

History of the RPCNA
Fresno Reformed Presbyterian Church
Sunday School, October 12, 2014
Week 6 – Covenanters in the United States (Part I)

- I. Review
- II. Presbyterians' effect on the founding of United States
 - a. Scottish Presbyterians came to America in droves
 - b. The Covenanters refusal to recognize the British government was contagious in America
 - c. Mecklenburg Declaration
 - d. Presbyterians & the Revolutionary War (“Presbyterian War”)
- III. Seceder vs. Covenanter → Difference in view of Government
 - a. Mediatorial Kingship of Christ
 - b. Seceder view
 - c. Covenanter view
 - d. Merger of 1782
- IV. Covenanters & the U.S. Constitution
 - a. James McKinney
 - b. Two Sons of Oil by Samuel B. Wylie
 - c. Political Dissent – Seven Logical Steps

FRPC Sunday School – History of the RPCNA – Quotes for Week 6

1. “This part of the Atlantic seaboard consequently acquired, and for long retained, a strong Scottish and Presbyterian character...the descendants of these Presbyterians had much to do with the foundation and prosperity of the College of New Jersey in 1774, which grew to be Princeton University.” – J.D. Douglas
2. “Before the outbreak of the American Revolution the numerical strength of the Presbyterians increased so rapidly as a result of the Scotch-Irish immigration that this religious group became increasingly important in the affairs of the province of Pennsylvania. In 1774, Benjamin Franklin, computing total population of Pennsylvania at 350,000, estimated that Scotch-Irish accounted for one-third of that number. Allowing for the fact that not all Scotch-Irish were Presbyterians, one would consequently place the number of Presbyterians in Philadelphia at the close of the colonial era in the neighborhood of 100,000.” – J.D. Douglas
3. “A section of the Covenanters, led by the Rev. Alexander Craighead in the first half of the eighteenth century, renewed their Covenants, declaring not only their religious convictions, but also their right to civil independence; indeed the followers of Craighead made a public demand for national independence from

Great Britain. They circulated the daring doctrine; it breathed the spirit of the early Scottish Covenanter manifestoes. From this bold statement of rights and principles the writer of America's Declaration of Independence admits that he received aid, and drew inspiration." – J.D. Douglas

4. "Resolved, That we the citizens of Mecklenburg county, do hereby dissolve the political bands which have connected us to the Mother Country, and hereby absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the British Crown, and abjure all political connection, contract, or association, with that nation, who have wantonly trampled on our rights and liberties — and inhumanly shed the innocent blood of American patriots at Lexington. That we do hereby declare ourselves a free and independent people, are, and of right ought to be, a sovereign and self-governing Association, under the control of no power other than that of our God and the General Government of the Congress; to the maintenance of which independence, we solemnly pledge to each other, our mutual co-operation, our lives, our fortunes, and our most sacred honor." – Mecklenburg Declaration
5. "When Cornwallis was driven back to ultimate retreat and surrender at Yorktown, all of the colonels of the Colonial Army but one were Presbyterian elders. It is estimated that more than one half of all the soldiers and officers of the American Army during the Revolution were Presbyterian." – Don Sweeting
6. "I fix all the blame of these extraordinary proceedings upon the Presbyterians." – Colonist loyal to King George in a letter to friends in England
7. "Presbyterianism is really at the bottom of this whole conspiracy, has supplied it with vigor, and will never rest until something is decided upon it." - New York Representative of Lord Dartmouth
8. "Call this war by whatever name you may, only call it not an American rebellion; it is nothing more or less than a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian rebellion." – Hessian Captain
9. "There is no good crying about the matter. Cousin American has run off with the Presbyterian parson, and that is the end of it." – Horace Walpole (House of Commons Member)
10. "With French help, the Americans won. A new nation emerged. Reformed Presbyterians no longer needed to dissent from an ecclesiastical and political establishment that denied the covenants. Then the states ratified a new constitution, written in secret in Philadelphia in 1787. The Covenanters were aghast at its secularism. Governments of Christian lands had acknowledged Christ's reign since Roman times, but the United States Constitution conspicuously omitted any reference to God or Christ. In Scotland the main issue had been the independence of the Christian Church from a professedly Christian King. In America, the issue was the government's wholesale denial of Christ's authority over the nations." – Bill Edgar
11. "The American constitution had been written and ratified, and most of the states had written new constitutions. McKinney attacked these new constitutions at two points: first, their secular nature...and second, the idea that government should openly tolerate religious error and heresy. Under McKinney, therefore, a remnant of the church maintained its position of dissent from the government, but shifted the basis of that dissent from the Solemn League and Covenant and the Revolution Settlement to the secular nature of the new American constitution. This marked a new intellectual beginning for the church and was the answer to the question of the relationship of the Scottish church to the United States that satisfied the remnant of the society people." – David Carson
12. "The church member should swear no oath of allegiance, elect no public functionaries to office (for between the elector and the elected, there is a representative of oneness), accept no office, including serving on juries, nor engage in any service regulated by an immoral law, such as engaging in the militia. Beyond these forbidden areas, members of the church were to live peaceable and regular lives, and to comply with the common order of society." – David Carson