

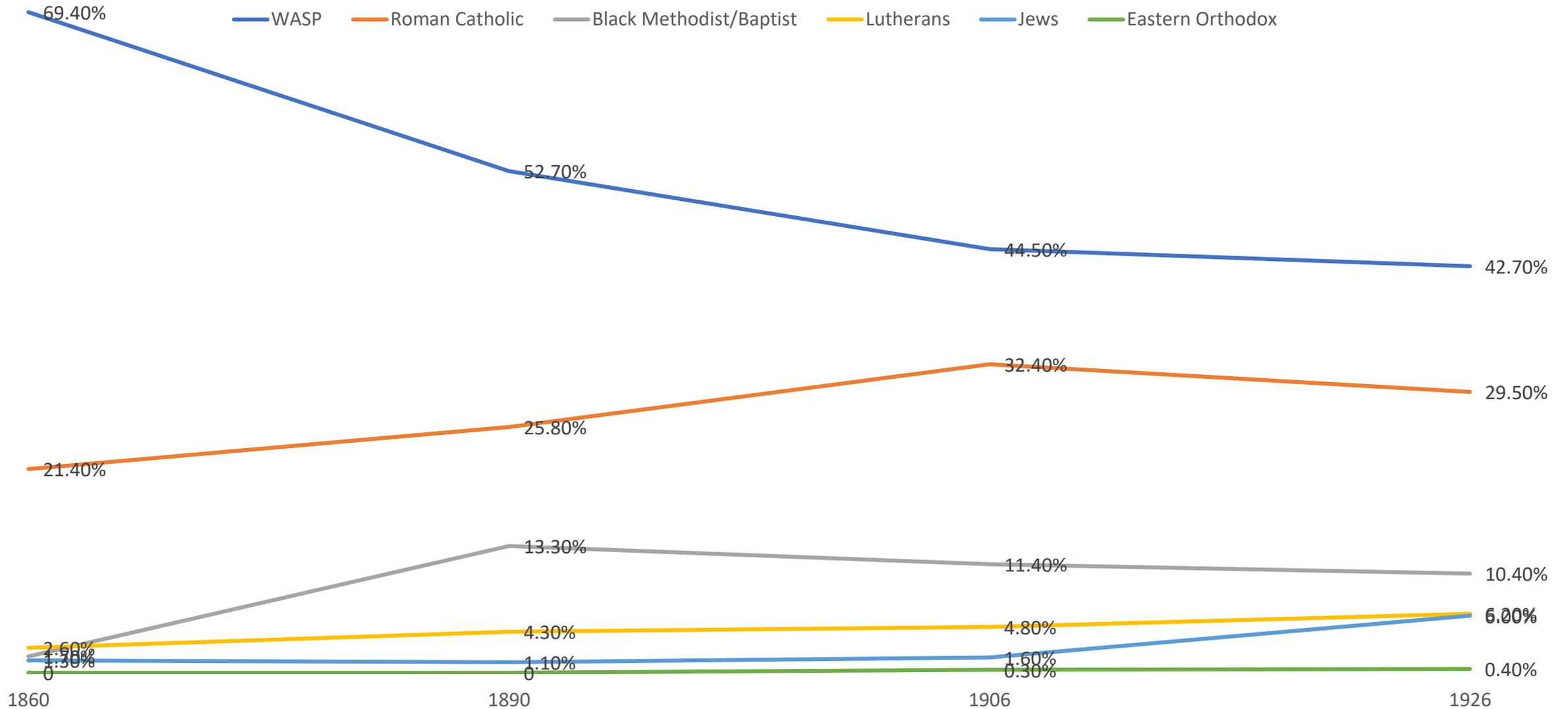
# CLASS 10

## The Rise of the Social Gospel Movement

- Immigration, Diversity, & Change
- Global Evangelization
- Social Reforms



# Proportions of Church Adherents, 1860-1926



# Immigration, Diversity, & Change

- In 1870, 26% of Americans (9.9 million) lived in cities; by 1930, 56% (69 million)
  - Overall population grew 3x; number of businesses grew 8x, and net national product grew 30x
  - Immigrants from Europe settled in cities in ethnic (religious) enclaves
  - Industrial Revolution meant more jobs in cities
- Results:
  - Loss of traditional family and community ties, including religious traditions
  - Decentralization of the home/family (long, odd working hours for all)
  - Poverty and disenfranchisement, but also moral laxity and callousness
  - Influx and growth of minority religious groups, often non-Protestant



