

HT 502

Class 9 CHRISTIANITY IN THE MODERN ERA (1880–1960)

The Rise of 19th Century European Liberalism

The 19th Century English Church

OUTLINE OF AMERICAN CHURCH HISTORY

Historically

Colonial Era	National Era	Modern Era	Post-Modern Era
Age of Divine Sovereignty	Age of Biblicistic Rationalism, Common Sense	Age of Rationalism, Science	Age of Privatism, Despair, Self
Theocentrism	Biblicistic Rationalism	Autonomous Rationalism	Individualism

Theologically

Course Overview

- I. Christianity and the Age of Enlightenment in Europe (1600–1800)
- II. Christianity in the Era of British Colonialism (1600–1776)
***The Rise of Pietism**
- III. Christianity in the National Era (1776–1880)
- IV. Christianity in the Modern Era (1880–1963)**
- V. Christianity in the Post-Modern Era (1960–2021)

III. The Modern Era (1880–1960)

A. Background: Religious Events and Movements in Europe.

B. The Development of American Liberal Theology.

C. The Development of Response to Denominational Latitudinarianism.

D. The Charismatic Movement in America.

E. The 20th Century Evangelical Reaction and Assimilation.

F. The Modern Civil Rights Movement.

G. The Current State of Mainline Denominationalism.

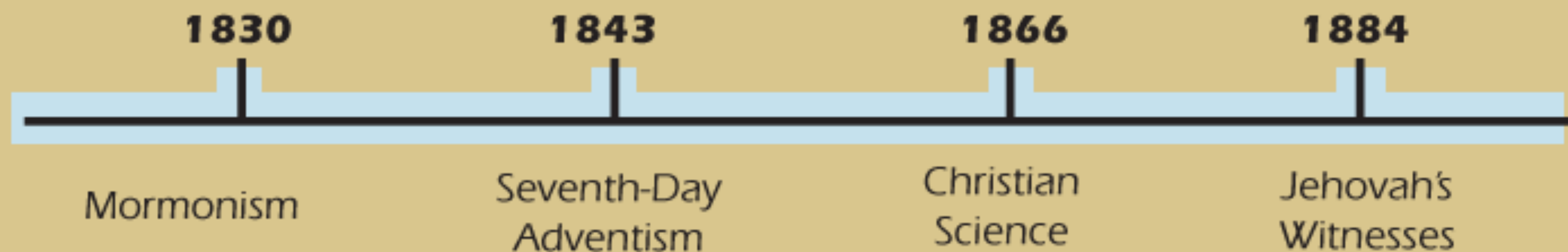
H. The State of Roman Catholicism in America post-Vatican I.

I. The Modern Ecumenical Movement.

IV. The Post-Modern Era (1960–present)

The Rise of Utopian
Societies and the
Classic American Cults

The Nineteenth Century: Rise of the Cults



The Antebellum and
Civil War Eras

THE MODERN PERIOD
OF AMERICAN
CHURCH HISTORY

The Background:
The Rise of Nineteenth-Century
European Liberalism

“GRACE” “ONE” “UNIVERSALS” “Noumena”

