

# What Is?...

## CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALISM

### AFFIRMING DENOMINATIONS

- Fundamental Baptists
- American Evangelical Christian Churches
- Berean Fellowship of Churches
- Christian/Plymouth Brethren
- Evangelical Church Alliance
- Grace Gospel Fellowship
- Independent Fundamental Churches of America
- Various others.

### KEY FIGURES

Brookes, James H. (1830-97)  
Darby, John N. (1800-82)  
Dixon, Amzi C. (1854-1925)  
Elliot, Elisabeth (1926-2015)  
Falwell Sr., Jerry (1933-2007)  
Greene, Oliver B. (1915-76)  
Ironside, Henry A. (1876-1951)  
Jones Sr., Bob (1883-1968)  
LaHaye, Tim (1926-2016)  
Lee, Robert G. (1886-1978)  
Machen, John G. (1881-1937)  
McIntire, Carl (1906-2002)  
Moody, Dwight L. (1837-99)  
Rice, John R. (1895-1980)  
Riley, William Bell (1861-1947)  
Robertson, Pat (1930-)  
Rogers, Adrian (1931-2005)  
Schaeffer, Francis (1912-84)  
Sunday, Billy (1862-1935)  
Torrey, Reuben A. (1856-1928)

### KEY VERSES

Jeremiah 6:16, Jude 1:3 (KJV)

### IMPORTANT EVENTS

John N. Darby popularizes the rapture (c. 1830) | 1st Niagara Bible Conference (1876) | Presbyterian General Assembly/Doctrinal Deliverance (1910) | World's Christian Fundamentals Association founded (1919) | Baptist Bible Union founded (1923) | Scopes Trial (1925) | Baptist Bible Fellowship founded (1950) | The Old-Time Gospel Hour begins (1956) | Liberty University founded (1971) | Focus on the Family founded (1977) | Moral Majority founded (1979) | Answers in Genesis founded (1994)

**SIGNIFICANT BOOKS:** *Maranatha* (1889) | *Scofield Reference Bible* (1909) | *The Fundamentals* (1909-1915) | *Christianity and Liberalism* (1923) | *Through Gates of Splendor* (1975) | *The Genesis Flood* (1961) | *The Late, Great Planet Earth* (1970) | *How Should We Then Live?* (1976) | *Left Behind* (1995)

**Standing for God.** Fundamentalism is a uniquely American religious movement. Though not fully defined until the 1920s, its roots go back to just after the Civil War. Back then, the higher criticism movement appeared on American shores for the first time after wide adoption in Europe. It sought to make the Bible compatible with evolutionary theory and progressive social history. It also held that the Bible was influenced by extra-Biblical sources. Therefore, its proponents analyzed the Bible as an historical, not divinely inspired, text. The movement quickly spread throughout American universities in the late Victorian era. Harvard, Princeton, Yale and other theologically conservative institutions quickly adopted its wholly anti-Christian teachings. Eventually, a generation of theologians came to not only adopt liberal theology, but to deny the resurrection, atonement, and divinity of Christ. As these changes trickled down to everyday society, orthodox Christians across America faced enormous doubts about their faith. Many began to believe that the Bible was no longer objectively true. Thankfully, many others took a stand. It was out of this environment that Christian fundamentalism was born. Over the next 150 years it would become a powerhouse movement in America's religious history.

Fundamental congregations are often independent churches that stand apart from the theological liberalism of their mainline denominations. Also, fundamentalism and evangelicalism, which began in the 1940s, are not the same. Those who follow the latter consider themselves mainline conservatives and tend to be Pentecostal, though not always.

Theologically, fundamentalists espouse Biblical inerrancy. That is, the Bible is "without error." They also believe the Bible is infallible or "incapable of error." These mean that the Bible is correct regarding all matters of faith, morality, science, and history. As such, fundamentalists believe in a literal, grammatical, and historical approach to Bible interpretation and often read literal translations such as the King James Version. They also follow the doctrine of Biblical separation, which is the belief that Christians are to be in the world but not of it, and are to behave in a manner consistent with God's Word and are to continually grow in Christlikeness. They support family values, honor God-ordained roles for men and women and often refrain from consuming alcohol. Separation's application is not without its intricacies, and while some take such values into the realm of legalism, many fundamentalists simply follow God's standards out of love for what he has done for them, and to please, obey and grow in him.

Fundamentalists also usually believe in dispensational premillennial eschatology. Dispensationalism divides human history into time periods ("dispensations") by which God acts in different ways toward his people. Eschatology is the study of end times. Premillennialism believes that Jesus Christ will return to initiate a thousand-year period of peace before the end of the world. This view underlies fundamentalism's passion for revivalism and evangelism both at the local church level and through global missions work.

Since its inception, Fundamentalism has had a major role in US politics. Fundamentalists have supported legislation for prayer and Bible teaching in public schools, limited government, and have protected many from the harms of abortion and gender identity movements. Moreover, many respected Christian colleges have been founded by fundamentalists including Bob Jones University, Liberty University, Regent University and Westminster Theological Seminary.

Ultimately, Christian fundamentalism is an indispensable part of America's religious identity. Its positive influences on society are a testament to the life-changing power of God's Word.

### Theological Stance

