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Christian History Made Easy (Rose Bible Basics)

26. What You Should Know About Christian History: 1780–1914

A quick-reference chapter listing the key events, people, and terms of Christianity from 1780 to 1914. It maps the era's major tensions: skeptical philosophy pressing on faith, and Christians splitting over how to read Scripture and how to respond to social evils.

Key takeaways

- Philosophers like Kant, Hegel, and Emerson challenged Christianity—arguing reason can't prove God, or that God is simply in every person.
- Dispensationalism (Darby, Scofield) split history into eras, treated 'Israel' as the earthly nation, and taught a pre-judgment 'rapture' of Christians.
- Covenantalism (Warfield, Machen) taught the opposite: God's covenants with Israel are fulfilled in the church.
- The Social Gospel (Rauschenbusch) pushed social reform over personal salvation; the Holiness Movement stressed a 'second blessing' and gave rise to the Nazarene Church and Pentecostalism.

- In 1895 conservatives declared the 'Five Fundamentals': Scripture's inerrancy and Christ's deity, virgin birth, substitutionary atonement, and future return.
- The AME Church (1816) formed after some Methodists refused to ordain Black bishops; the Boxer Rebellion (1901) killed many missionaries in China.

Passages worth keeping

“The highest revelation is that God is in every man.”

Emerson's line captures the liberal drift away from historic Christian doctrine in this era.

How it connects

The dispensationalism vs. covenantalism divide is really a disagreement over one question: does 'Israel' in Scripture mean the nation or the church?

Scripture referenced

- **Romans 9:6-7** -- Cited for covenantalism—'Israel' understood as the church.
- **Galatians 6:16** -- Cited for covenantalism—the church as the 'Israel of God.'