

Baptist Distinctives and History

This will be a 13 lesson series on the history and beliefs of Baptists.

INTRODUCTION

There are many denominations within Christianity. What does the average do? Where do you go? Which one is right? In this lesson series we will focus on Baptist beliefs and how these beliefs have been handed to us from the time of Christ.

Lately churches have been dropping the Baptist from their name. And lately many churches are choosing to call themselves non-denominational, and we will explain why this is a misnomer.

When a church says they are non-denominational, this means they are open to or accept people of any Christian denomination.

But as Christians we believe certain things that distinguish us from other religions. When we scratch below the surface, non-denominational churches do believe in something. The moment they say Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven, they distinguish themselves from all other religions. The moment they say come as you are, yes God wants us to come to Him as we are, they are telling you that they don't believe in dress standards; that you can dress anyway you wish, but the Bible teaches that we are supposed to dress modestly.

Ask them about leadership, about their style of music, about their outreach programs, and all these things are dictated by what they believe.

The way you believe determines the way you act.

A Christian denomination is a distinct religious group within Christianity, identified by traits such as a name, organizational structure, and doctrine.

One website said, "Some denominations emphasize slight doctrinal differences, but more often they simply offer different styles of worship to fit the differing tastes and preferences of Christians."

The two main reasons for all these denominations is first doctrine and secondly separation. Christians interpret the Bible differently; we have those that believe you can lose your salvation, we have those that believe the saints will go through the tribulation, we have those who believe God is done with Israel, we have that believe God has chosen those who will get saved and those who will go to hell and there is nothing anyone can do about it (Calvinism). There are those who believe musical instruments should not be played in church, they are

those who believe modern technology is wrong, some are ordaining women preachers, and I could go on and on...

When it comes to separation, many Christians resent this because they want their cake and eat it too. They want to live in the world and act like the world, but they pretend this not the case. So when you point this out to them they don't like it, they call you a legalist, they say you are old-fashioned (that's what we used to say to our parents when I was growing up), they say you are too strict, they say you don't want me to have any fun.

2 Corinthians 6:17: Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

The context of 2 Corinthians is yoking (to join together) with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14-16).

John 17:15: I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

We need to be clear, a denomination is not what saves you, it is Christ. You don't get to heaven by being a Baptist, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, a Pentecostal, Missionary Alliance, a Nazarene, Free Evangelical, etc.; you get saved by believing that Jesus Christ died on the cross for your sins.

Churches are dropping Baptist from their name because they believe this way they will sound more welcoming, somehow the name Baptist scares people. The Southern Baptist convention is doing this; all these churches around us are Southern Baptist: C3 Church, Eastpoint Fellowship, Innovation Church... Why are they dropping Baptist? Because, honestly, some Baptists have given us a bad name. I think of Westboro Baptist, they preach hate, and now there is a new movement New Independent Fundamental Baptists, they too preach hate and are anti-Israel.

I am a Baptist because I believe Baptists are doctrinally closest to the Bible than any other denominations. Do I believe all Baptists have 100% true doctrine? My answer is "No".

But I stand by the word of God and say that the Bible is my final authority on all matters of faith and practice; if Baptist teaching goes contrary to scripture, than I stick with the Bible. What we believe is on our church website. Do I expect everyone to agree with me? "No." But there are certain fundamentals that I believe we all should believe in. And these are nicely summarized by the Baptist distinctives.

BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES

The best way to describe a Baptist is to describe what Baptists believe. More precisely we are Independent Baptists (each church is independent and not part of a larger group of churches),

this can be described with the following acrostic B.A.P.T.I.S.T.S. "Baptist" is not a denomination, rather it is a belief in a set of doctrines.

The doctrine developed Baptists, and it is not that we developed the doctrine. The doctrine was here first. By following the doctrine we became what we are. Most organizations develop the doctrine after they have organized. Not so with Independent Baptists.

We are Baptists because we follow what Jesus Christ taught.

B – Biblical Authority; The Bible is our sole standard for belief and practice. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. If it does not match up to the Bible, then throw your belief out the door! All our doctrine comes from the Bible. No human opinion or decree can ever override the Bible. (see also Romans 15:4; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

A – Autonomy of the Local Church; 1 Timothy 3:15: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Each local assembly is independent and not accountable to any organization or hierarchical denomination. Autonomy does not mean isolation; it is OK to fellowship with other churches with common beliefs. (see also Titus 1:5; Revelation 1).

P – Priesthood of the Believer; Revelation 1:5-6: And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. You no longer need a priest to approach God on your behalf, you can approach God by yourself....throne of grace. (see also Hebrews 4:16; 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 5:9-10)

I – Two Ordinances; The local church should practice two ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper (must be in that order). Acts 2:41-42: Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Salvation resulting from faith in Christ must be followed by baptism (immersion in water), which identifies the individual with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. The Lord's Supper, or communion, is practiced to commemorate Christ's death. (see Acts 8:12, 35-38; 10:47-48; 16:30-33; 18:8; 1 Cor. 11:25-26)

I – Individual Soul Liberty; 1 John 2:27: But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. Every

individual, whether a believer or an unbeliever, has the freedom to choose what his conscience believes is right in the religious realm. Soul liberty teaches that the individual is ultimately responsible to God for his own actions and one should not try to force anyone else to do or believe anything contrary to his own conscience or will. However, this liberty is not a justification for disobeying God. Baptists oppose religious persecution. (see also Romans 14:5, 12; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:12)

S – Saved and Baptized Church Membership; Matthew 28:19: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Mark 16:16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. Local church membership is restricted to individuals who can provide a genuine testimony of personal faith in Christ and have publicly identified themselves with Him in believer's baptism. (see also Acts 2:41-47)

I – Two Offices (Pastors and Deacons); Philippians 1:1: Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: The pastor is the spiritual leader of the church and the deacons assist the pastor in managing the physical needs of the church. The pastors and deacons of a church form the elders of a church. (see also Acts 6:1-6; 14:23; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:5-9)

S – Separation of Church and State; Matthew 22:21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. God established both the church and the civil government, and gave each its own distinct sphere of operation. The government's purposes are outlined in Romans 13:1-7 and the church's purposes in Matthew 28:19-20. Neither should control the other, nor should there be an alliance between the two. Christians in a free society should properly influence government towards righteousness; this is not the same as a denomination or group of churches controlling the government. (see also Matthew 22:15-22; Acts 15:17-29)

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 1

How do you trace the history of the true church? It is not a denomination's history that we should concern ourselves with, but with what did the Christian's believe throughout the centuries; this will determine whether your denomination has roots which tie it to the early church or not.

Protestants can only trace their roots to the protestant reformation; they did not exist before then.

It is only through what has been written in the legal documents and papers by the Christians of those ages that we can trace the church's history and beliefs.

Much of the material presented in this study will be taken from the book titled: *The Trail of Blood* written by J.M. Carroll.

There is a great debate as to which is the oldest Christian denomination. The Catholics claim they are, the Greek Orthodox refute that claim and say they are and that in 1054 AD the Pope of Rome broke away (Great Schism) from the other four Apostolic Patriarchates (Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem). They accuse the pope of creating this break because he tampered with the original Creed of the Church (Orthodox), thereby making the pope infallible. This is known as the Great Schism.

Note: In 313 AD, Constantine and Licinius issued the Edict of Milan decriminalizing Christian worship.

This is what a retired Greek Orthodox priest says regarding Christian denominations (notice, he uses the word religion):

If you are a Lutheran, your religion was founded by Martin Luther, an ex-monk of the Catholic Church in the year 1517.

Note: In 2016 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) passed the "Declaration on the Way" stating that "there are no longer church-dividing issues" on many points with the Roman Catholic Church. ECLA says though this is not an official union, it is a step toward unity.

If you belong to the Church of England, your religion was founded by King Henry VIII in the year 1534 because the Pope would not grant him a divorce with the right to re-marry.

If you are a Presbyterian, your religion was founded by John Knox in Scotland in the year 1560.

If you are a Congregationalist, your religion was originated by Robert Brown in Holland in 1582.

If you are a Protestant Episcopalian, your religion was an offshoot of the Church of England, founded by Samuel Senbury in the American Colonies in the 17th century.

If you are a Baptist, you owe the tenets of your religion to John Smyth, who launched it in Amsterdam in 1606.

If you are of the Dutch Reformed Church, you recognize Michelis Jones as the Founder because he originated your religion in New York in 1623.

If you are a Methodist, your religion was founded by John and Charles Wesley in England in 1774.

If you are Mormon (Latter Day Saints), Joseph Smith started your religion in Palmyra, New York in 1829.

If you worship with the Salvation Army, your sect began with William Booth in London in 1865.