God

Ideas

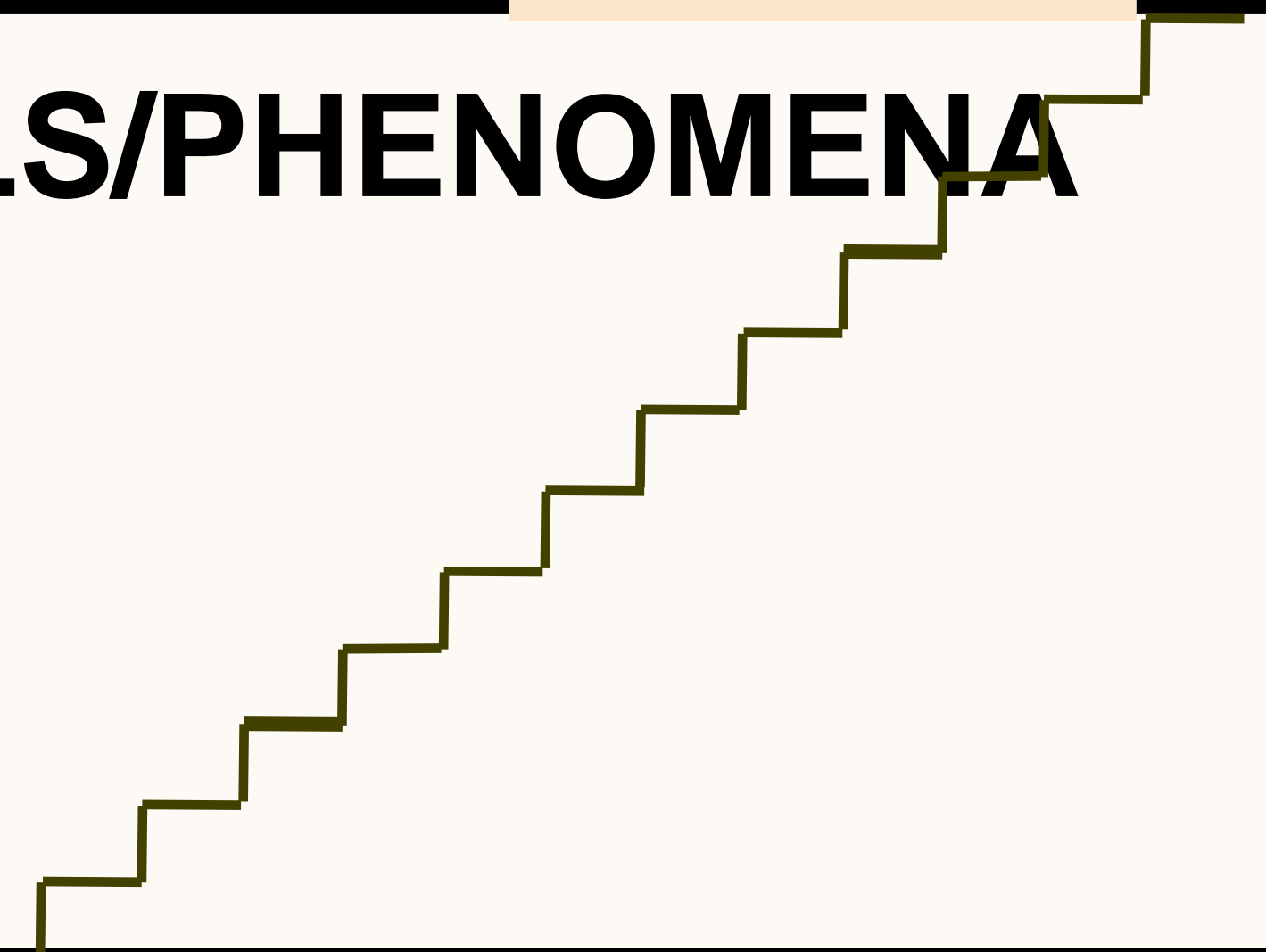
Absolutes

Morals

“NATURE” “CREATION” DETAILS/PHENOMENA

Observable phenomena

Things People Events Language



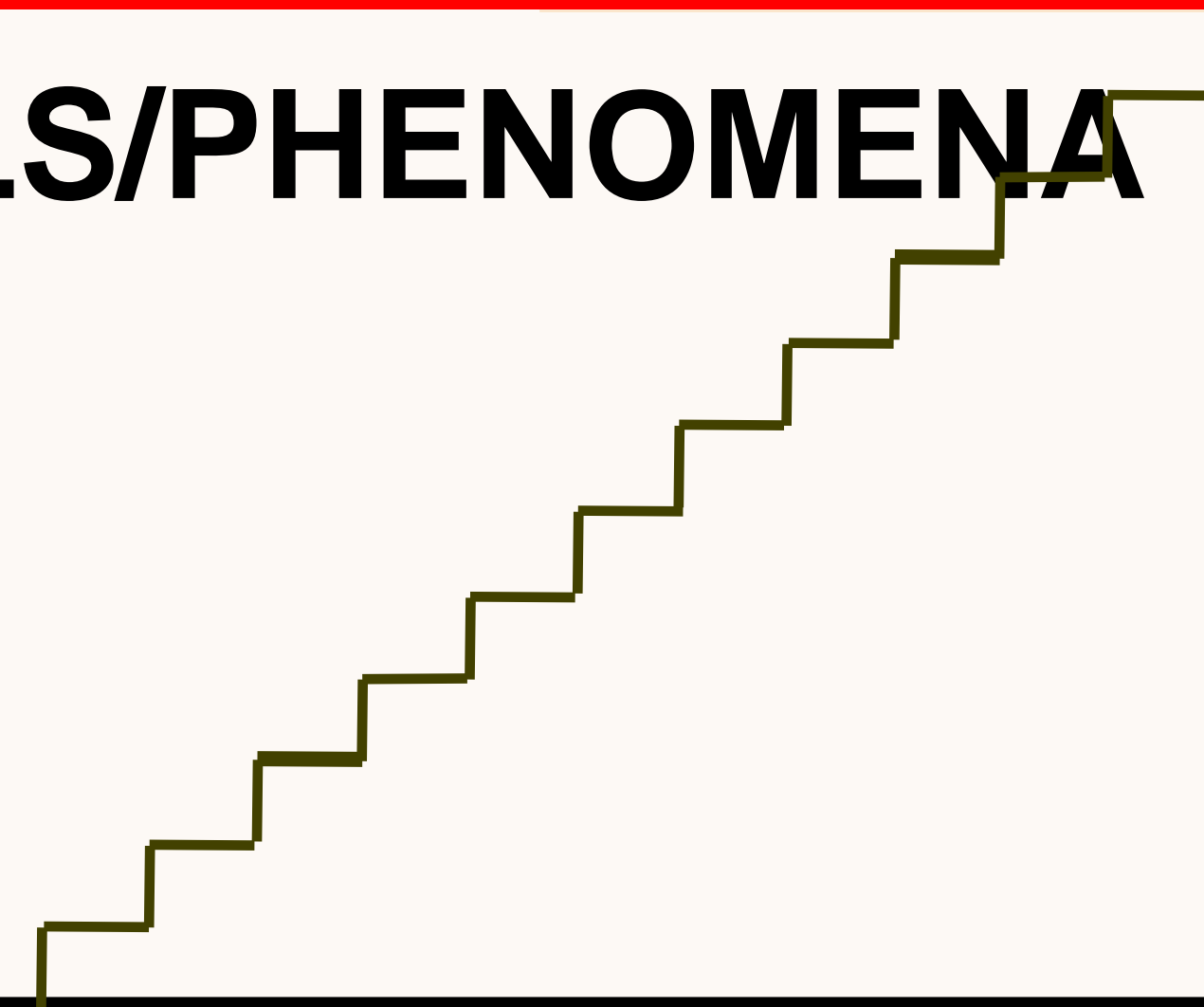
**No Meaning, No God,
Existential Darkness, Despair**

EPISTEMOLOGICAL BARRIER

“NATURE” “CREATION” DETAILS/PHENOMENA

Observable phenomena

Things People Events Language



MODERNISM

Immanuel
Kant:
Subjectivism

RATIONALISM

EMPIRICISM

SKEPTICISM

EXISTENTIALISM

19TH-20TH
Centuries

Descartes

Locke

The Enlightenment ca 1640–1780

Post-
Modernism
1900–Present

Three Results:

- 1. Truth is no longer extrinsic, objective, verifiable, derived from an external source. The Bible is now discredited as a source of TRUTH.**
- 2. Human thought understood subjectively is now the standard for truth, values, morality, spirituality.**
- 3. Faith was redefined.**

***Religion without God always degrades into simply human morality. God becomes an idol; sin, man, redemption, the purpose of life are all redefined.**

The Rise of the Sciences:

The Root of Change in Religious Understanding

1500

1600

1700

1800

Scientific Advance

**Philosophical
Shift**

**Historio-
graphical
Revolution**

**Adjustment in
Theology and
Biblical Studies**

British Victorianism.

