



Southern Churches in Crisis Revisited (Religion & American Culture)

Samuel S. Hill

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Hill's landmark work in southern religious history returns to print updated and expanded – and compellingly relevant.

In 1966, Samuel S. Hill's *Southern Churches in Crisis* argued that southern Protestantism, a cornerstone of white southern society and culture, was shirking its moral duty by refusing to join in the fight for racial justice. Hill predicted that the church was risking its standing in southern society and that it would ultimately decline in influence and power. A groundbreaking study at the time, Hill's book helped establish southern religious history as a field of scholarly inquiry. Three decades later, *Southern Churches in Crisis* continues to be widely read, quoted, and cited.

In *Southern Churches in Crisis Revisited*, which reprints the 1966 text in full, Hill reexamines his earlier predictions in an introductory essay that also describes how the study of religion in the south has become a major field of scholarly inquiry. Hill skillfully engages his critics and revisers integrating new perspectives and recent scholarship. He suggests new areas for exploration and provides a selected bibliography of key studies in southern religious history that have been published during the last three decades.

In a second essay entitled "Thirty Years Later," Hill contends that a new crisis has emerged. He finds that the current dilemma, unlike the externally driven crisis of the 1960s is strictly an internal affair, initiated by the churches and related to doctrinal orthodoxy. He concludes that the triumph of rational purity over "the religion of the heart" has inaugurated an era in the South's religious life that promises to produce major changes in the storied relation of church and culture in this most visibly religious section of the United States.

Southern Churches in Crisis Revisited will be of value to scholars and students interested in the author's reexamination of this powerful and influential force in Southern religion.

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