If you are Christian Scientist, you look to the year 1879 as the year in which your religion was born and look to Mary Baker Eddy as its founder.

If you belong to one of the religious organizations known as the “Church of the Nazarene,” “Pentecostal Gospel,” Holiness Church,” or “Jehovah’s Witnesses,” your religion is one of the hundreds of new sects founded by men within the past hundred years.

End quote.

From <https://www.thenationalherald.com/3361/the-orthodox-faith-is-the-oldest-christian-denomination/>

What this orthodox priest said was accurate, except for the highlighted portion. John Smyth (c. 1570 – c. 28 August 1612) was an early Baptist minister of England who was exiled to Amsterdam. He was a former Anglican minister who baptized himself.

This brazen act upset England’s state church. Amsterdam Separatist Richard Bernard nicknamed him a “Se-Baptist” (self-baptizer); “se” in Latin placed before a word means himself. Though Smyth’s followers preferred the term “Christians Baptized on Profession of Their Faith,” the shorter, derogatory “se-baptist,” was later shortened to “Baptist,” and it stuck.

Now, I want to reiterate, it is not about denomination, it is about what you believe. And what makes us Baptists is what we believe.

John Smyth was not the founder of the Baptists.

Now I want to quote catholic Cardinal Hosius, once president of the Council of Trent, who in 1524 AD said, "Were it not that the Baptists have been grievously tormented and cut off with the knife during the past 1,200 years, they would swarm in greater number than all the Reformers."

Note carefully what he says, I have underlined some of what he said. He acknowledged that the Baptists had been around that past 1,200 years! And he wrote this in the 16th century!

As Baptists we do not claim apostolic succession as taught by the Roman Catholic Church; which is an unbroken line of popes from the apostle Peter, who was the first pope (claimed by the Catholic Church).

Baptists trace their lineage to Jesus Christ, the founder of the church. Baptists claim (and I believe this) that their doctrine is the same as that of the early church. Baptists do not have a "human" founder who began their denomination.

The name Baptist was not a self-ascribed name, but a name given to a group of people who were heavily persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church because of what they believed. You have to get this; we did not give ourselves the name of Baptists, it was given to us because of what our spiritual forefathers believed!

Sir Isaac Newton (1642 AD-1727 AD), the famed mathematician and physicist, said, "The Baptists are the only body of known Christians that have never symbolized with Rome."

Dr. Carroll says that churches have been found in every age that believe certain NT doctrines, he calls these doctrines "marks" of the NT Church.

He lists there "marks" as follows:

1. Its Head and Founder--CHRIST. He is the law-giver; the Church is only the executive. (Matt. 16:18; Col. 1:18)
2. Its only rule of faith and practice--THE BIBLE. (2 Tim. 3:15-17)
3. Its name—"CHURCH," "CHURCHES." (Matt. 16:18; Rev. 22:16)
4. Its polity--CONGREGATIONAL--all members equal. (Matt. 20:24-28; Matt. 23:5-12)
5. Its members--only saved people. (Eph. 2:21; 1 Peter 2:5)
6. Its ordinances—BELIEVERS' BAPTISM, FOLLOWED BY THE LORD'S SUPPER. (Matt. 28:19-20)
7. Its officers--PASTORS AND DEACONS. (1 Tim. 3:1-16)

8. Its work--getting folks saved, baptizing them (with a baptism that meets all the requirements of God's Word), teaching them ("to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"). (Matt. 28:16-20)

9. Its financial plan—"Even so (TITHES and OFFERINGS) hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel," (1 Cor. 9:14)

10. Its weapons of warfare--spiritual, not carnal. (2 Cor. 10:4; Eph. 6:10-20)

11. Its independence--separation of Church and State. (Matt. 22:21)

Any church that believes these "marks" we say that they are "baptistic" in doctrine.

They may call themselves non-denominational, if they believe these "marks" they in essence, are a Baptist church.

Now, compare these "marks" to the Baptist distinctives, and what do you notice?

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 2

Now, I want to divert our attention briefly to the topic of **infant baptism**. One of the doctrines that Baptists hold dear to is that of baptism following conversion. This is one of the doctrines, along with the rejection of Calvinism (at least among most independent Baptists) and Reformed theology that separates us from most protestant denominations. A protestant is a member or follower of any of the Western Christian churches that have separated from the Roman Catholic Church and follow the principles of the Reformation.

The following Christian denominations practice infant baptism: Catholics, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, Anglicans, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and other Reformed denominations, Methodists and some Nazarenes, and the Moravian Church.

Scholars disagree on the date when infant baptism was first practiced. The first mention of infant “baptism” in the history of the church is from the African church father named Tertullian (160 AD – 220 AD). He was born in Carthage, studied law in Rome, and was converted to Christianity in about 195. He was the first Christian theologian to write in Latin.

Tertullian, in his *De Baptismo* (Concerning Baptism), written between 200 and 206 AD, he questions the wisdom of baptizing infants. He says:

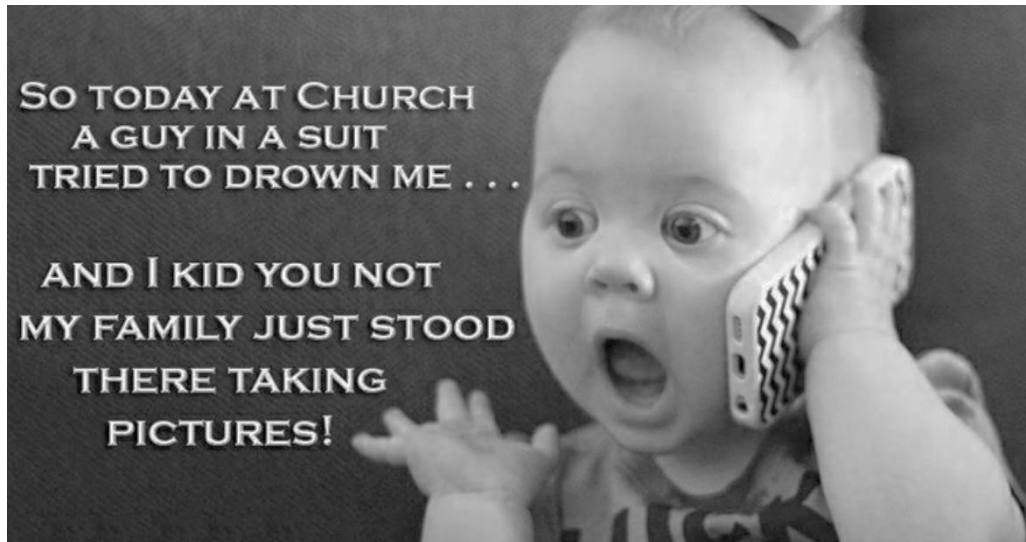
“According to everyone’s condition and disposition, and also his age, the delaying of baptism is more profitable, especially in the case of little children. For why is it necessary—if [baptism itself] is not necessary—that the sponsors should be thrust into danger? For they may either fail of their promise by death, or they may be mistaken by a child’s proving of wicked disposition.... They that understand the weight of baptism will rather dread the receiving of it, than the delaying of it. An entire faith is secure of salvation! (*De Baptismo*, ch. xviii)

Now this does not mean that infants were baptized then, but that there was a debate regarding this issue, or that some may have been considering baptizing infants. In theological circles infant baptism is called “paedobaptism.”

The earliest extra-biblical directions for baptism occur in the Didache (100 AD) and they concern the baptism of adults, since they require fasting by the person to be baptized. The Didache, also known as *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* is a brief anonymous early Christian treatise (essay) written in the first century outlining the beliefs of the early church. There is no mention in this document of infant baptism.

It is clear though that at least by the 3rd century and onward “Christians” baptized infants as standard practice. It is important to note that baptizing babies was a pagan ritual. So when

paganism and Christianity merged under pretext of the Roman Empire adopting Christianity, infant baptism made its way into the “church.”



New Catholic Encyclopedia (1967): “It makes little difference whether Scripture has any actual references to the practice of infant Baptism or not. Probably it can be conceded that no explicit references are to be found there.”

Catholics will quote the writings of the church fathers to support their belief in infant baptism (<https://www.catholic.com/tract/early-teachings-on-infant-baptism>). But Baptists insist that baptism is only for those who have come to faith in Jesus Christ; there is no evidence in the Bible that such a practice was done.

Why have we spent so much time discussing infant baptism? Because the rejection of infant baptism and insistence of being baptized following conversion was one of the clear “marks” of early bible-believing Christians. They did not accept one’s baptism as an infant as a substitute for believer’s baptism.

So where do they get infant baptism from in the Bible?