In terms of Victorian Protestantism, this prompted Protestants to “defend Christianity on Idealist grounds.” This emphasis on morality, sentimentality, and idealism led to “the affinity between Protestantism and aesthetic feeling by placing a premium on experience and heartfelt religion.”
~Hart, *Defending the Faith*, 18.

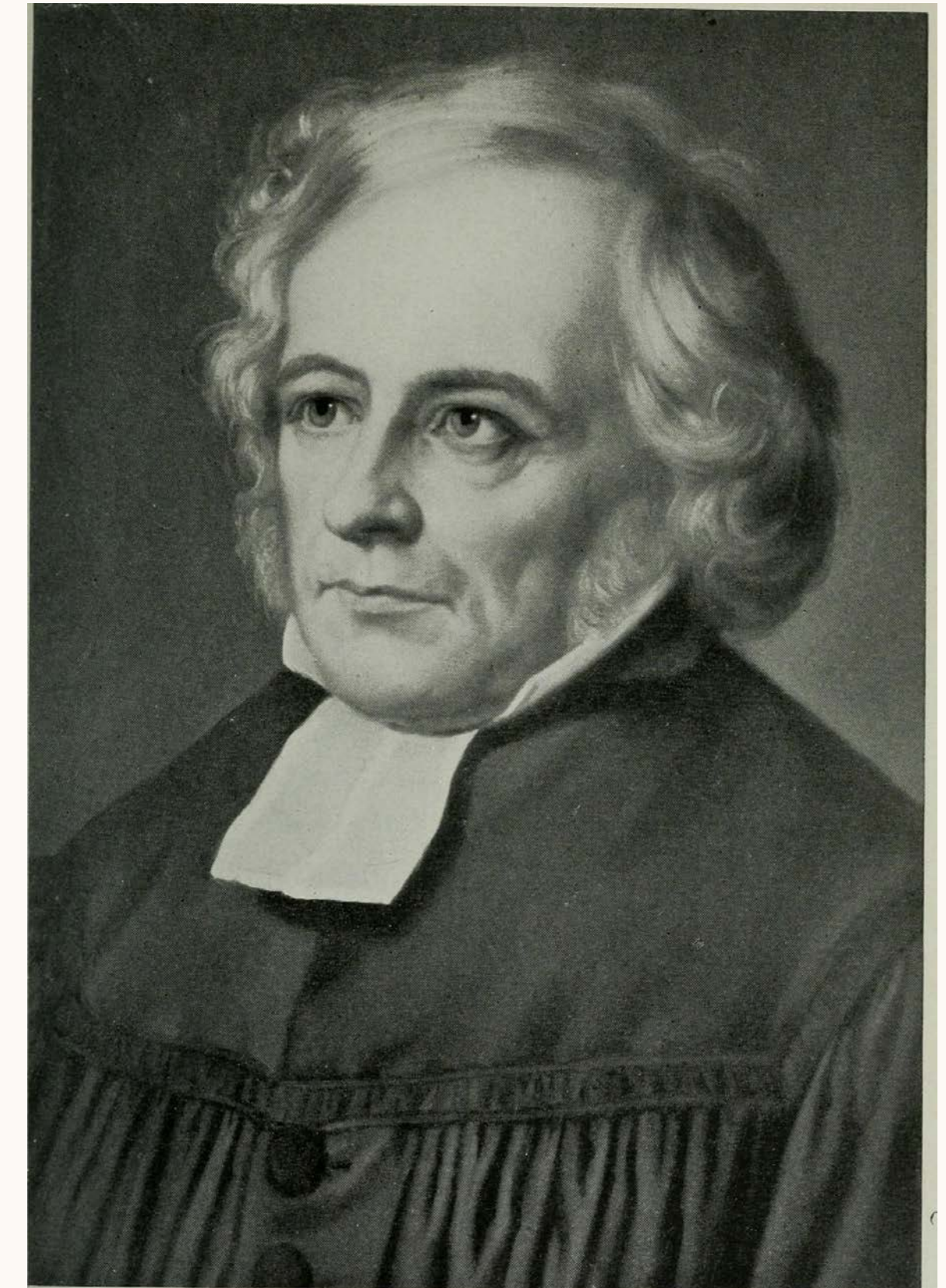
For both the liberal Protestants and those who attempted to maintain traditional belief, Christianity is reduced to feelings and experience.

“The truth is that the manifold religious life of the present day, despite the interlocking of the branches and much interaction, does not spring from one root but from two. One root is Christianity; the other is a naturalistic or agnostic modernism which, despite Christian influences in detail, is fundamentally hostile to the Christian faith.”

