five dollars per day, almost double what they had been getting. When he did this, he encouraged the workers to invest some of their earnings in the company. This gave the employees a reason to stay with Ford, and it also gave back to the company a significant amount of the salary increase in the form of employee investments.

In 1900 some 8,000 automobiles were in use in the United States. By 1920 Americans owned 8.1 million cars and 1.1 million trucks. Improvements in related industries such as rubber production and petroleum refining also helped spur the industry. In turn the increasing number of car owners helped bring about a demand for better and safer roads.



The Wright Brothers' First Successful Flight, 1903

Other Inventions

Man took flight with the Wright Brothers' airplane on December 17, 1903. Orville and Wilbur Wright designed and built their flying machine in their bicycle shop in Ohio. Orville flew the first heavier-than-air machine 120 feet in twelve seconds along the windy Outer Banks seacoast of Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Progress in flying proceeded rapidly. In 1919 a Navy plane

crossed the Atlantic by way of the Azores, and that same year a two-man crew flew non-stop from Newfoundland to Ireland.

The Italian Guglielmo Marconi sent the first wireless telegraph signal by radio in 1895; in 1901 he sent and received messages across the Atlantic. Three years later, voice and music were broadcast by radio for the first time. Marconi won the Nobel Prize in physics in 1909. Radio came into widespread use in the 1920s.

The following list shows how rapid and widespread the inventive impetus was:

- The typewriter, 1873
- Rayon, the first artificial fiber, 1884
- Coca-Cola, 1886
- The player piano (for saloons in the American West, where piano players were scarce), 1887
- The Ferris Wheel (by George Ferris), 1893
- The chocolate candy bar (by Milton Hershey), 1894
- The safety razor (by King [that was his first name] Gillette), 1895
- The first flaked cereal (by William and John Kellogg), 1895
- The discovery of x-rays (by William Roentgen), 1895
- Aspirin perfected, 1899
- Condensed soup (by John Dorrance of the Campbell Preserve Company), 1899

This steady stream of practical inventions began to make life in America look more like what we know today than what it had been a hundred years earlier. Automobile and

airplane travel, rapid electronic communication, improved health care, a wide variety of packaged and prepared foods—the kind of life we know in America began to take shape in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

*But just as it is written, “Things which eye has not seen
and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man,
all that God has prepared for those who love Him.”
1 Corinthians 2:9*

Assignments for Lesson 93

English

- Continue reading *Mama’s Bank Account*.

Bible

- Read Colossians 2:8. What hollow philosophies and deceptions of men are challenges to Biblical Christian doctrine?
- Read “His Eye Is On the Sparrow” by Civilla Martin and Charles Gabriel (*American Voices*, page 294).

If you are using the optional Quiz and Exam Book, answer the questions for Lesson 93.



This dairy farmer is wearing headphones and tuning his radio as he prepares to milk his cow (c. 1923).

Lesson 94

The Panama Canal

It's a story that has it all: grand plans made against overwhelming odds, tragic defeat and magnificent triumph, political intrigue and scandal, personal and national achievement, and a literal life and death struggle. It involves science, geography, technology, medicine, and compelling human interest. It is an event that literally changed the world. Of all the fascinating aspects to the story, this is the most significant: it is all true.

American Interests

People had dreamed of a water route through Central America since the early 1500s, when Spanish explorers crossed the forty-mile wide land bridge that connects North and South America and that separates the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. They understood even then



that such a passage would be invaluable to world exploration, travel, and trade. In 1846 the United States concluded a treaty with the country of New Granada (later known as Colombia, of which Panama was a province) that gave the U.S. the right to build a means of transit across the Isthmus of Panama. The Senate ratified the treaty in 1848.

The matter held little interest to most Americans until gold was discovered in California that year. Then it became a matter of huge interest. Thousands of people wanted to go from the eastern U.S. to California, but no easy route existed. They had the choice between a difficult journey across the western U.S. territories or a difficult voyage around South America. Both routes were expensive and required weeks of travel. In 1850 an American company undertook to build a railroad across Panama.