Proof verses used to support infant baptism:

Acts 2:38-39: Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and **be baptized every one of you** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is **unto you, and to your children**, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Acts 16:15: And when she was baptized, and **her household**, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

Acts 16:32-33: And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; **and was baptized, he and all his**, straightway.

1 Corinthians 1:16: And I baptized also the **household of Stephanas**: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

The thinking is that included in one's household there must have been children and infants. But we know that infants and some small children are not capable of understanding the message of salvation.

When did the church start?

The church started on the day of Pentecost, 50 days after the Feast of Passover or 50 days after Jesus died, or 7 days after His ascension.

Jesus prophesied that Holy Spirit would only come after He had ascended to the Father.

John 7:39: (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

John 14:16: And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

John 14:26: But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 15:26: But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

John 16:7: Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

Acts 2:

¹ And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³ And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire,

and it sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

This was the promise prophesied by John and given by Christ.

Acts 1:5: For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Compare Acts 2:5 with Matthew 3:11 and notice the absence of fire in Acts 1:5. Why? Notice the colon at the end of Matthew 3:11, and explanation is given to us of what this fire is in Matthew 3:12

Matthew 3:12: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Some claim the church was started in John chapter 20:

²⁰ And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: ²³ Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

This was not the start of the church, but Jesus giving His disciples strength through the Holy Spirit. God gave strength and empowered OT believers with the Holy Spirit countless times. The Spirit came and went as He pleased in order to accomplish God's will.

References in the NT prior to the Day of Pentecost when believers received power, including Christ: Matt. 10:1; Mark 1:10; 6:7; Luke 2:27; 4:1, 14, 18; John 1:32;

Jesus says that He would send the Comforter from the Father. And we find the disciples in Acts 1:4 waiting for the Comforter; Jesus has already ascended into heaven, way past the time frame of John 20:22. And this (the sending of the Comforter) occurred in Acts chapter 2.

Early events surrounding the first church:

1. At the day of Pentecost Tiberius (42 BC - 37 AD) was Caesar of the Roman Empire.
2. The Jews had their temple in Jerusalem, but no independent homeland, they were still under Roman occupation.
3. The first persecution of the church occurred right after the death of Stephen (Acts 8:1).
4. James the son of Zebedee was likely the first senior pastor of the church at Jerusalem (Acts 12:2).

5. After James was killed, it is likely that James the brother of the Lord was the next senior pastor of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18).
6. The second church was established at Antioch (Acts 11:26).
7. It wasn't until Paul's first missionary journey, along with Barnabas, that additional churches were established, primarily in Asia Minor (Acts 14:23).
8. Followers of Christ were called those of "The Way." (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:22). For us to understand; The Way = Christianity. Not clear on who named the faith of the disciples as such, but it was likely the Jews.
9. The disciples were called Christians (little Christ) first in Antioch (Acts 11:26), again it is not clear who named them that. But they were called that so someone must have given them that name.
10. Jerusalem was destroyed 70 AD by Roman general Titus as predicted by Christ.

True believers in Christ were named by their detractors.

A precedent was set, in that true followers of Christ throughout the ages have been given "names" by their enemies: those of "This way", Christians, Montanists, Paterins, Novationists, Donatists, Paulicians, Albigenses, Waldenses, Ana-Baptists, Baptists, etc.

And another mark of these true Christians was that they were relentlessly persecuted and martyred, hence they left behind a "trail of blood."

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 3

The church started in Jerusalem and it was persecution that forced the disciples to fulfill the great commission. This persecution was perpetrated by the Jews (Jewish unbelievers).

Acts 8:1: And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a **great persecution** against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.

The great commission was first given by Christ to His disciples:

Mark 16:15-16: And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

But what we find in Acts chapter 8 is Philip, one of the first deacons, going to Samaria. In fact the apostles for a great while stayed in Jerusalem. It was others who left when persecution began at the time of Stephen's death.

Acts 11:19: Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

History does tell that the apostles did eventually venture out from Jerusalem and all but one (John) died a martyr's death. James died in Jerusalem, Peter likely died in Babylon, John in Ephesus, Bartholomew and Thomas died in India, Matthias in Armenia, Andrew in Greece (had gone as far as modern day Russia), Philip in Carthage, Matthew in Ethiopia, Jude (Thaddeus) and James the son of Alphaeus in Syria, and Simon the zealot died in Turkey. Note: we cannot be 100% certain of where some of the apostles died.

I want us to look at the seven periods of church history which are represented by the seven churches in the book of Revelation. Each church mentioned corresponds to a period of time.

Periods of church history:

Church	Church History Typified	Dates	Meaning; Qualities	Verses
Ephesus	The Apostolic Church	A.D. 33-100	Fully Purposed; loveless	Rev.2:1-7
Smyrna	The Persecuted Church	A.D. 100 – 313 Persecuted by Rome	Myrrh; persecution	Rev. 2:8-11
Pergamum	The Compromising Church	A.D. 313 – 606 Union of church and state under Constantine	Much marriage; compromise	Rev. 2:12-17
Thyatira	The Church of the Dark Ages	A.D. 606-1517 Rome proclaims Boniface III, as the “Head of all the churches”	Odor of affliction; corrupt/papal church	Rev. 2:18-29
Sardis	The Church of the Reformation	A.D. 1517-1648 Luther’s 95 theses	Red ones; dead church	Rev. 3:1-6
Philadelphia	The Church of the Great Missionary Movement	A.D. 1648-1881 Peace of Westphalia	Brotherly love; faithful	Rev. 3:7-13
Laodicea	The Apostate Church	A.D. 1881-present Westcott-Hort Greek text	Civil rights; lukewarm	Rev. 3:14-22

The Spread of Christianity

For the first 180 years Christianity had spread throughout the Greco-Roman world, India and eastern Africa.

By 630 AD Christianity had been established in China, verified by the Nestorian Stele; it was Tang Chinese stele erected in 781 which documents 150 years of early Christianity in China. And in 845, at the height of the Great Anti-Buddhist Persecution, Emperor Wuzong decreed that Buddhism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism be banned, and their very considerable assets forfeited to the state.

The Christianization of Scandinavia, other Nordic countries, and the Baltic countries, took place between the 8th and the 12th centuries.

I have often wondered about the American Indians, why they weren't reached. But we know that Leif Erikson reached Newfoundland in 999 AD and established a colony there. About Leif Erikson, here's a quote from Wikipedia: "After Leif's first trip to Vinland, he returned to the family estate of Brattahlid in Greenland, and started preaching Christianity to the Greenlanders."

Could he have tried to reach them, and they wanted nothing to do with Christ? Just wondering...

In the first few years, Christianity faced persecution mainly from Judaism and paganism. But despite the persecution in first two centuries the churches multiplied and the disciples increased. And something else happened; churches began to fall into error.

The **first error** to creep into the church was that some bishops (pastors) began to assume authority over nearby smaller churches. With their many elders they began to lord it over God's heritage (1 Peter 5:3). Cyprian (200 – 258 AD) began calling bishops "priests".

Clement (Phil. 4:3) writes of the organizational structure of the church and says that bishops and deacons were appointed in every church. He also mentions that 'overseers' were also elders, but not all elders were also overseers/bishops.

But the smaller churches had become dependent on the larger churches (ex. Antioch and Alexandria) and because these churches were prominent and their bishops respected and honored it was easy to submit to them, and slowly these bishops acquired the title of patriarch. We can see how this could work today with the influence well-known and popular preachers can have over other churches.

Another error to creep into the church was **baptismal regeneration**. Those who believe this teach that that salvation is imparted to an individual when they are baptized and that salvation is impossible apart from it. Regeneration does not occur until a person is water baptized. The proof verse used for this teaching is Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and **be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, **and ye shall** receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." It was easy for churches to fall into this error because the Jews and well as pagans, had for many generations, been trained to lay great stress on ceremonials.

The next error that crept in was a change of the subjects of baptism. Since it was believed that baptism was the agency or means of salvation, it was then reasoned the sooner baptism takes place the better; hence arose “infant baptism.” We have dealt with this subject at length.

Bible-believers have always been persecuted and called heretics by Rome.

Acts 12:1-2: Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

It was the Romans who crucified Christ and it was the Romans who imprisoned and killed Paul. (Dates below are subjective, but approximates).

Ten persecutions of the church by Rome (Rev. 2:10):

1. Nero, A.D. 67
2. Domitian, A.D. 81
3. Trajan, A.D. 108
4. Aurelius Antoninus, A.D. 162
5. Severus, A.D. 192
6. Maximus, A.D. 235
7. Decius, A.D. 250
8. Valerian, A.D. 257
9. Aurelian, A.D. 274
10. Diocletian, A.D. 303

Approximately 5-7 million Christians were killed during these persecutions.