~J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*

“The authority of Holy Scripture cannot be the foundation of faith in Christ; rather must the latter be presupposed before a peculiar authority can be granted to the Holy Scriptures”

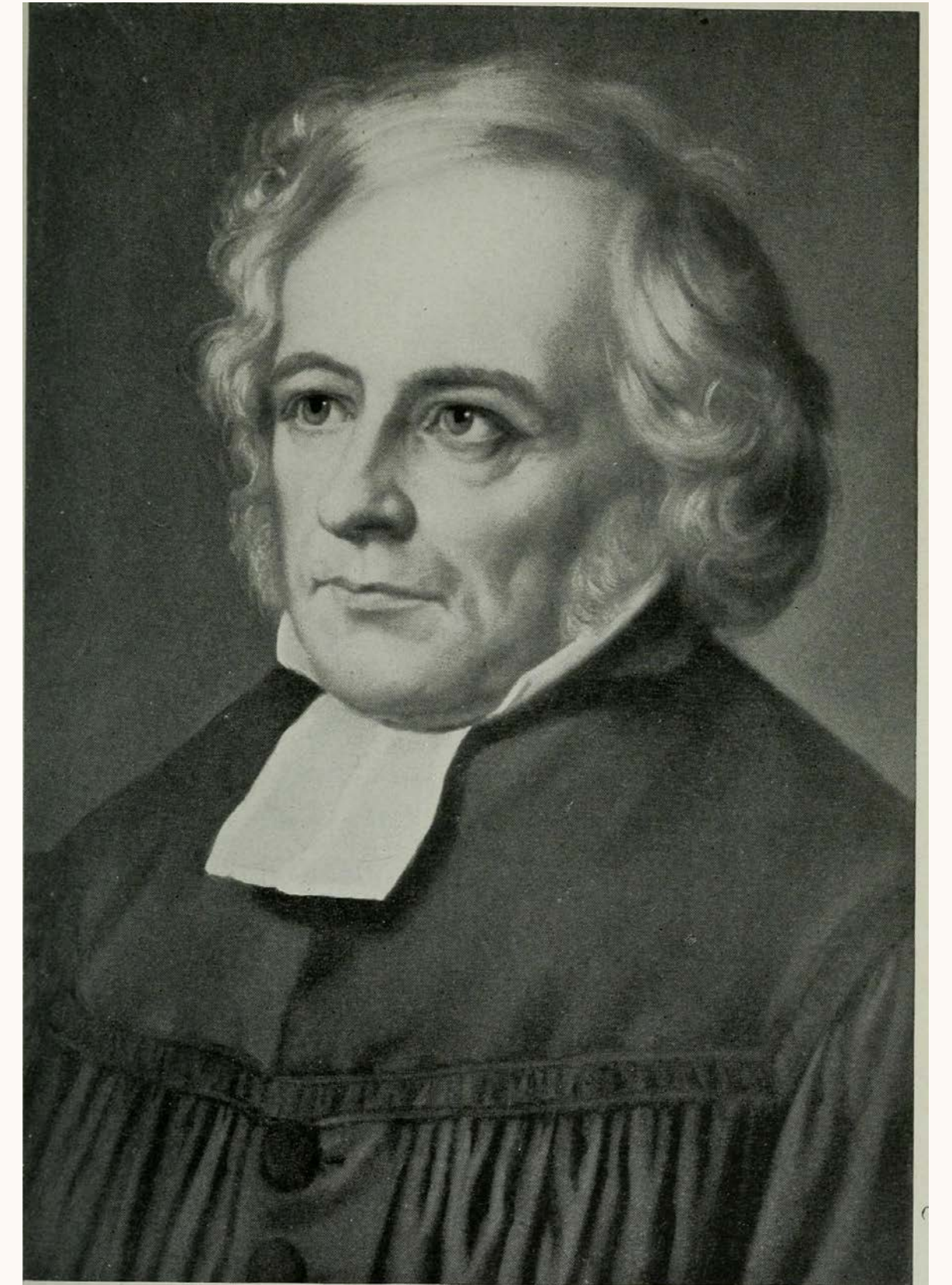
**~F. Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*,
2:519**



