

Free book review on religion in america

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Joseph Smith's religious vision has led to the development of a uniquely American region. Smith was the founder of the latter day saints church (LDS) which holds 14.4 million members worldwide. In the United States, the church is rated as the 4th largest Christian denomination by the American council of churches. The church has led to the development of both the American religion and the economy because of its highest population in the United States. It is one of the most widespread churches in America and the wealthiest compared to other denominations. Through its expansion in the United States, many people have been converted to the religion and many employment opportunities have been created for its members. Smith's vision of the church has led to the religion being spread all over the United States because they went past the odds by preaching to the slaves, a group other religions had no interest in. This is a religion that has preached to the Native Americans and interjected God directly into the Americans compared to any other religion.

America's fascination with Adventism and millennialism was brought about because they wanted to recall the original Christianity that was preached since time immemorial (Lippy7). They believed that Jesus died, resurrected and He was to come back as a second Adventist. Their belief in the second Adventist who was to come back and vindicate His followers brought up Adventism. The fascination by Americans on Adventism and millennialism was claimed to have come from certain books in the bible, Revelation and Daniel which gave accounts and actual events that will happen on the return of the Second Advent who was to rule for 1000 years. The Americans had a fascination with the end times which all Christian religions believed in since

the beginning (Lippy 8). Millennialism was a belief from the book of Revelation 26: 1-6 where Christ was to return and establish a 1000 year kingdom on earth.

New religions generated hostility and opposition towards each other because of a strong tendency of xenophobia and ethnocentrism. Monotheist religions were the main offenders of this hostility. The hostility was based on claims that new religions were different and some were demonic and inferior. They refused to accept religious diversity and the worship of many gods claiming that those religions were cults and they should only worship one God.

This hostility is not justified since in many states, the constitutions has given the freedom of worship to its citizens and therefore all religions should accept and respect each others religious views and practices.

Women played a very vital role in the development of the 19 century new religious movements. They were the main people who took the duty of strengthening the ties between the famine Irish immigrants and Catholicism. They also made sure that their employers got involved in religious organizations and lived religious life to demonstrate that they are loyal American citizens. In addition, the women took their time to minister to slaves, African Americans and the natives thus bringing so many people to the Catholic Church. They took an incentive of reaching the unreached like ministering to slaves and the free black population which the protestants avoided ministering to. Many women rose into public prominence thus spearheading many movements and doing charitable work. They got involved in social campaigns a good example is the anti-death campaign

Sister Helena Prejean. The Utopian groups altered the women status in the society by undermining their efforts although they later supported their cause.

Immigration highly contributed to the rapid catholic growth and stability. The Irish immigrant from Ireland facilitated catholic growth because the immigrants identified with the catholic religion and this led them into joining them. The Catholics outnumbered other religions and this led them into building new parishes so as to contain the growing population. Their stability also grew after they built schools and institutions which also created employment opportunities for their people and it generated income for the church. In addition, urban groups and stable geographical expansion also facilitated its growth and stability in the antebellum America.

Protestants were apprehensive of Catholicism because they were suspicious that Catholics will never become law abiding citizens basing on their misguided idea that, they were only loyal to the pope. Protestants took some of Catholics beliefs as superstitious. The idea of transubstantiation which said that after bread and wine has been concentrated by the priest, it turns into the real body of Christ. In addition, they were not for the idea that Catholics used the Latin language in prayer yet only few people understood it. They also did not like the idea of celibate priests and the nuns.

In 1974, Carrol wrote a book called Address to the Catholics of the United States so as to assure the Protestants that Catholics are loyal citizens. He also spearheaded organizations to give the American Catholics a good name and to deal with catholic churches that rejected church authority.

The Reform Judaism movement was developed in Germany and its expansion in the U. S. made the Jewish religion to grow. The reform enlightened the Jewish beliefs that were tied to the past to be reviewed since they appeared irrelevant in the modern world. The reform helped the Jewish people to easily blend quickly with the American culture. Even though the reform down played typical features of the Jewish heritage, it ensured that the Jewish life dominated in the United States and it added Jewish fabric in the American religious life. The reform helped the Jewish to print newspapers and other media to promote their religion's idea and this connected them to people who were devoted to make the Jewish religion and practices to reflect with the conditions of the modern worlds.

Denominational divisions contributed to the conflict that led to the American civil war. Through their debates on slavery, they could not come to one agreement whether slavery was right or wrong. Some religious denominations supported slavery while others condemned it and saw it as sinful and immoral (Lippy 144). This brought conflicts between the religion defending slavery and those condemning it which brought about divisions that led to the American civil war. The southerners defended slavery because it contributed to the growth of its economy. The slaves used to work on tobacco and coffee farms in the South and they had to defend slavery to stabilize their economy.

Comparably, the northerners condemned slavery as they looked at it as a violation of human right and an immoral practice and they wanted to end it completely. The mounting differences and conflicts between religious groups

on slavery led to rapture thus the American civil war.

The American civil war itself was a religious event because it was caused by denominational divisions on slavery. It became a religious event because it was brought up by religious groups. They could not agree on slavery thus bringing about religious splits and differences that led to the war. Many religions from the North condemned slavery comparably, those from the South defended it because the slaves worked on the farms which boosted the Southern economy. This debates and disagreements went on and on until it became a religious issue that could not be solved which later led to the American civil war.

Appalachia demonstrates the persistence of a regional religious character because of its location on a mountainous area. Appalachia is a region with mountain culture and religious heritage and it is known and appreciated for herbal remedies and this demonstrates the supernatural religious character in it. Due to its mountainous location, Appalachia was not suitable for agriculture thus it created a regional religious style. Holiness Is always related to nature and the quiet nature of Appalachia makes it supernatural. It is believed that there is power beyond human control in Appalachia that impacts human life in Appalachia.

The religious practices and the type of religion in a region affect its growth in the United States. A region in the United States is described by its religious virtues. Regional disparity has ties to religion, political and economic differences in the United State. The two regions, the Southern and the Northern had different religious views and that is why they could not agree

on whether slavery was wrong or right. Different regions supported different religions and this added to the story of religious diversity. In essence, region is the main component in fashioning American religious life.

Works Cited

Lippy, Charles H. *Introducing American Religion*. New York: Routledge, 2009. Print.