It was completed in 1855 and was an immediate financial success. However, no one devised a workable plan for a canal until the late 1800s; and the inspiration came from a Frenchman, Ferdinand de Lesseps.

De Lesseps' Dream

De Lesseps was a diplomat and promoter whose vision led to the building of the Suez Canal between Egypt and the Suez peninsula. The Suez project was completed in 1869. The Suez Canal was the fulfillment of another dream. It eliminated the need for ships to sail around Africa to reach India and the Far East. The Suez Canal was universally hailed as a triumph of planning, engineering, and construction; and the people of France took understandable pride in the accomplishment.

Then de Lesseps turned his attention to Central America and the digging of another canal, one that, along with the Suez Canal, would complete a naval pathway around the globe and bring the people of the world closer together. However, the task of building a

canal across Central America would be more difficult than at Suez. In Suez the terrain was flat and sandy, so all that was needed there was a big, long ditch dug at sea level. By contrast, Central America had jungles and mountains. Suez was hot; but Central America was hot and rainy and known for deadly diseases such as yellow fever, typhoid, and malaria. De Lesseps was undaunted. He was sure that a canal could be built, and he devoted himself to raising money and putting together a team that could do the job. De Lesseps obtained the rights from New Granada to build a canal.

Construction began in 1881. The organizers and leaders of the work were French, but most of the laborers were black men from islands in the Caribbean. The work was difficult if not disastrous from the start. First, de Lesseps' idea of a sea-level canal was simply not workable given the terrain in Panama. Second, the technology that was available was inadequate for the task. Third, work-related accidents and tropical diseases took a heavy toll among the workers. The French did not keep exact records, but it is estimated that as many as 20,000 people died during the French-directed efforts. Fourth, it was revealed later that the project suffered from the misappropriation of funds, much of which had been raised by bonds authorized by the French government and purchased by average French citizens. Some of the money, for instance, had been paid to newspapers to get them to report glowing accounts of the project to the French people even as the work was progressing poorly. The company that oversaw the project went bankrupt, and construction halted in 1887.

There the situation remained for over a decade. The French did not have the heart to take on another attempt, and the only other country that entertained even the possibility of doing the work was the United States. A canal would be of great assistance to the U.S. with its two-coast geography. However, American interest in undertaking the work was not great. In addition, American opinion was divided over whether to build a canal in Panama or to select a route further north in Nicaragua. The total mileage across Nicaragua was greater; but Nicaragua had more gentle terrain, natural waterways that could be used to connect parts of a canal, and a lower risk of tropical diseases. In addition, the distance from the U.S. to Nicaragua was considerably less than it was to Panama.

Renewed American Interest

American interest in a Central American canal increased dramatically because of the Spanish-American War in 1898, when matters in the Caribbean became of great concern to Americans. When the war erupted, the battleship *Oregon* took six weeks to go from California around South America to the Caribbean. Newspapers reported the ship's progress every day, and this drama convinced most Americans of the need to build a canal.

In 1901 the United States and Great Britain signed a treaty that gave the U.S. the right to build a canal across Nicaragua. The two countries had previously agreed to build and operate a canal together, but the U.S. now wanted sole control of the project and Great Britain was ready to let go of its interests. However, the United States soon thought it had a better deal than the Nicaraguan route. The French company that had overseen the failed effort in Panama offered to sell its canal rights there to the U.S. for \$40 million. America was ready to snap up the offer, and it also offered to pay Colombia a lump sum of \$10 million as well as \$250,000 in annual rent to Colombia for a six-mile wide canal zone. However, Colombia balked at the offer in the hope of getting more money.