**Friedrich Daniel Ernst
Schleiermacher
(1768–1834)**

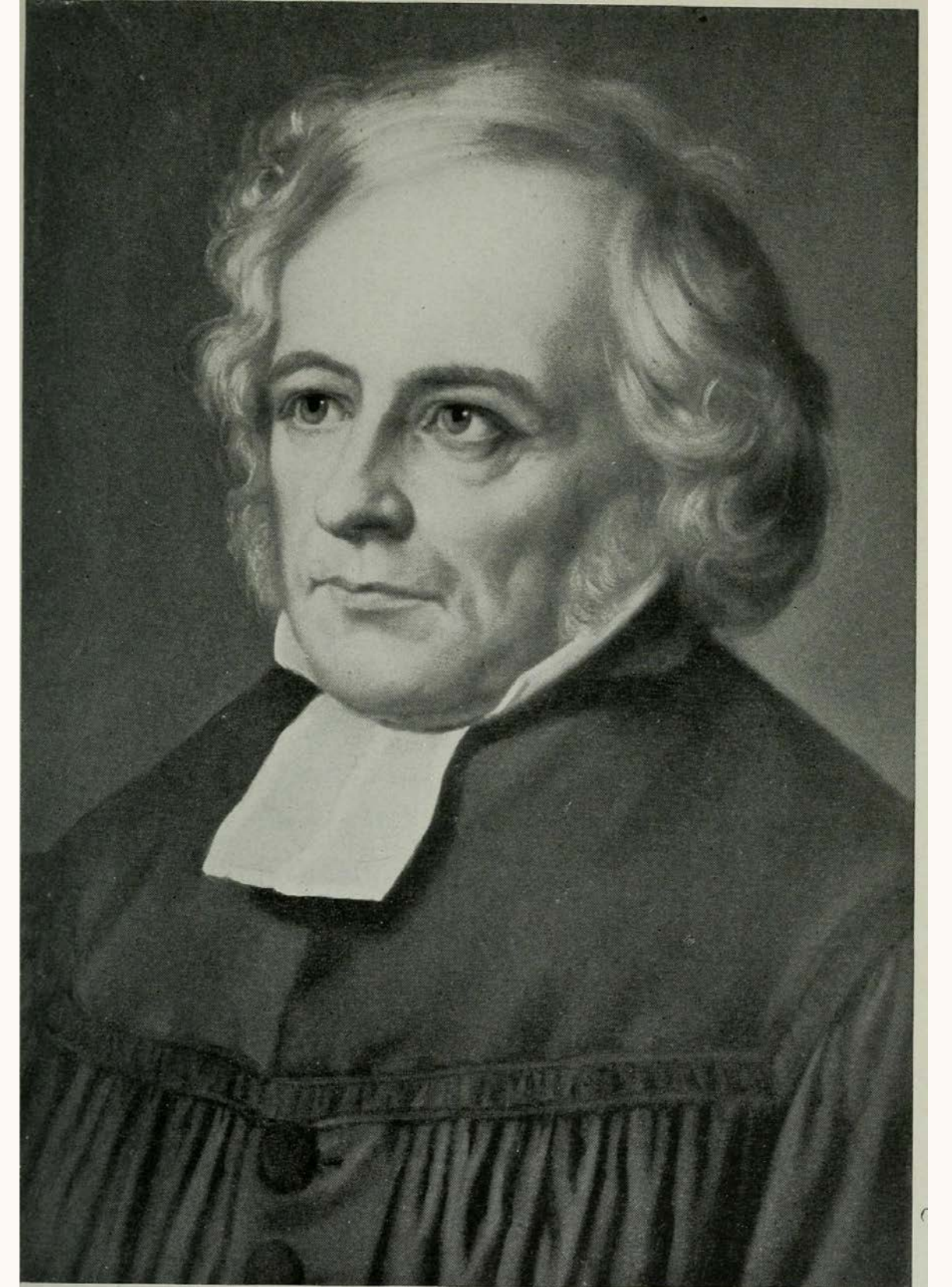
“The beginning of His life [Jesus] was also a new implanting of the God-consciousness which creates receptivity in human nature; hence this content and that manner of origin are in such a close relation that they mutually condition and explain each other. That new implanting came to be through the beginning of His life, and therefore that beginning must have transcended every detrimental influence of His immediate circle; and because it was such an original and sin-free act of nature, a filling of His nature with God-consciousness became possible as its result.”

(The Christian Faith, 2:389)



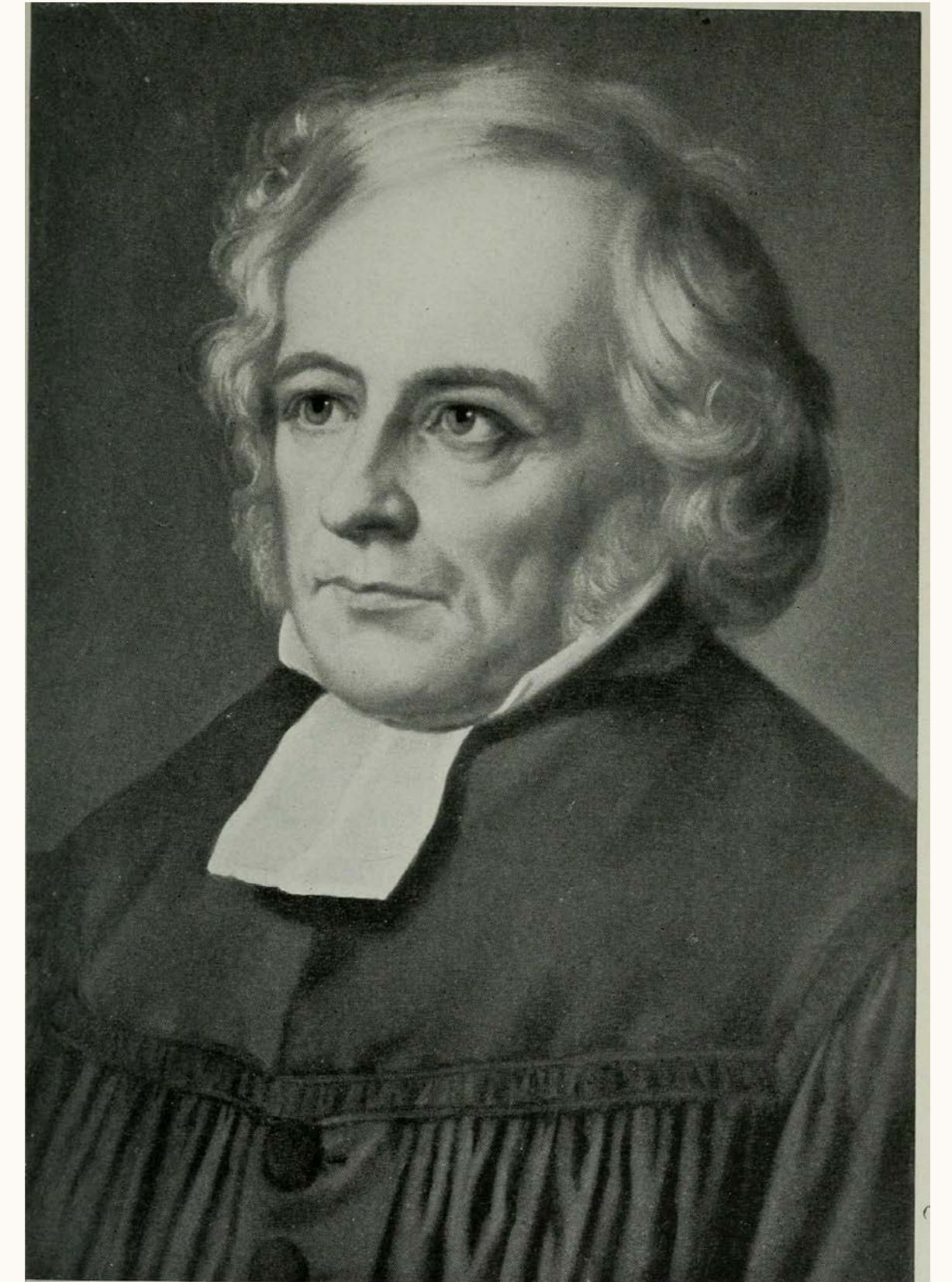
**Friedrich Daniel Ernst
Schleiermacher
(1768–1834)**