Persecution included beheadings, cruel torture, crucifixion, burning of their homes, set on fire, feeding to the lions, torn by dogs, etc. After Nero, it became a capital crime to be a Christian, although pardon was always available if one publicly condemned Christ and sacrificed to the gods. Those who did were called “Lapsi” by the faithful and were not allowed back in fellowship.

The more the Christians were persecuted the more they multiplied.

Stephen was stoned, Matthew was slain in Ethiopia, Mark dragged through the streets until dead, Luke hanged, Peter and Simeon were crucified, Andrew tied to a cross, James beheaded, Philip crucified and stoned, Bartholomew flayed alive, Thomas pierced with lances, James, the less, thrown from the temple and beaten to death, Jude shot to death with arrows, Matthias stoned to death and Paul beheaded.

So in summary, in the first 300 years, there was great persecution, the church grew rapidly and three false doctrines made their way into the church:

- (1) The change from the idea of a bishop presiding (not dictating) over a local church government to bishops exerting influence to smaller adjacent churches.
- (2) The regeneration at the moment of salvation to “baptismal regeneration.”
- (3) The change from “believers’ baptism” to “infant baptism.”

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 4

I want to take some time this evening and look at some prominent groups that arose after all the apostles had passed away. And I want to give you some detailed history of one of the problems churches faced in the 2nd (101 – 200) and 3rd (201 – 300) century AD. Because of the severe persecution that was going on, many Christians denied their faith.

In 250 AD the Roman emperor Decian issued a decree ordering everyone in the Roman Empire to perform a sacrifice to the Roman gods and to the well-being of the Emperor. The sacrifices had to be performed in the presence of a Roman magistrate (they were elected officials), and a signed and witnessed certificate be issued to that effect. It was the first time that Christians had faced legislation forcing them to choose between their religious beliefs and death; persecution resulted from this and it is known as the Decian persecution.

Two churches where this was severely felt were in Carthage and Rome. Cyprian was the Bishop of Carthage from 248-258 A.D and fled this persecution, but continued communicating with his church by letter. In Rome, the bishop of pastor was Fabian, he perished in the persecution. Historians estimate the church at Rome had about 50,000 members. Note: During the 2nd century AD, the city of Rome had more than one million inhabitants.

But because many refused to obey the emperor, this alarmed the Roman leaders and the persecution abruptly ended.

But many Christians apostatized during this time of trial. The tortures were great and terrible. Eusebius, for example, relates one account:

“They seized first an old man named Metras, and commanded him to utter impious words. But as he would not obey, they beat him with clubs, and tore his face and eyes with sharp sticks, and dragged him out of the city and stoned him.”

When Cyprian returned to Carthage after the persecution he wrote a comprehensive treatise titled *On the Lapsed*. He admitted that, in Carthage, “the greatest number of the brethren betrayed their faith.”

Upon reading this, I wondered, “What would I do?” What would you do as you witnessed the brutal murder of your brothers and sisters in Christ, and knew that you were next in line?

Cyprian was shocked, he says: “They voluntarily betrayed their Savior!” He went on to say regarding the persecution: “Have not prophets aforetime, and subsequently apostles, told of these things?”

And when the persecution ended the churches in Carthage and Rome had a problem on their hands. What to do with the returning Christians called “the Lapsi”. Should they be admitted back to fellowship or not?

Cyprian reminded his readers that Christ had ordained eternal punishment for those who rejected Him. We know this is not a Baptist teaching. Cyprian flatly condemned all apostasy during the persecution.

There were two categories of people to consider; those who had offered incense to the Emperor and obtained certificates proving it, and others, usually the wealthy, who had simply bribed Roman authorities and obtained their certificates without sacrificing to the Emperor. This was the question which sparked the Novatian schism.

Novatian was one of the church leaders in Rome. After Fabian was martyred in 250 AD he stepped into the vacancy and assumed leadership of the church. One of those he corresponded with was Cyprian, and was cordial toward him. In a letter to Cyprian he agreed that when the persecution ended a council should be convened to determine what to do about those who had lapsed from the faith.

Novatian personally took an ardent position toward the Lapsi saying they should never be brought back into the church. As this was going on, the church at Rome elected Cornelius as their Bishop and Novatian and several others consequently split from the church.

Now why I am spending a lot of time on this? To point out that all men are fallible. Cyprian was one of the church fathers (why didn't he stay with the flock?) and the Novatians (those who followed Novatian) are heralded as our Baptist forefathers by some of the brethren.

We applaud these men for standing up to the persecution, but need to point out where they go against the Bible.

Another important group that appears at the onset of the 4th century AD are the Donatists. Donatus was elected pastor of the Church at Carthage in the year 306 AD.

The Donatists were a group of men who had separated themselves from the worldly churches around them, and the label of Donatists to men who long stood on the same ground as the original Donatists lingered for about another 4 centuries. The Donatists were known by other names, but merged in with them because they were similar in their principles.

Donatism is viewed by historians as heresy. So what was the heresy that Donatists held to? Donatus the bishop of Carthage led a protest against certain Catholic bishops who had handed over the Scriptures to be burned under the persecution of Diocletian. Such an act, the Donatists insisted, was a serious sin of apostasy.

Therefore, since the Catholic pastors were ordained by bishops who had sinned so grievously, the Donatists believed they, rather than the Catholics, constituted the true Church of Christ. Did you notice what was going on? The Bishops were those in charge over several churches, and they ordained pastors of the local assemblies they presided over.

Where do they get this from? The Bible. Turn to the book of Titus.

Titus 1:4: To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Titus 1:5: For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and **ordain elders** in every city, **as I had appointed thee**:

Remember, Clement (Phil. 4:3) writes of the organizational structure of the church and says that bishops and deacons were appointed in every church. He also mentions that 'overseers' were also elders, but not all elders were also overseers/bishops.

So Titus was appointed by Paul to set up pastors and deacons; they were not selected by the church, but by Titus.

And this is easily explained by the very fact that there were no NT Scriptures Christians could turn to and find out what had to be done; no place were the qualification of elders listed. So someone had to instruct the early Christians. This evidenced by the question that arose as to whether one had to keep the Law for salvation.

Acts 15:1: And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

So they called the apostles together and inquired of this matter. They eventually conclude that the gentile Christians do not have to keep the Law, but at least keep from certain. And the apostle James lists these things:

Acts 15:19: Wherefore my *(James makes the final call)* sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

Acts 15:20: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

Back to the Donatists; they argued that the validity of the sacrament depends upon the moral standing of the minister. That is, if the pastor is not living a holy a life then the sacrament (baptismal regeneration, Lord's supper, etc.) did nothing for the people.

The final straw for the Donatists (so named after their leader Donatus) was when Caecilian was ordained bishop of Carthage. The Donatists believed that Caecilian's ordination was invalid because one of his consecrators (those who participated in the ordination) had been a traditor. A traditor (from the Latin *traditores*) was a church leader who during the persecution of Diocletian had gone as far as turning in Christians to the authorities and also "handed over" sacred scriptures to them so that they may be burned. So the Donatists split away from Catholic Church of North Africa

The Donatists also were opposed to state interference in church affairs and the secularization of the church. Despite persecution and the Vandal invasion of 429 AD, Donatism survived into the 7th century in North Africa, when it and Catholicism were overcome by Islam and consequently Christianity effectively became extinct in North Africa.

Augustine (354 – 430 AD) was one of Donatism's chief rival; historians will say that his writings were highly influential in the fight to eradicate this heresy. Keep in mind that Augustine as far as we are concerned was a heretic. He said Christians who took the Creation Story literally were a laughingstock and thought of as idiots among non-Christians because they denied science and reason. He also came up the doctrines of original sin and Hell as eternal conscious torment.

Immoral leaders led to the defection of many Christians from established churches that had made a "deal" with the devil—Constantine.

But they don't tell you about Donatus, though valid in his opposition to the Catholic Church, is that he was also elected Primate of Africa, that is the leading bishop in Africa. Remember—what was one of the early heresies that crept into the church? The pastors of prominent churches began exerting control over the smaller churches around them.

Remember also that those who followed him "split" from the Catholic Church. Sound familiar?

Next week we look at the persecution of true Christians by the Catholic Church.

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 5

313 AD – 606 AD

We are entering a period of church history where we transition from Jewish and Roman persecution of Christians to persecution of Christians by organized religion—who call themselves Christians.

Four your information: During this time Armenia became the first Christian state in 301 AD.