Revolution in Panama

President Theodore Roosevelt and many other Americans were furious at this insult by the Colombian government. Fortunately for the United States, the leaders of the province of Panama chafed at Colombia's rule and resented Colombia's refusal to accept the American offer. Panamanian leaders envisioned their land being the crossroads of international trade and did not want to let the opportunity slip away. Panamanian representatives secretly went to Washington, D.C., to inquire about the possibility of American assistance if a revolution in Panama created a separate nation there. The request was officially refused, but representatives of the American government indicated that America would not interfere if a revolution got underway.

Word got out that an American warship would be in the area of Panama on November 2, 1903. The gunboat *Nashville* did arrive in Panama on that day, but a Colombian boat also landed that day with a detachment of troops headed for Panama City. The Colombian officers were

seized and imprisoned by Panamanians. With this the revolution began and the insurrectionists soon declared victory. A new government of Panama was organized on November 4, and the U.S. recognized it on November 6. The United States and Panama signed a treaty on November 18, giving the U.S. a 99-year-lease for a ten-mile-wide strip on which it would build a canal. America pledged to pay Panama \$10 million as well as \$250,000 a year for the lease. Exemplifying the deeply intertwined maneuvers in the Panama deal is the fact that the representative for the new Panamanian government who concluded the treaty with the U.S. was Philippe Buneau-Varilla, a French engineer who had worked for the French company that originally made the offer to the U.S.



This illustration, published in 1904, was captioned, "The Crown He is Entitled to Wear."

In 1911 Theodore Roosevelt, commenting on his desire to take decisive action, remarked in a speech, "I took the Isthmus, started the canal and then left Congress not to debate the canal, but to debate me."

In 1921 the United States paid Colombia \$25 million to settle any outstanding issues and resentments from the events of November 1903.

The Canal Is Built

American-led work in Panama began in 1904. After the first leaders of the work resigned following brief stints, Roosevelt put Army engineering officers in charge of the work since, as he put it, they could not resign. American technology and engineering made the work feasible. Little of what the French had done was of much use to the Americans. The American plan

involved using and diverting existing waterways as well as building locks that could be closed around ships to raise and lower them as needed along the canal route. As with the earlier French project, the large majority of laborers were black Caribbeans who came to Panama seeking jobs. President Roosevelt paid a brief visit to the work site, thus becoming the first U.S. President to leave the country while in office.

One development that made the Panama Canal possible was the conquering of yellow fever and other jungle diseases that had made the area inhospitable. Few people at the time believed that mosquitoes had anything to do with transmitting disease. Most thought that “vapors” rising from the damp ground were the cause. However,

Dr. Walter Reed proved shortly after the Spanish-American War that yellow fever was transmitted by mosquitoes. His research taught the world that getting rid of mosquitoes greatly reduced the incidence of yellow fever.

Because of the geography of Panama, the Atlantic or northern entry of the canal is actually farther west than the Pacific or southern point of entry.

Other researchers and physicians led the efforts in Panama to drain standing water and to do away with other breeding areas for mosquitoes. These improvements radically transformed the region and largely eliminated the diseases that had taken many lives.

The Panama Canal was an astounding engineering accomplishment. It was opened to the commerce of all nations on August 15, 1914, at a cost of about \$350 million and about 5,600 lives (again, most of whom were black workers) during the ten years that the U.S. oversaw the work. The trip between New York and San Francisco was cut from 13,932 miles around Cape Horn to 6,059 miles through the canal. Unlike the French debacle, the American effort came in under budget without any financial scandal and was completed about six months ahead of schedule.

The United States operated the canal peacefully and profitably through times of war and peace. However, the American presence there came to be seen as a vestige of American imperialism. During the tenure of President Jimmy Carter, the U.S. Senate ratified treaties that gave legal control of the canal to Panama in the year 2000 and permanently guaranteed the canal’s neutrality.



Construction of the Canal, 1909



In 1915 the SS Panama travels through the completed canal.

*You make him to rule over the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet,
All sheep and oxen,
And also the beasts of the field,
The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea,
Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.
O Lord, our Lord,
How majestic is Your name in all the earth!
Psalm 8:6-9*

Assignments for Lesson 94

English

- Continue reading *Mama's Bank Account*.

