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

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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  manifest destiny  John Winthrop
Puritans  holy commonwealth  “covenant of grace”
John Foxe  Cotton Mather  Jonathan Edwards
Alexis de Tocqueville  George Whitefield  Great Awakening
Enlightenment  Thomas Jefferson  custodial ideal
plural ideal  Lyman Beecher  Righteous Empire”
Woodrow Wilson  John Scopes  William Jennings Bryan
Clarence Darrow  Benjamin Franklin  Charles Darwin
Horatio Alger  Walter Rauschenbusch  social gospel
progressivism  higher criticism  therapy
Carl Rogers  Roe v. Wade  moral pluralism