On February 23rd A.D. 303, the ancient Romans celebrated the festival of Terminalia in honor of the god Terminus, who presided over boundaries. On this day Diocletian appointed a persecution of the Christians. This first began Nicomedia and involved breaking into their church seizing all their religions books and burning them, not contented with burning the books, Diocletian had the church levelled with the ground.

In 286 Nicomedia was chosen by Diocletian to the eastern and most senior capital city of the Roman Empire; he assumed the title Augustus of the East.

Following what was done to this church Diocletian issued a severe edict commanding the destruction of all other Christian churches and books; and an order soon followed rendering all Christians outlaws.

One city in particular, Phrygia, consisting entirely of Christians, was burnt, and all the inhabitants perished in the flames.

Acts 18:23: And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and **Phrygia** in order, strengthening all the disciples.

In 311 AD emperor Galerius, just eight years after the greatest persecution Christians had ever endured (under Diocletian) passed another edict recalling the first (by Diocletian) and actually granting toleration toward Christians. This permitted them to live out the religion of Jesus Christ.

In 313 AD emperor Constantine recognized that there must be something special about Christianity because it grew despite the tremendous persecution. History says that this new emperor saw a heavenly vision in the skies; a fiery red cross and on that cross written in fiery letters: “By this thou shalt conquer.” He interpreted it to mean that he should give up paganism and become a Christian, and by attaching the spiritual power of the Christian religion to the temporal power of the Roman Empire the world could be easily conquered.

And also in 313 AD Constantine called for a council and invited representatives of the Christian churches; many came, but not all. At that council a hierarchy was formed. Constantine enthroned himself as head of the church promising to become a Christian if allowed to do so. Many of those who came had already adopted the teaching of baptismal regeneration, and when Constantine asked them a serious question, “If I am saved from my sins by baptism, what is to become of my sins which I may commit after I am baptized?” they couldn’t answer him.

Constantine finally decided to unite with the Christians, but postponed his baptism until just preceding his death so that all his sins might thus be washed away at one time. It is known that he lived much of his life as a pagan and only joined the “Christian faith” on his deathbed, being baptized by Eusebius of Nicomedia.

But the Roman senate opposed this decision by Constantine in 313 AD, so he went to Byzantium (current day Istanbul), built a new imperial residence and renamed the city Constantinople.

Constantine appointed Christian ministers (those who supported him) to high positions in many parts of his empire. He gave Christian ministers special privileges. He also extended many benefits to pagan priests who became Christian ministers. For example, they received monetary support from the Empire and didn’t pay taxes.

By the decree of Constantine in 324 AD, Christianity became the official religion of Rome. But he never outright banned pagan rituals.

Up until this point the persecution of Christians was carried out primarily by **Judaism** (this ended around 70 AD) and **pagan Rome** (this began around 70 AD with Nero and ended in 311 AD by Galerius).

Constantine also decreed in AD 321 that, with an exception for farmers, Sunday was to be a day of rest. “On the venerable Day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed.”

Between the years 300-500 AD the hierarchy organized under the leadership of Constantine, rapidly developed into what is now known as the Roman Catholic Church. This newly developing organization no longer carried out the teachings of the New Testament, but began legislating, that is, amending or annulling old laws or enacting new ones utterly unknown to the New Testament.

And in 416 AD “the church” passed the law of “infant baptism.” Infant Baptism now becomes compulsory. Infants had been infrequently baptized by some churches for probably a century preceding this. Thus two NT teachings were violated: “Believers Baptism” and “Voluntary

personal obedience in Baptism.” Churches began being filled with unbelievers, since the necessity of the new birth wasn’t taught.

And what do you think happened? The true Christians refused to accept this and this incurred the hot displeasure of the state religionists (those who belonged to the state church). So Catholics started persecuting Christians.

The years after the Roman Catholic Church established infant baptism (426 AD) we enter an awful period known as the “Dark Ages”. This was an awful and bloody period for Christians in Europe and lasted for around 1000 years. Historians have tried to hide this horrible period by renaming it the Middle Ages or Medieval Period.

Wikipedia says, “The majority of modern scholars avoid the term altogether due to its negative connotations, finding it misleading and inaccurate...But when used by some historians today, the term “Dark Ages” is meant to describe the economic, political, and cultural problems of the era.”

Another significant event occurred during this time period. It was during this period that popery had its beginnings.

Def’n: Popery refers to the doctrines, practices, and ceremonies associated with the Pope or the papal system; Roman Catholicism.

Several bishops of Rome began using the title of *Pope* before it became an official title. The name *Pope* was first applied to Marcellinus the Bishop of Rome between 296-304 AD. Historians agree that the title “Pope” was largely a development. This title was formally adopted by Siricius who was the Bishop of Rome between 384-398 AD. And then officially adopted by Leo I (Bishop of Rome from 440-461 AD), technically he was the first pope.

Keep in mind that these “popes” worked hand in hand with the Roman Emperors.

The Catholic retroactively calls the bishops or pastors of the church in Rome “pope.”

So what does the word **pope** mean? The word comes from the Latin *papa*, which means “father.”

Matthew 23:9: And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

Matthew 23:10: Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

The pastors of the churches were actually called Bishops in those days, as the Bible says.

1 Timothy 3:2: A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

Titus 1:7: For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

At some point in history bishops began to be called pastors. I don't have an answer for this; I do not know when this happened. But, I suspect that when Bishops began to govern over regions, called dioceses in Orthodox and Catholic churches, they had to give a different name to the person presiding over the local church, and that name or title was pastor.

In the United States, the term pastor is used by Catholics for what in other English-speaking countries is called a parish priest.

So what has happened to the church during this time?

1. The gradual change from a local church to church government.
2. The change from salvation by grace to Baptismal Regeneration.
3. The change from "believers' baptism" to "infant baptism."
4. The Hierarchy of the Catholic Church has been organized. Marriage of church and state.
5. The seat of the Roman Empire changed from Rome to Constantinople.
6. Ufilias (311-383 AD) a Goth of Cappadocian Greek descent takes Gospel to the Barbarian Goths in mid-century.
7. Infant baptism established by law and made compulsory.
8. Christians (religionists) begin to persecute Christians.
9. The "Dark Ages" begin 426 AD.
10. Religious liberty (as decreed by the Roman Emperors in the 4th century AD) dies and is buried and remains buried for many centuries.
11. Loyal New Testament churches, by whatever name they are called, are hunted and hounded to the utmost limit of the new Catholic temporal power. Christians scatter over the world hiding in forests, mountains, valleys, dens and caves.

This begins an awfully black and bloody period in true Christianity. From now on for more than one thousand years, the trail of loyal Christianity is largely washed away in its own blood.

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 6

The Dark Ages 500 AD – 1100 AD

The Dark Ages is a period of time during which the Western Roman Empire falls and the Catholic Church ascends.

As the emperor's power declined, that of the Bishop of Rome increased. Pope Leo I (440-461), the first "official" pope and the Bishop of Rome negotiated with Attila the Hun (452) and saved Rome from attack. He asserted authority over other bishops, claiming the bishop of Rome is successor to Apostle Peter.

The Western Roman Empire finally falls when the last Western emperor, Romulus Augustulus, was deposed by Odoacer (an Ostrogoth) who became the king of Italy in 476 AD when the Ostrogoths (the East Goths) conquered the Western Roman Empire.

Pope Leo met Attila, it is said, in the neighborhood of the river Mincio, and he spoke to the grim monarch, saying "The senate and the people of Rome, once conquerors of the world, now indeed vanquished, come before thee as suppliants. We pray for mercy and deliverance. O Attila, thou king of kings, thou couldst have no greater glory than to see suppliant at thy feet this people before whom once all peoples and kings lay suppliant. Thou hast subdued, O Attila, the whole circle of the lands which it was granted to the Romans, victors over all peoples, to conquer. Now we pray that thou, who hast conquered others, shouldst conquer thyself. The people have felt thy scourge; now as suppliants they would feel thy mercy."

Attila turned away from Rome but promised to return; he never did.

During this time, Patrick (390-460 AD) was sold as slave at age 16. He later escaped, went to Ireland and evangelized the Irish.

His real name was Maewyn Succat born in today's Scotland or Wales. He was captured by raiders as a 16-year-old in northern Britain and was taken across the Irish Sea by pirates and sold into slavery. Escaping from six years of bondage and after receiving a spiritual vision, Patrick returned to Ireland decades later with a mission to convert the island to Christianity, abolishing slavery and human sacrifice in the process.

