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Bruce L. Shelley: The Gospel and the American Dream: Study Guide

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BRUCE L. SHELLEY: THE GOSPEL AND THE AMERICAN DREAM: STUDY GUIDE, 1990-1999

Steven Alan Samson

CHAPTER THREE: DREAMS IN THE MAKING

Study Questions

1. Identify the four major cultural traditions or visions of the American Dream.
2. What ideas and factors contributed to the Puritans' zeal? Discuss the "holy commonwealth" they sought? How has the Puritan ideal continued to influence us?
3. What was the "spirit of the Enlightenment?" Identify the key assumptions of republicanism. How did the character of American Christianity change during the transition from the first to the second tradition?
4. How did revivals and voluntary societies help transform American society and spur evangelical activity?

CHAPTER FOUR: NIGHTMARES IN THE SECULAR CITY

Study Questions

1. Why does the Scopes trial of 1925 mark an important turning point in American life?
2. How has enthusiasm for material progress been reflected in our economic tradition? How have industry, immigration, and pragmatism changed the American way of life? How has American Christianity been influenced both by the success ideology and theological liberalism?
3. How has the "pursuit of happiness" transformed American culture and affected Christian practice?

Review

Abraham Lincoln
Puritans
John Foxe
Alexis de Tocqueville
Enlightenment
plural ideal
Woodrow Wilson
Clarence Darrow
Horatio Alger
progressivism
Carl Rogers

manifest destiny
holy commonwealth
Cotton Mather
George Whitefield
Thomas Jefferson
Lyman Beecher
John Scopes
Benjamin Franklin
Walter Rauschenbusch
higher criticism
Roe v. Wade

John Winthrop
"covenant of grace"
Jonathan Edwards
Great Awakening
custodial ideal
Righteous Empire"
William Jennings Bryan
Charles Darwin
social gospel
therapy
moral pluralism