**“The turning point of religion is not the mind
but the emotion.”**



**Friedrich Daniel Ernst
Schleiermacher
(1768–1834)**

“If we are to express ourselves with any accuracy we cannot say, either, that Christ fulfilled the divine will in our place or for our advantage. This is to say, He cannot have done so in our place in the sense that we are thereby relieved from the necessity of fulfilling it. No Christian mind could possibly desire this, nor has sound doctrine ever asserted it.”
The Christian Faith, 456



**Friedrich Daniel Ernst
Schleiermacher
(1768–1834)**

The Enlightenment and Traditional Religion:

Schleiermacher's Attempt to Preserve True Religion

**Traditional
Religion**



Enlightenment

SCHLEIERMACHER

Focus of Religion

Revelation

Feeling

Reason

Revelation

From Without
(God Speaking)

From Within
(Man Emotionally
Perceiving/Feeling)

From Within
(Man Reasoning)

Christ

Divine/Human
Revealer

Human Archetype of
God Consciousness

Human Archetype
of Morality

Hegel and the History of Civilization

Key to Change:

The Geist (Spirit)

Motive of Change:

Quest for self-consciousness

Process of Change:

Nationalistic / Historicist

Method of Change:

Dialecticalism (harmonization of opposites)

Oriental despotism vs. freedom = Greek world

Greek world vs. freedom = Roman world

Roman despotism vs. freedom = Christianity

Christianity vs. freedom = Secularism

(Industrial Age)

“Studying Feuerbach is like being made aware of pollution. After one is Ralph Nadarized one starts to see sulphates and phosphates everywhere. And once one is made aware of Feuerbach, he is found, it seems, in every nook and cranny of contemporary theology.”

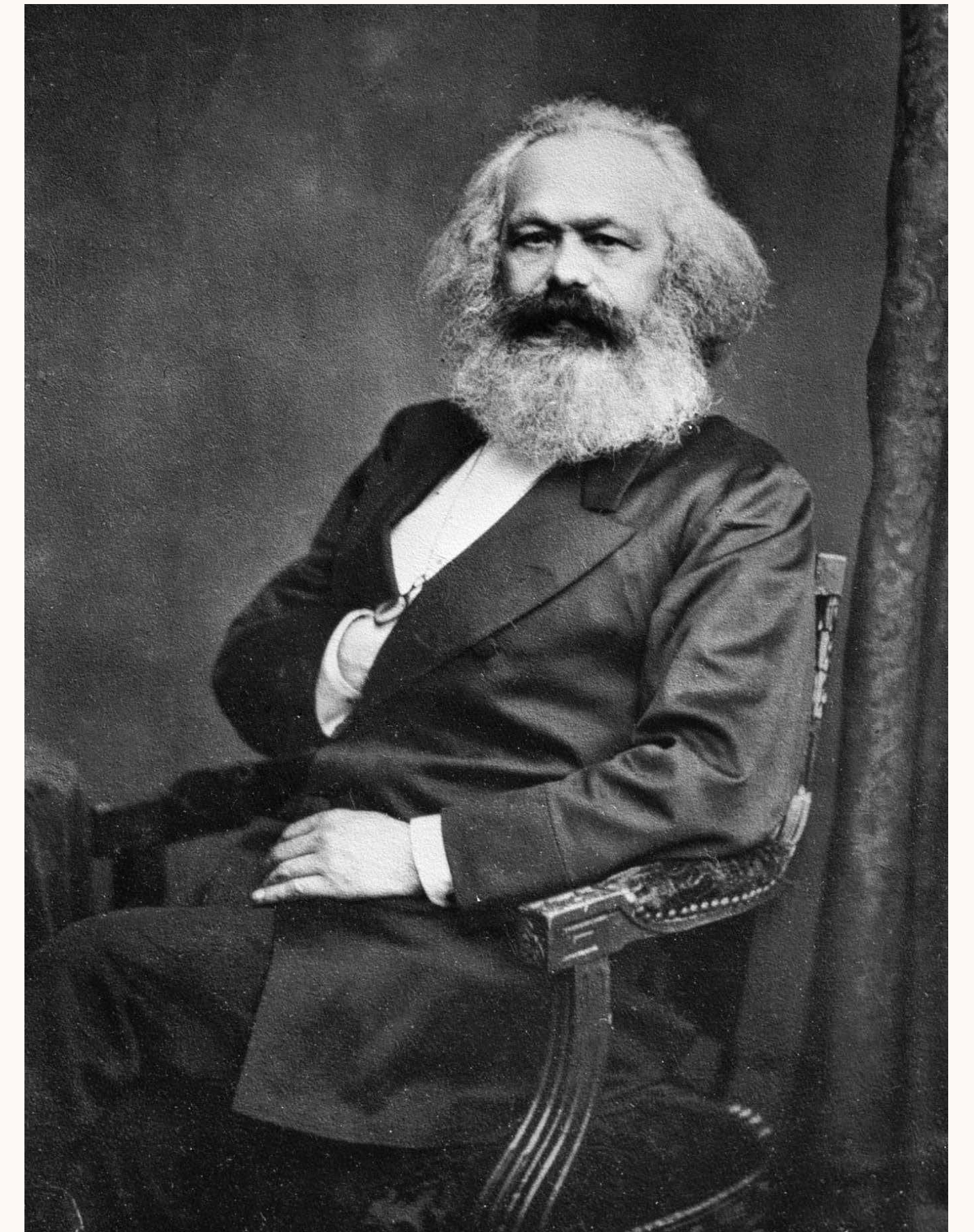
~Mark Noll

“Then came Feuerbach’s *Essence of Christianity*. With one blow it pulverized the contradiction in that without circumlocutions it placed materialism on the throne again. Nature exists independently of all philosophy. . . . Nothing exists outside nature and man, and the higher beings our religious fantasies have created are only the fantastic reflection of our own essence. The spell was broken . . . ; the contradiction, shown to exist only in our imagination, was dissolved . . . ; we all became at once Feuerbachians.”