Patrick or St. Patrick as he is often called was never Irish, was not Catholic, we was never canonized by any pope as a saint and the original colors to represent him were blue, not green, and there never were any snakes in Ireland for him to banish (still no snakes in Ireland)

In 451 AD the Catholics had their council at Calcedon; it was called by Emperor Marian. About 500 to 600 bishops or Metropolitans (Metropolitans were city pastors or First Church pastors)

were present. During this Council the doctrine of what is now known as Mariolatry (the worship of Mary) was promulgated (officially put a law into effect). This new doctrine at first created quite a stir, many seriously objected. But it finally won out as a permanent doctrine of the Catholic Church.

In 496 AD Clovis King of the Franks converted to Christianity and was baptized. He conquers half of France and paves the way for Charlemagne's Holy Roman Empire.

The Roman Church establishes our modern calendar (by Dionysius Exiguus in 550 AD), they also introduce a cult of martyrs and relics, and the glorification of Virgin Mary grows; this worship of mother and child is the Babylon Mystery Religion (Rev. 17:5). Incense is first introduced into a Christian church service in the West.

During this time Mohammed (570-629 AD) starts the religion of Islam, which begins to supplant Christianity across the Middle East and North Africa. In 638 AD the Muslims capture Jerusalem.

In 648 AD Emperor Constans II issues "The Typos" limiting Christian teachings to that defined in first five ecumenical councils of the Catholic Church. Pope Martin I (655 AD) refuses to sign the Typos. Martin is seized and banished to Crimea and dies. He is last pope to be venerated as a martyr.

In 664 AD England adopts the Roman Catholic faith at the Synod of Whitby.

In 680 AD the Catholics held their sixth council at Constantinople called by Constantine IV. This was held to condemn heresy (how ironic). During this meeting Pope Honorius by name was deposed and excommunicated. Papal infallibility had not yet been declared.

The Moors (Moslems from North Africa) invade Spain, but are defeated by Charles Martel at the Battle of Tours in 732 AD.

In 771 AD Charlemagne becomes the King of the Franks and is later crowned as the "Holy Roman Emperor" thus establishing the dream of a kingdom with a Christian king. Who alone has the right to be king over the Christian kingdom?

Rev. 11:15: And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

In 787 AD the Catholics held their seventh Council in Nicea. The Byzantine Empress Irene called this one. It seems that this meeting was the definite starting place, of both "Image Worship" and "Saints Worship." You can thus see that the Catholic Church was getting markedly more paganized than Christianized.

The iconoclastic controversy, which was over the veneration of images, divides the Byzantine Emperor (opposed) and the Pope (in favor). This later leads to the Great Schism.

Exod. 20:4: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

Lev. 26:1: Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God.

Deut. 4:16: Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female,

Religious paintings (icons) started making their way into the church by the 4th century and by the 6th century they were part of regular worship. In the 7th century the Muslims started invading the Middle East and North Africa and started destroying these religious images, they believed them to be idol worship. Ironically the Muslims allowed greater religious freedom to the Christians than the Catholics did.

In 726 AD the Emperor of the Eastern Empire said that icons were no longer allowed in Christian worship, this split the Catholics into two groups; the icon smashers (iconoclasts) and the icon kissers. But a group of iconophiles attacked and killed the emperor. A council was held to determine if icons would be allowed. And guess what was voted? Images were allowed, but not statues.

Num. 33:52: Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places:

Nestorian Christians in China develop missionary activities and build Christian monasteries. By 630 AD Christianity had been established in China, verified by the Nestorian Stele; it was a Tang Chinese stele erected in 781 AD documenting 150 years of Christianity in China.

In AD 816 the papacy asserts its earthly rule and establishes the Papal States in Italy. Pope Leo III (816 AD) separates from the Eastern Empire and becomes supreme bishop in the West.

During 855-857 AD the Catholic Church had a woman pope, Pope Joan, she disguised herself as a man.

In the 9th century missionary activities take the gospel to the Scandinavians and the Slavs.

In the 10th century Hungarians and Poles begin to convert to Christianity, and Christianity reaches Iceland and Greenland to the west.

During this century private confession develops from public confession in both Eastern and Western Churches. The Roman Church begins the concept of indulgences. An indulgence is payment for a pardon of certain types of sin. The Papacy reaches a low point in morality. Homework: read about the scandals the popes were involved in.

In 1054 AD the East-West Schism occurs in the Catholic Church. This ended the communion between what are now the Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodox churches. The eastern churches rejected papal authority and insisted that all Bishops were equal. Keep in mind who they referred to as Bishops.

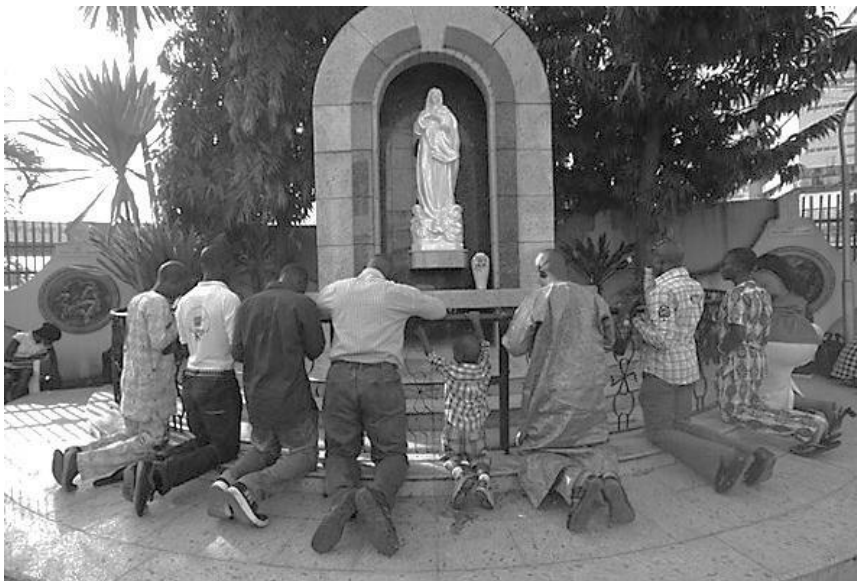
They also argued over the Holy Spirit: "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father (and the Son)". The Eastern churches did not believe in the second clause.

John 8:42: Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but **he sent me**.

John 15:26: But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even **the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father**, he shall testify of me:

They also argue over statues vs icons. Catholics claim they use icons and statues of Saints to help them learn how to live Holy lives and draw closer to Jesus. "We don't worship them, we have them as reminders, as inspiration." But the Law is clear.

Lev. 26:1 states that you are not to make or bow down to any image or statue! Do these in following picture look like they are just honoring the memory of Mary?



In 1066 William of Normandy conquers England.

In 1071 AD the Seljuk Turks conquer Armenia, ending the Byzantine Empire in Asia Minor.

In 1095 AD Pope Urban II proclaims the First Crusade to reclaim Jerusalem from the Moslems.

In 1099 AD the Crusaders take Jerusalem.

Next week we are going to look at several “true” Christian groups.

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 7

Dark Ages Continued 1100 – 1400 AD

I want to begin by point out that union of the church and state was devastating for Bible believing Christians. And as Baptists we know this and for this reason we believe that religion and politics should be separate.

Our past brethren suffered and died at the hands of religionists (a person adhering to a religion). As Baptists we do not adhere to the Baptist religion, there is no Baptist religion. We believe the Bible and live out faith according to the Bible.

That's what the last "S" in BAPTIST_S stands for: Separation of Church and State; God established both the church and the civil government, and gave each its own distinct sphere of operation. The government's purposes are outlined in Romans 13:1-7 and the church's purposes in Matthew 28:19-20. Neither should control the other, nor should there be an alliance between the two.

But, this does not mean that we should not influence government. We are commanded to pray for those in authority over us. When our government is doing something wrong, we should voice our opposition.

Romans 13:1: Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Romans 13:2: Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

1 Timothy 2:1: I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

1 Timothy 2:2: For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

So when I pray for my government, am I not asking God to intervene? Am I not asking God to change some things? When I pray for the peace of my city, I am doing so that I may have peace.

Jeremiah 29:7: And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

Psalms 122:6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

The Christians of the middle ages lost their peace because several hundred years prior Christians compromised and joined with the state to form the very organization that was persecuting them.

Notable Persecuted Christians Groups

Some of the groups I want to look at this evening are:

Paulicians, Paterins, Arnoldists, Albigenses, the Petrobrussians and Henricians.

It is hard to find information on these groups because their true history has been largely erased. Those who persecuted them not only put them to death but also destroyed their writings. And not only did they destroy their writing they promulgated a distorted history of these groups, accusing them of being heretics, evil, and strange.

So what their adversaries have written about them should be suspect.

The Paulicians

I want to spend some time on this group since they were very influential across Europe, their influence lasts for 6 centuries. They are vilified by secular historians.