Bible

- Read Proverbs 11:1. Another issue during this time was corporate and individual honesty. What Biblical teachings should guide a business person in how he or she runs a business?
- Read Colossians 3:22-25. What is the balance between being a faithful and obedient worker and not letting a boss abuse you?
- Read "I Stand Amazed" by Charles Gabriel (*American Voices*, page 295).

If you are using the optional Quiz and Exam Book, answer the questions for Lesson 94.



The Panama Canal, 1923

Lesson 95—Bible Study: Liberal and Conservative

Change in Christian America took two different directions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Each change was in some sense a reaction to the other, and each continues to have an impact today. Like most other aspects of life, religion was caught up in the ferment of change in America at the turn of the century. Some believers absorbed the materialistic spirit of the age while others reacted to the age by searching for a deep, personal, guiding faith.

Theological Liberalism

Developments in American theological studies showed a strong influence from the trends of the world. German schools of theology began raising doubts about the inspiration and authority of Scripture in the first part of the 1800s. This was hastened by the influence of Darwinian thought in the latter half of the century.

In this rejection of the authority of Scripture, theologians began asking questions about whether and how the Scriptures were inspired by God. Some believed that the Scriptures as we have them are merely a product of evolutionary change. They said that early writings were pulled together and edited to produce the final product that we have today. As a result, these scholars saw the Bible as one expression of faith but not more authoritative for all times and places than anyone else's expression of faith. They said that the Bible contains the Word of God (the message God wanted to convey to the world) but that it is not the Word of God (final, authoritative, and without error). But if such were true, how could the average person determine what is truth and what is error? One supposes that these scholars were the ones who would have to interpret the Scriptures and convey that word to us, since in their view the message had become clouded by error and tradition.

A key battleground in this war of interpreting Scripture was the creation account in Genesis. The traditional view held that God created the world in seven literal 24-hour days. Liberal interpreters believed that Genesis had to fit the theory of evolution; so they began interpreting Genesis 1-2 as describing seven long periods of time or as a merely poetic account that was not intended to have historical or scientific accuracy.

Liberal theologians also raised questions about the words and deeds of Jesus. More extreme scholars doubted whether Jesus was actually divine, whether He actually performed miracles, and whether He really was raised from the dead. Their assumption was that, if there is a supernatural realm, it does not invade the temporal realm. With that assumption, the miracles of the Bible are automatically cast into doubt. Liberal theologians also rejected the traditionally accepted dates for when the Biblical books were written. They suggested much later dates than the traditionally understood ones, since they believed that the ideas in the books were the result of the evolution of thought. Many also questioned the authorship of some of Paul's letters.

Some liberals even questioned whether Christianity could be accepted as the one exclusive pathway to God and the truth. They believed that it was arrogant to say that only

one belief system was right. Such scholars believed that, if God could be known at all, he was certainly not a God of judgment.

Many schools of theology suffered serious division as these ideas became accepted. The influence of these ideas was felt beyond the seminary because theologians teach ministers and ministers teach the people in the pew. The Princeton School of Theology and the Presbyterian Church as a whole were a major battleground in the theological wars.

If the liberals were right, the value of Christianity was not that it was the way to find God, but that it offered a helpful perspective on truth and morality. They said that Jesus was a great, perhaps the most perfect, example of an ethical man, and that His importance was not His substitutionary atonement for sin but His example of a good life.

Conservative Reaction

Meanwhile, and partly in reaction, conservative religious activity increased. The period around the turn of the twentieth century was the day of huge evangelistic crusades in big cities with preaching by men such as Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899). Moody Bible Institute was begun in 1886. Billy Sunday (1863-1935) was a professional baseball player who began a career with the Chicago White Stockings in 1883. Three years later he had a religious conversion, and in 1891 he quit baseball to go into full-time evangelistic preaching. Sunday was known for his dramatic and often theatrical messages. The country witnessed numerous revival meetings in the twenty years before the Great War.