~Friedrich Engels

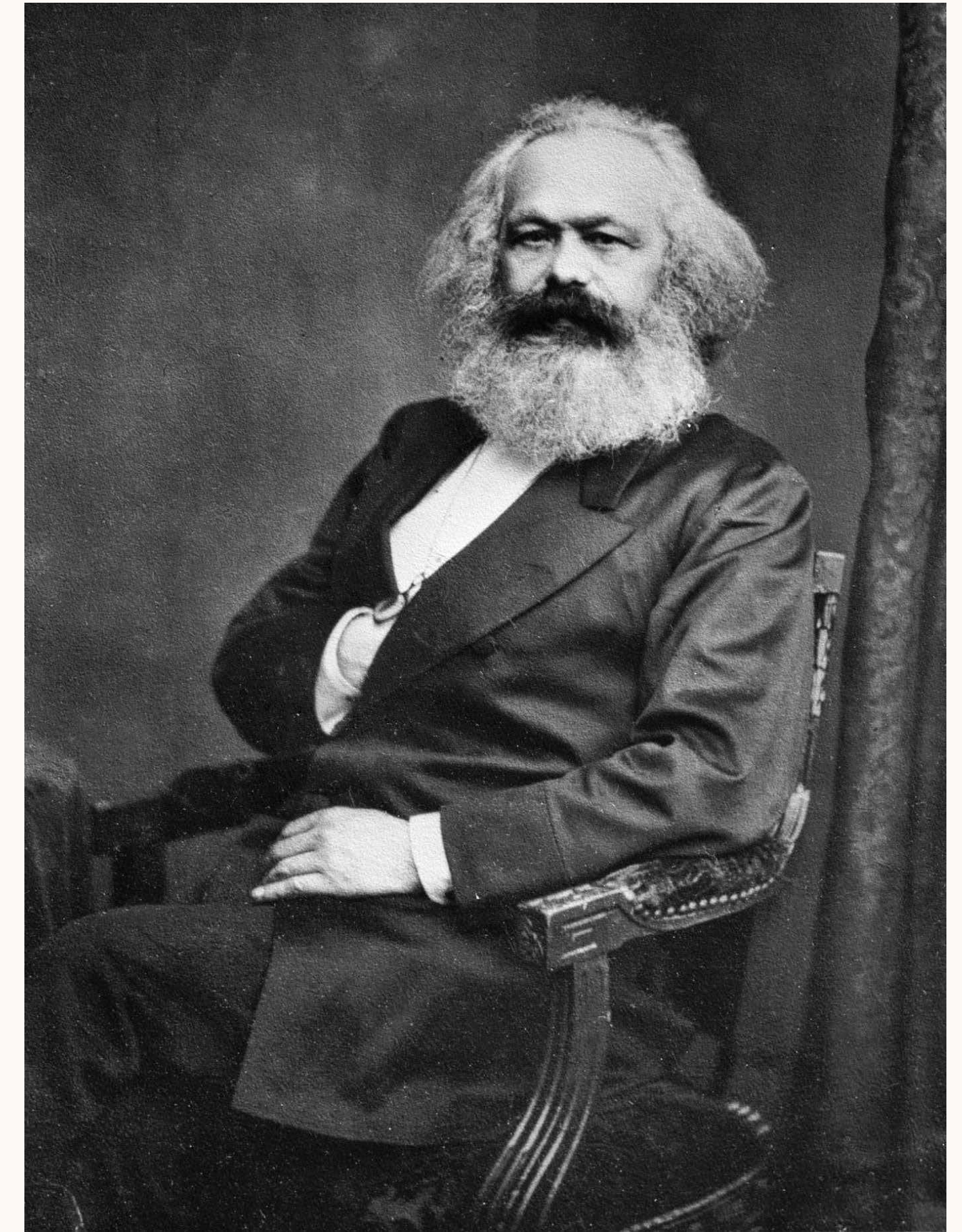
**“The history of all
hither to existing
society is the history of
class struggles”**

Communist Manifesto



Karl Marx (1818–83)

“Man makes religion, religion does not make man. Religion is indeed man’s self-consciousness and self-awareness as long as he has not found his feet in the universe. But man is not an abstract being, squatting outside the world. Man is the world of men, the State, and society. This State, this society, produce religion which is an inverted world consciousness, because they are an inverted world. . . . Religious suffering is at the same time an expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of soul-less conditions. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion, as the illusory happiness of men, is a demand for their real happiness.”



Karl Marx (1818–83)

What we observe in all of these movements from the shift to the “Consistent Calvinism” of New England Theology, to Transcendentalism, to Finneyism to these liberal European theologies is a denial of the inherent corruption of mankind, the assertion of innate goodness and thus the ability of mankind to move progressively toward a utopic state. Man’s problem is no longer determined to be sin — spiritual death which is the separation of man from God — and the inherited corruption of all aspects of the soul, but an external problem related to society, social inequities, lack of education, class conflict caused by those with wealth. The solution is no longer a savior who gives new life. By replacing theology with an anthropology devoid of sin, God has been replaced by man, meaning is found by turning inward, and psychology and sociology provide the lasting solutions.

