RELIGION IN THE SIXTIES
The Jesus Movement
Between mid-1950s and mid-1980s, over one third of all Americans left the denomination in which they’d bee raised.

During the 1940s and 1950s, the major Christian and Jewish denominations grew.

During Eisenhower’s administration, “under God” was added to the Pledge of Allegiance and “In God We Trust” inscribed on currency.

Between 1965 and 1975, every major white liberal denomination (Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopal, Church of Christ) shrank.

During the same decade every conservative denomination (Southern Baptists, Assembly of God, Nazarenes) grew.
* Campus Crusade for Christ founded in 1951 by Bill Bright.

* In 1967 Jon Braun, Crusade for Christ leader at Berkeley, called “Jesus Christ, the world’s greatest revolutionary.”

* In 1970, Hall Lindsey, former Crusade for Christ leader at UCLA, published *The Late Great Planet Earth* about the Rapture and End Time. It sold 9 million copies.
The Jesus Movement

The Jesus Movement was the hippie element within the Christian Church that developed in the 1960s and largely died out by the 1980s. Adherents referred to themselves as the Jesus people and others called them Jesus freaks. Some of the churches that grew out of the Movement were the Calvary Chapel in California, Belmont church of Christ in Tennessee and Fellowship House Church in South Carolina.

- The Jesus Movement sought return to the original life of the early Christians and rejected mainline denomination as apostate.
- Many Jesus people lived in communes and shared possessions.
- Jesus people believed in miracles, signs, faith healing, spiritual possession, and exorcism.
- Jesus people emphasized social justice and often expressed anti-American political views.
- The Jesus Movement was evangelical and millennial.
Lonnie Frisbee and the Calvary Chapel

In the 1960s some fundamentalists became less resistant to secular youth styles and music, creating a new image of Jesus as communal, earthy, spontaneous, and anti-establishment.

One of the earliest figures in the Jesus Movement of the 1960s was Lonnie Frisbee, a San Francisco Art Academy drop out, who had a vision of God on an LSD trip and joined a Christian commune named The House of Acts.

When he and his wife Connie moved to Southern California they joined Chuck Smith’s new Calvary Chapel that was being constructed from a former school building near Cosa Mesa. Frisbee’s appearance, charismatic preaching of the healing power of the Holy Spirit, and use of folk-rock Christian groups like Agape and the All Saved Freak Band helped build a hugely successful youth ministry, attracting thousands to the Wednesday night services that Frisbee led and forming the basis for the growth of Contemporary Christian Music.
One of Frisbee’s most famous converts was **Greg Laurie** who is now the senior pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship in Riverside California, the eighth largest church in America. In the 1970s Frisbee helped John Wimber found the Association of Vineyard Churches.

When Lonnie Frisbee’s closeted homosexuality became widely known, he was ostracized from both churches. He dies of AIDS in 1993.

Some historians identify changes that occurred in American religious life in the 1960s and 1970s as the **Fourth Great Awakening** in American religious history.

Although many Protestant churches declined in membership and influence, the most traditional denomination such as Southern Baptists and Missouri Synod Lutherans grew rapidly, experienced internal schisms, and became politically powerful.

Other evangelical and fundamentalist denominations as well as megachurches with conservative theologies expanded.

New emphasis was placed on a personal relationship with Jesus by newly style “non-denominational” churches and “community faith centers.”

Pentecostal and charismatic belief in gifts of the spirit, including speaking in tongues, healing, and prophecy increased.
**Catholicism:** The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), called Vatican II, convened by Pope John XXIII and completed by Pope Paul VI, asserted the Catholic Church’s connection with the struggles of ordinary people and dramatically altered the Catholic liturgy:

- Mass recited in vernacular (English or Spanish in American churches)
- Priest faced congregation
- Introduced “kiss of peace”
- More communal singing and reading of Bible

**Judaism:** After Israel’s victory in 1967 and its occupation of Palestinian territory, there was a revival of religious fervor among American Jews

**New Age:** Erhard Seminars Training (EST), Transcendental Meditation (TM), Scientology, and Zen Buddhism were adopted by some Americans.