

World Religions in Greater Indianapolis Teaching Module

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World Religion: Christianity **Teaching Module Title:** Christianity Tradition in American Part II

Teaching Module Goals:

1. Introduce students to David Wills' book "Christianity in the United States." Explore the major themes of the book.
2. Have the students become familiar with some of the influential Christian ministers or Christian movements in American History.
3. Create an awareness of the Great Awakening's religious and social impact in America.

Assigned Readings and /or Websites:

-David W. Wills, *Christianity in the United States a Historical Survey and Interpretation*

Essay Resources

[-The First Great Awakening, Divining America, TeacherServe ...](#)

[nationalhumanitiescenter.org/....](http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/...)

[-Africans in America/Part 3/Richard Allen - PBS](#)

www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part3/3p97.html

-“The Most Famous Man in America: The Biography of Henry Ward Beecher” by Debby Applegate. 2006

-“America’s Pastor: Billy Graham and the Shaping of the Nation” by Grant Wacker. 2014

[-Fanny Crosby: America's Hymn Queen - Christianity](#)

www.christianity.com

[-Biography - The Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University](#)

edwards.yale.edu/research/about-edwards/biography

[-The American Experience | Jubilee Singers | Jubilee Songs](#)

www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/singers/sfeature/songs.html

Study Questions and/or Discussion Prompts for Students for David Wills' book:

1. In Chapter One, the author discusses “Three Enduring Themes” in America’s Colonial Religious History. What were they and how did they impact the colonies?
2. In Chapter One, who was Ann Lee and who were the Shakers?

3. What religious denomination openly challenged slavery in colonial America?
4. Why were the Baptist and Methodist congregations popular among African-Americans?
5. In Chapter Two, the book discusses the impact of the immigrants on religion. What was the influence of the Asian immigrants? What was the influence of the German, Scandinavian, and Jewish immigrants on America's religious mix?
6. What country provided the most Roman Catholic immigrants to America? How did they change Christianity in the United States?
7. How did the slavery issue impact the various denominations in America?
8. In chapter 2, what was the influence of religion in the foreign missions and international politics?
9. On page 57, what is position of the Orthodoxy Christianity in America?
10. On page 69-70, discuss some of the modern trends in Christianity that arose in the 1970's and 1980's.
11. On page 77-78, the author mentions non-traditional European immigrants to the United States. What have been some of the religions that have been brought over? How have they reshaped Christianity?

Written Assignments:

Select one topic from the Essay Resources. Discuss the impact and influences of the individual or movement on Christianity in America. Who was the individual? What did they do to change the religious landscape in America? What were their strengths and weaknesses? Are they still impacting Christianity in the modern world? What evidence do we see of them in the world today? What were some of their greatest sermons? Did they change Americans' views on social and political issues? What unique traits did they possess to have such inspiration on society? On the individuals who made contributions to music, are their songs still heard in today?