Albrecht Ritschl:

Liberalism and the Reduction of Christianity to Ethics

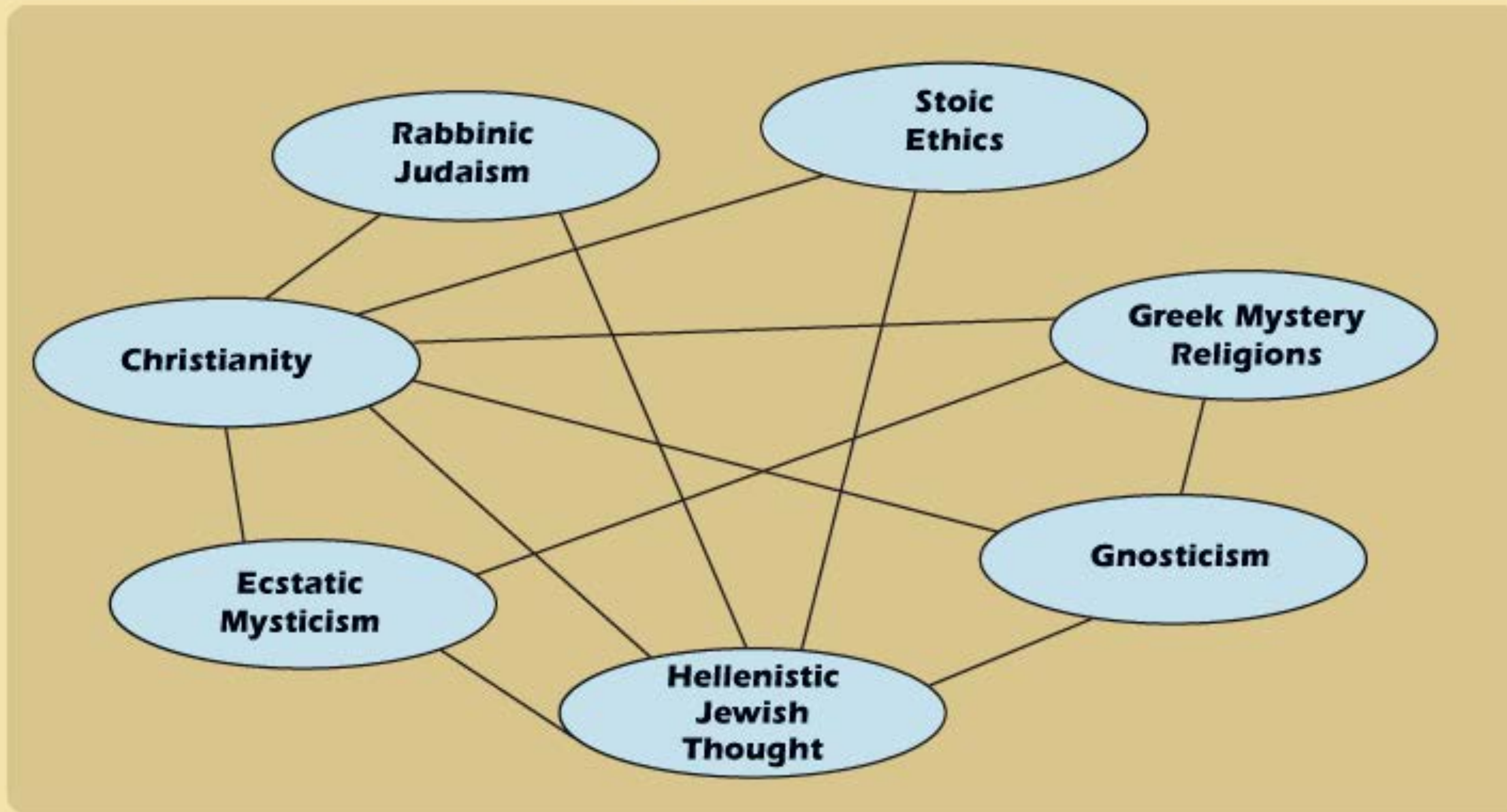
"Christianity, then, is the monotheistic, completely spiritual, and ethical religion, which, based on the life of its Author as Redeemer and as Founder of the Kingdom of God, consists in the freedom of children of God, involves the impulse to conduct from the motive of love, aims at the moral organization of mankind, and grounds blessedness on the relation of sonship to God, as well as on the Kingdom of God."

"Christianity . . . resembles not a circle described from a single center, but an ellipse which is determined by two foci."

—*The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation*



Liberalism and the History of Religions School



The Pioneers of the Theory of Evolution

Erasmus Darwin (Charles' grandfather)
(1731–1802)



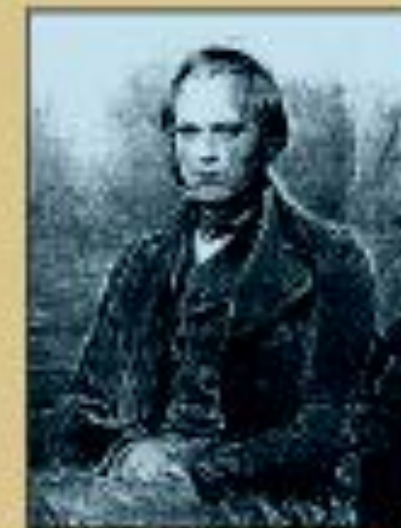
Jean Baptiste de Lamarck
(1744–1829)



Sir Charles Lyell
(1797–1875)



Charles Darwin
(1809–82)



Charles Darwin
(1809–82)

The Rise of American
Liberalism, the “New Theology”

Protestantism in Nineteenth-Century England