Billy Sunday

This was also the time when missionary societies increased their activity in other countries. As advances in travel and communication helped Americans become more aware of the world, believers sought to respond to Christ's Great Commission to go into all the world and teach the good news. Missionaries were sent to Africa, Hawaii, and other foreign lands as well as to the Indian tribes in the American West.

The churches of the Restoration Movement, begun a century earlier as a result of the Second Great Awakening, suffered a division that reflected the divided thinking of the day. Many members wanted their churches to stick to the old paths of Biblical teaching and patterns, while others favored innovations such as the use of mechanical instruments in their assemblies. The Restoration Movement did not see itself as a denomination in the usual sense, so no official division took place. However, a 1906 religious census taken by the U.S. Government (something not done now) revealed that the more conservative congregations were generally called Churches of Christ while those accepting modern thinking were often called Christian Churches. The Christian Churches suffered another division later in the twentieth century as the more conservative congregations separated from the group that has come to be known as the Disciples of Christ. Christian Churches/Churches of Christ continue to be generally conservative and congregationally autonomous while the Disciples see themselves as simply another mainline denomination. These divisions were repeated in many religious bodies throughout the country during this period.

John Darby (1800-1882) and Cyrus Scofield (1843-1921) popularized the method of Biblical interpretation known as dispensational premillennialism. This was an attempt to interpret the Bible literally and to apply its message and prophecies to world history. Dispensational premillennialism holds that mankind's time on earth is divided into seven dispensations: innocence, conscience, human government, promise, law, grace, and kingdom. It says that we now live in the sixth dispensation and that the next period will be the millennium when Christ will reign on earth. Classic dispensationalism held to Bishop Ussher's dating of the earth's creation around 4000 BC and expected the millennium to begin around 2000 AD. The Scofield Reference Bible was published in 1909 (revised in 1919) with copious notes that interpreted all of Scripture from the perspective of dispensational premillennialism.

Yet another trend from this period was the Holiness movement that arose primarily in the Methodist Church. This teaching held that Christians were perfected by a second work of grace called entire sanctification. The Church of the Nazarene was formed by Holiness believers who came out of the Methodist Church in 1908. A branch of Holiness called Pentecostalism also arose in the early 1900s. This is best exemplified by the Assemblies of God and holds that miraculous gifts are still practiced today.

While all of the theological debates and all of these actions and reactions were taking place, a group of wealthy businessmen funded a publication project that proposed to set out the basic tenets of traditional, conservative Biblical interpretation. The effort utilized some of the best-known conservative scholars of the day. The material appeared in a series of booklets called *The Fundamentals* starting in 1910. About three million copies were sold over a three-year period. The series was ended by the coming of the Great War. The title of the series and the conservative orientation of the teaching in the booklets led to those who held to these beliefs being called Fundamentalists.

Believers were also involved in the drive to outlaw the sale of alcoholic beverages. Even some secularists could see the damaging effect of alcohol on individuals and families, but by far most of the energy and numbers of the prohibition movement came from Christian people. Unfortunately, a fair number of Protestants were also involved in anti-Catholic and anti-Jewish activities as increasing numbers of Catholic and Jewish immigrants came to America from eastern and central Europe.

*Beloved, while I was making every effort
to write you about our common salvation,
I felt the necessity to write to you
appealing that you contend earnestly
for the faith which was once for all
handed down to the saints.
Jude 3*

Assignments for Lesson 95

English

- Finish the writing assignment you chose for Unit 19.
- Finish reading *Mama's Bank Account*.

Bible

- Read "Softly and Tenderly" by Will L. Thompson and "Give Me the Bible" by Priscilla Owens (*American Voices*, pages 245 and 247).
- Write a 100-word paragraph responding to one of the hymns you have read in this unit. Tell how it strengthens your faith.
- Recite or write 1 Timothy 6:20-21 from memory.

If you are using the optional Quiz and Exam Book, answer the questions for Lesson 95 and take the quiz for Unit 19.