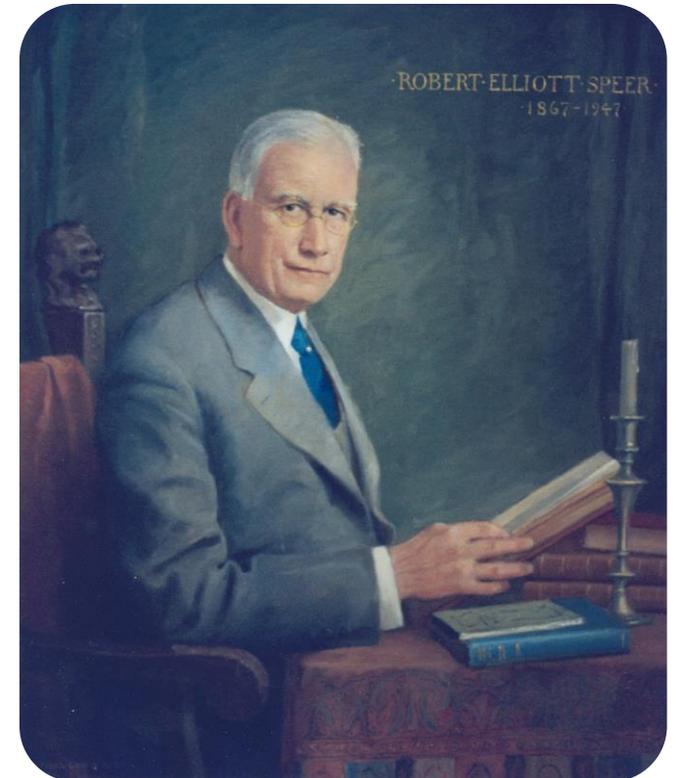
# Global Evangelization

- As the United States was drawn into the global industrial economy, the Christian community looked for opportunities to evangelize abroad, as well as at home
- Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899)
  - Made preaching tours of England (1873-1875) with Ira D. Sankey, then returned to the United States to preach in urban centers
  - Preached basic Christian belief (3 Rs):
    - Ruin by Sin
    - Redemption by Christ
    - Regeneration by the Holy Ghost
  - Emphasized a return to traditional Protestant family and social values
  - Founded missionary training centers and conferences, leading to the Student Volunteer Movement (motto: “the evangelization of the world in this generation”)



# Global Evangelization

- Robert Elliott Speer (1867-1947)
  - Early administrator of the Student Volunteer Movement
  - Exposed a “missionary mandate” in 70 books and hundreds of articles
    - Biblical responsibility to preach the gospel
    - Task to convert, not to “civilize”
    - Emphasized developing native leadership and preachers
  - Championed ecumenism
    - An attempt to ignore denominational differences in favor of cooperation on important issues:
      - Evangelism (domestic and foreign)
      - Moral and social reform
    - Creates a “Christian consensus” in society
      - Examples: church support for World War I, Prohibition



# Global Evangelization

- Ties to American Expansionism
  - During the Spanish-American War, the McKinley administration defended the US invasion of the Philippines in missionary terms

“There was nothing left for us to do but take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God’s grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow-men for who Christ died.” –William McKinley, 1899

“[God] has marked the American people as His chosen nation to finally lead in the regeneration of the world.” –Sen. Albert Beveridge, 1900

- Increased involvement of (and roles for) women in evangelism and missionary societies



# Social Reforms

- Churches eventually could not ignore the need to act in social spheres
  - Emphasis on “next-life” Christianity left many disadvantaged people skeptical of the church and Christianity
  - Constitutionally, the churches could not act through government
- Churches had 4 options:
  - Pursue individual moral change
  - Form Christian aid organizations
    - YMCA; Salvation Army; St. Vincent de Paul
  - Support (or form) labor unions
    - Knights of Labor (Catholic)
  - Campaign for morality-enforcing legislation
    - Women’s Christian Temperance Union

