

(1) The Early work was done by Francis Makemie (in and out of the colonies after 1683) who died in 1708 after a famous bout with the appointed English governor of New York, Lord Cornbury. (I don't mean the bout killed him...his death was probably incidental to the strain although it was a very serious problem). His early work was in Maryland but he was an indefatigable traveller and founded churches in Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, and New Jersey. In 1706 he established the Philadelphia presbytery...about nine presbyterian communions found some fellowship in this...and in 1716, after his death, of course, a synod was formed with four presbyteries although one of these (Snow Hill in Maryland) was just a "paper" presbytery. The work of Makemie was a strong work and was greatly aided by the immigration of many Scots-Irish presbyterians (sometimes bringing their old world differences with them, of course) and a zealous evangelistic fervor that did not stress the denomination very much. The advantage given the presbyterian body in structure was in the fact that the new synod and its presbyteries were independent from reliance on bodies in England, Scotland, etc. The work had become an American institution almost from the start. And after the formation of the synod a good number of calvinistic, congregational churches actually affiliated with the Presbyterian parties giving a surge to growth.

(2) In 1729 the Presbyterian synod passed the Adopting Act...a measure accepting the Westminster confession (with small modifications) as the standard for the Presbyterian church in the colonies. This had been a point of contention since it was feared the presence of a creed would narrow the body but the concessions accepted removed this fear and permitted a wide divergency of doctrinal expression within a defined view. A key factor in this was the understanding that synod (nor any other church court) had any authority over the conscience and that all believers had responsibility to the Word of God as a primary guide in matters of religion.

(3) A schism was suffered from 1741 to 1758. It grew from the work of William Tennant and the displeasure many old world clergy felt with him, his sons and his disciples. Tennant was an Anglican who became presbyterian and came to the colonies. After two short term pastorates he settled in Neshaminy, Pa. where he spent the rest of his life. There being no theological college in the colonies that had a presbyterian affiliation, Tennant began his own in a famous log building, known affectionately as the "Log College." He apparently had in mind the training of his four sons but took in some others also...probably about 18-20 the total number of students. The curriculum was thorough, Tennant was a classicist, himself, and commencement was when he felt one was ready. But the building was crude and was ridiculed by contemporaries although the graduates of it quickly distinguished themselves in church building and evangelism. When the synod decided not to