For example, the Paulicians were founded in the mid-6th century by an Armenian named Constantine, this is what the Britannica says about the Paulicians:

The fundamental doctrine of the Paulicians was that there are two principles, an evil God and a good God; the former is the creator and ruler of this world, the latter of the world to come. From this they deduced that Jesus was not truly the son of Mary, because the good God could not have taken flesh and become man. They especially honoured the Gospel According to Luke and the Letters of St. Paul, rejecting the Old Testament and the Letters of St. Peter. They rejected the sacraments, the worship, and the hierarchy of the established church.

The New Advent website, a catholic website says this about the Paulicians:

“A dualistic heretical sect, derived originally from Manichaeism (keep this word in mind, we’ll come back to it). The origin of the name Paulician is obscure.”

“Their special veneration for the Apostle (Apostle Paul) and their habit of renaming their leaders after his disciples lend some colour to this view.”

Now, let’s look at this guy Constantine.

In the year 660 Constantine sheltered a Christian who was fleeing Mohammedan captivity in Syria. In gratitude to his host, the man gave to Constantine a copy of the four gospels and the epistles of Paul.

Gibbon, the author of "The Rise and Fall of Roman Empire" wrote: "These books became the measure of his studies and the rule of his faith; and the Catholics, who dispute his interpretation, acknowledge that his text was genuine and sincere."

So this guy Constantine begins teaching the people the true word of God.

Because Constantine was becoming popular and powerful, teaching doctrines which undermined the growing Catholic doctrines and practices, both Rome and Constantinople began a counter-attack. And because Constantine had been a Manichean, that was the charge used against him. Keep in mind, Paul was a Pharisee before he got saved.

What is Manichaeism?

Manichaeism was a major religious movement founded in the 3rd century by an Iranian prophet named Mani.

Manichaeism taught an elaborate dualistic cosmology describing the struggle between a good, spiritual world of light, and an evil, material world of darkness. Throughout human history, light is gradually removed from the world of matter and returned to the world of light.

By the 5th century this religion had spread across Europe in the west and had even reached China in the east. Constantine the Armenian was a Manichean before he got saved.

The Paulicians, Donatists, Albigenses and nearly every other Baptist group have been called "Manicheans" at some point or other by Catholicism. Bossuet, a Catholic himself, wrote this of them: "This so hidden a sect, so abominable, so full of seduction of superstition and hypocrisy, notwithstanding imperial laws which condemned its followers to death, yet maintained and diffused itself." In other words, it refused to be destroyed despite all that Catholicism could do.

In History of the Christian Church, Schaff devotes an entire section in chapter 4 of volume 4 discussing the "heretical beliefs" of the Paulicians. He too calls them Manicheans.

The error Schaff makes is that he judges who is heretical and who is not based on where they stand in comparison to Catholic doctrine. And what have we learned about Catholic doctrine? It has developed and has evolved over time.

Schaff says, "They were a strange mixture of dualism, demiurgism, docetism, mysticism and pseudo-Paulinism, and resemble in many respects the Gnostic system of Marcion." (Schaff, 576)

Why do Schaff, and other Church historians compare the beliefs of the Paulicians with those of Marcion (85-160 AD)?

Because he (Marcion) believed that the God of the Old Testament loved the Jews exclusively, Marcion rejected the entire Old Testament and also those New Testament writings that he thought favored Jewish readers—for example Matthew, Mark, Acts, and Hebrews. He also rejected other Christian writings that appeared to compromise his own views, including 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. Keep in mind, this was said of him by his critics.

In the end, Marcion's Bible (allegedly) contained an altered version of Luke and ten letters of Paul. "The Apostle of the Gentiles, it seems, was the only apostle who did not corrupt the gospel of Jesus."

So he was heretic because he believed Paul accurately preached the gospel of Christ?

Writing around 180 AD Irenaeus states the following regarding Marcion's beliefs, "with regard to those who allege that Paul alone knew the truth and that to him the mystery was manifest by revelation, let Paul convict himself." (Bercot, 419).

Tertullian states the following in 207 AD regarding what the Marcionites believed, "the Marcionites allege that Marcion did not so much innovate on the rule of faith by his separation of the Law and the Gospel, as restore it after it had been previously adulterated." (Bercot, 420).

We need to be very careful when passing judgment on Marcion. The things the church fathers (mostly Catholic) say about Marcion are very similar to the things our critics say about us Bible-believers: we worship Paul, we don't use the entire Bible, we cut and mutilate the Bible, etc.

So in most historic writings the Paulicians are to be considered heretics because they disagreed with Catholic Orthodoxy and that they were Manicheans because their founder was.

There were called Paulicians because they endeavored to follow the writing of the Apostle Paul.

More information on the Paulicians:

Regarding the Paulicians Thomas Armitage (History of the Baptists) says that "vast number of Catholics were converted (by the Paulicians). In fact the influence of the Paulicians was so strong that it created a war between Rome and Constantinople. The Eastern branch of Catholicism became convinced, for a time, that idol worship was sinful. In 726 Leo Isauricus, the Emperor, issued an edit prohibiting idolatry. The Roman Pontiff saw this as an attack upon his spiritual authority, and Catholic blood was shed. Unfortunately disorder was restored and the state church turned its swords again on the Paulicians. In 832 the Empress Theodora instituted an organized persecution which culminated in the deaths of more than one hundred thousand

Paulicians in Armenia. And in a real historical anomaly there was a time when the Paulicians lived among the Muslims, the Mussulmans, to save their people from total extermination – genocide.”

As early as the 11th century mention was made of a Paulician document called the “Key of Truth” but up to that time it had never been found. Then in 1891, Frederick Conybeare, a fellow of the University College, Oxford, no friend of the Baptists, was making a study of the history of Armenia, and the Lord led him to a copy of the “Key of Truth.” He was able to obtain a copy from a library in Edjmiatzin and eight years later he produced a translation. For the first time the Paulicians were able to defend their theology. And they openly denied that they were Manicheans.

J.T. Christian says, “Turning to the doctrines and practices of the Paulicians we find that they made constant use of the Old and New Testaments (and nothing more). They had no orders in the clergy as distinguished from laymen by their modes of living, their dress, or other things; they had no councils or similar institutions. Their teachers were of equal rank. They strove diligently for the simplicity of the apostolic life. They opposed all image worship which was practiced in the Roman Catholic Church. The miraculous relics were a heap of bones and ashes, destitute of life and of virtue. They held to the orthodox view of the Trinity; and to the human nature and substantial sufferings of the Son of God. Baptist views prevailed among the Paulicians. They held that men must repent and believe, and then at a mature age ask for baptism, which alone admitted them into the church. ‘It is evident,’ observes Mosheim, ‘they rejected the baptism of infants.’ They baptized and rebaptized by immersion. They would have been taken for downright Anabaptists.”

In the year 970 the Eastern Emperor John Tzimisces gave permission and support to a group of Paulicians to move from Armenia to Thrace the most eastern part of Europe across the Bosphorus. North of Thrace was Romania and to the west was Macedonia and the Adriatic Sea. Tzimisces granted to the Paulicians, total religious liberty, and in turn those people granted it to others. And from there the doctrines of the New Testament were spread across Europe.

The Paterins

About the year 1040, under the leadership of Arialduus (Arialdo), a deacon of Milan, the Paterins/Patarenes (Patarini in Italian), a group craftsmen, tradesmen, and peasants organized in Milan to oppose clerical concubinage (priests who kept concubines in defiance of clerical marriage laws). They also opposed the papacy’s moral corruption and temporal powers. This group though, had no connection to the Catholic Church, they rejected Jerome of Syria, Augustine of Africa, Gregory of Rome, and Ambrose of Milan; considering them, and all other

pretended fathers, as corrupters of Christianity. They particularly condemned pope Sylvester, as Antichrist. They called (the adoration of) the cross the mark of the beast.

They believed a Christian church ought to consist of only good people; a church had no power to frame any constitutions; it was not right to take oaths; it was not lawful to kill mankind...faith without works could not save a man; the church ought not to persecute any, even the wicked...there was no need of priests, especially the wicked ones; the sacraments, orders, and ceremonies of the church of Rome were futile...

This group flourished for about 200 years. In the 13th century the name was appropriated by the Cathari (also known as the Albigenses), who said it came from patire ("to suffer"), because they endured hardship for their faith.

The Arnoldists

Arnold of Brescia/Arnaldo da Brescia (1100-1155 AD), born in the Republic of Venice, was an outspoken critic of the clerical wealth, corruption, and temporal power of the popes. He was from the monastery at Brescia, where in 1137 he participated in a popular revolt against the government of Bishop Manfred. His teaching caused him to be condemned as a schismatic by Pope Innocent II in 1139.