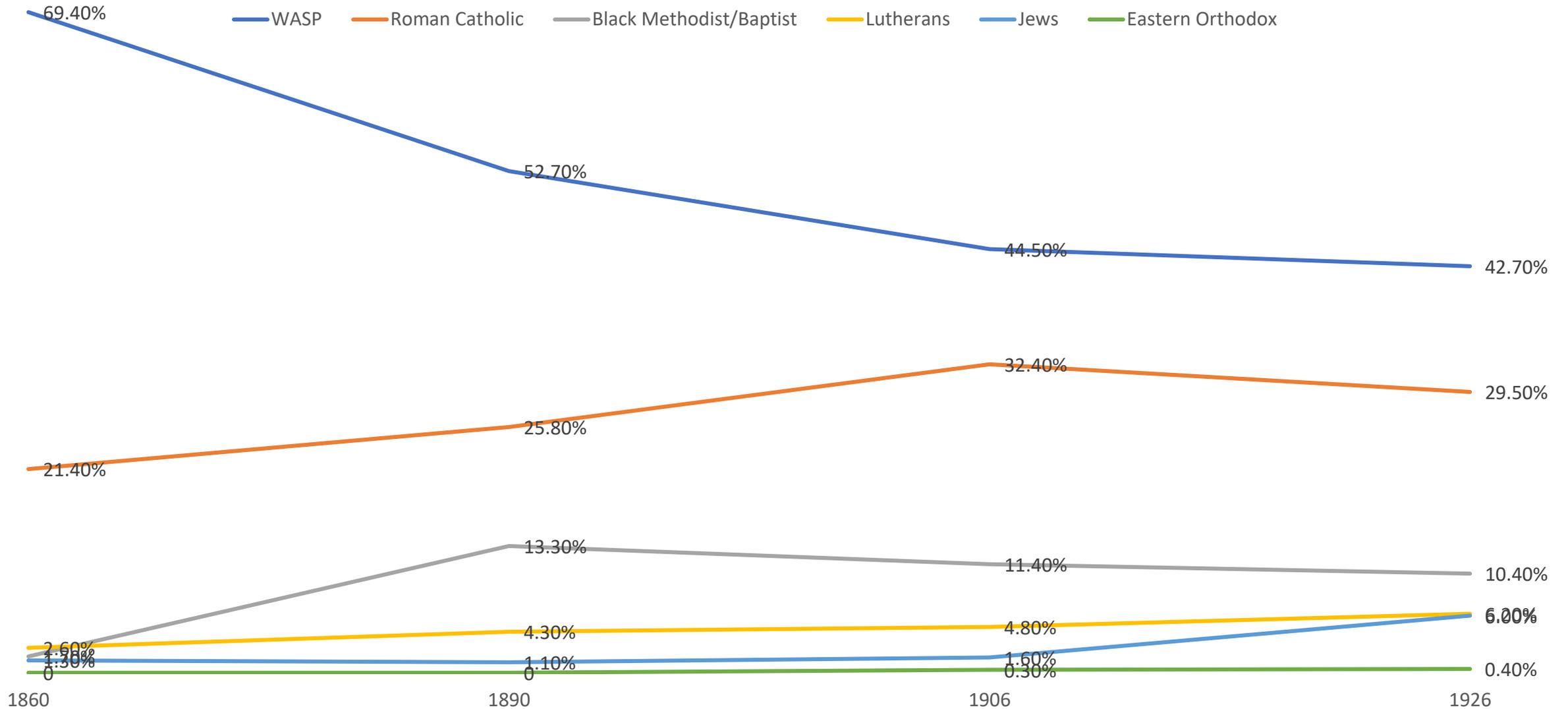


# Christian Political Power

- By electing officials who shared their religious convictions, mainstream Protestants sought to enact their vision of America as God's Nation
  - Presidents Rutherford B Hayes (1877-1881) and James Garfield (1881) supported the temperance movement on religious principle
  - William Jennings Bryant (Secretary of State, 1913-1915) was also a religious lecturer
  - President Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921) based his administration's foreign and domestic policies on Christian ideology
- Influence peaked in 1917 with passage of the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment banning alcohol sales



# Proportions of Church Adherents, 1860-1926



# Social Gospel

- Main idea: God's salvation affected corporate and national structures as well as personal lives; therefore Christians are obligated to help reform the social, economic, and political order
  - Championed by Washington Gladden and Walter Rauschenbusch

“The social gospel is the old message of salvation, but enlarged and intensified. The individualistic gospel has taught us to see the sinfulness of every human heart and has inspired us with faith in the willingness and power of God to save every soul that comes to him. But it has not given us an adequate understanding of the sinfulness of the social order and its share in the sins of all individuals within it. [...] The social gospel seeks to bring men under repentance for their collective sins and to create a more sensitive and more modern conscience. It calls on us for the faith of the old prophets who believed in the salvation of nations.” –Walter Rauschenbusch, 1917