He fled to France, and then to Zurich. He was considered a reformer (tried to reform the Catholic Church). He was executed by the Roman church in Rome, in 1155 A.D. After his death his followers were called "Arnoldists."

Reforming a corrupt organization from within never works.

Rev. 18:4: And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. (see also Jeremiah 51:44-45)

This verse was used by Martin Luther as a call to leave Rome. But this verse has to do with the Jews who will become entangled with the Roman Catholic Church during the Tribulation.

The Albigenses

Albigenses (AKA Cathari) come from the city of Albi (formerly known as Albige); historians say they were the members of a heretical sect in southern France in the 12th–13th centuries, identified with the Cathars. Their teaching was a form of **Manichaeism** dualism, with an extremely strict moral and social code.

Pope Innocent III called for an Albigensian Crusade (1209–29) against the Cathari (Albigenses), a dualist religious movement in southern France that the Roman Catholic Church had branded

heretical. Although the Crusade did not eliminate Catharism, it eventually enabled the French king to establish his authority over the south.

These Albigenses were Paulicians who migrated there from the Balkan Peninsula because the local governor gave them his protection.

The Petrobrussians and Henricians

The Petrobrussians were named after their famous leader Peter de Bruys. They appeared in southern France in the early 12th century and numbered in the hundreds of thousands. After he was martyred, Peter was succeeded by a preacher named Henry, from which the name Henricians comes.

Historians agree that the Petrobrussians appeared in the South of France about 1104. Kurtz says of Peter de Bruys: "He rejected the outward or visible church, and only acknowledged the true, invisible church in the hearts of believers. In his opinion all churches and sanctuaries should be destroyed, since God might be worshipped in a stable or tavern. He used crucifixes for cooking purposes; inveighed (speak or wrote with great hostility) against celibacy, the mass and infant baptism; and after twenty years of continued disturbance ended his days at the stake by the hands of an infuriated mob, 1124. He was succeeded by one of his associates, Henry of Lausanne, formerly a monk of the order of Clugny. Under him the sect of the Petrobrussians greatly increased in numbers."

Now why do we harp on Catholicism? We do not bash Catholics; we point the errors of their religion. When we get to the book of Revelation, we will see that the false prophet, who I believe is a future pope, will bring the world under one world religion, and institute the mark of the beast. In the book of Revelation an entire chapter is devoted to the Catholic Church (chapter 18).

Important Dates:

In 1123 AD Pope Calixtus II called a council where 300 bishops were present. At this meeting it was decreed that Roman priests were never to marry. This was called the Celibacy of the priests. The reason was financial; the church was losing money when the priests retired or died as their wealth went to their surviving families.

In 1147 the Second Crusade (supported by Bernard of Clairvaux) fails, with most Crusaders dying in Asia Minor.

In 1187 the Crusaders lose Jerusalem

In 1190 the German Hospitalers (an Order of Knights who separated from the Roman Catholic Church) and became “Protestant” in northern Germany and the Netherlands.

Belief in Immaculate Conception of Mary spreads. Immaculate Conception is the conception of the Virgin Mary free from original sin by virtue of the merits of her son Jesus. Pope Pius IX declared the Immaculate Conception of Mary an article of faith on December 8, 1854.

In 1170 Pope Alexander III established rules for the canonization of saints, the same year Thomas Becket (Archbishop of Canterbury who has disputer with King Henry II) is murdered in England. Becket is canonized in 1173.

In 1173 the Waldensian movement begins in Lyons, seeking truth in Bible rather than medieval tradition. The church persecutes these devout believers sometimes seen as predecessors of Protestant reformation.

In 1204 Europeans, with Vienna taking the lead, capture Constantinople.

In 1212 the Children's crusade starts

With Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) the papacy was at the height of its powers. He affirmed all churches were under his control. He developed theory of papal power that allowed him to interfere in political affairs of nations. He approved 4th Crusade, established Dominicans and Franciscans, he instituted the inquisition, joining powers of church and state to punish heretics.

In 1215 Fourth Lateran Council summarized and reinforced medieval doctrines and practices.

Thomas Aquinas (a Catholic theologian) summarizes Scholastic Theology in his Summa Theologica, 1271, writing, *Intelligo ut Credam* “I understand, in order that I may believe.”

The Papacy, having reached its high point with Innocent III (1160-1216), begins a decline under Boniface VIII (c. 1234-1303).

In 1302 the Papal bull “Unam sanctum” by Boniface pronounces the highest papal claims to supremacy: One God, One Faith, One Spiritual Authority (the Catholic Church).

John Wycliffe transforms Oxford into the spiritual center of England. Looks to the Scriptures for authority and truth. In 1382 Wycliffe is expelled from Oxford, translates Bible into English, and trains lay preachers to spread the gospel.

In 1398 John Hus begins lecturing on theology at Prague University and spreads Wycliffe's ideas.

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 8

Reformation 1400 – 1600 AD

These three centuries, 15th, 16th, and 17th are among the most eventful in all the world's history, and especially in Christian history. There was almost a continual revolution inside the Catholic Church (Roman and Greek—West and East) seeking a Reformation. This evening we are going to look at the 15th and 16th centuries.

This produced a desire for a genuine reformation from several elements within the Catholic Church. We mentioned during the 13th century the power of the Roman Catholic Church began declining.

One such reformer was Arnold of Brescia and he was executed by the Roman Church in 1155 AD. We mentioned him last week. But before we talk about the upcoming reformation we need to look a grim, dark period (not that there was any time period during which Mystery Babylon enjoyed any light) in the history of the Roman Church and this was the Spanish Inquisition which began in 15th century.

In 1478, the Catholic Monarchs began the famous Inquisition to purify Catholicism in all their territories. This was a tribunal to identify heretics and bring them to justice. Another underlying motive of this inquisition in Spain was the eradication of the Jew. There was within Europe an element of hatred between Jews and Christians (Catholics) of that time period. Anyone who felt wronged could accuse the offender of being Jewish and that was enough reason for them to face the tribunal.

Government and church officials felt it important to spread “real Catholicism”. They made laws forbidding intermarriage between Christians and Jews or converts in order to keep purity of blood and thus many Jews fled from Spain.

The Spanish elite had felt threatened by the growing Jewish population and their economic clout. Haven't we heard this before?

Exodus 1: 8-10: Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.

The Spanish Inquisition was the culmination of the many Inquisitions the Catholic Church launched to stamp out heretics (Bible believing Christians); do you remember when we discussed the Albigensian Crusade in South France?

The Portuguese Inquisition formally started in Portugal in 1536 AD at the request of King João (John) III.

As the reformation was taking shape, in 1542 AD Pope Paul III established the Congregation of the Holy Office of the Inquisition (AKA Roman Inquisition) as a permanent congregation staffed with cardinals and other officials. This office was tasked to maintain and defend the integrity of the faith (Catholic) and of pointing out false doctrine (what irony). A famous case tried by the Roman Inquisition was that of Galileo Galilei in 1633. He was condemned to death because he supported heliocentrism.

As we have said before, and we repeat: Catholicism is the foe, not the Catholics. They are as much victims as the Christians they martyred.

John 16:2: They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

It is estimated that 50-68 million people were killed by Rome during the inquisitions. Catholic apologists refute this claim citing the population of Europe at a rebuttal; during the Middle Ages it is thought that the population Europe may have been 100-120 million. "How could you kill half the population of an entire continent?" Keep in mind that the inquisitions transpired over a period of about 300-400 years, perhaps longer.

Dowling in his *History of Romanism* says, "From the birth of Popery in 606 AD to the present time, it is estimated by careful and credible historians, that more than fifty millions of the human family, have been slaughtered for the crime of heresy by popish persecutors, an average of more than forty thousand religious murders for every year of the existence of popery." *History of Romanism*, pp. 541, 542. New York: 1871.

Samuel Clarke's Martyrology counts the number of Waldensian martyrs during the first half of the 13th century in France alone at two million.

Estimates range up to 7 to 12 million for the number who died (includes military deaths and those who died by famine and disease) during the thirty years' war (1618 to 1648 AD). The Thirty Years' War was a 17th century religious conflict fought primarily in central Europe, it started off as a battle between the Catholic and Protestant states that formed the Holy Roman Empire. In the end it became less about religion and more about which group would ultimately govern Europe.

Romans 8:36: As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

You can read Fox's Book of Martyrs [here](#):

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/history/foxs-book-of-martyrs/>

Now we're going to look at the reformation proper. Throughout the centuries several priests tried to reform the Roman Church from within. How do you think that worked out?

John Wycliffe (1320 to 1384 AD)

Last week we introduced you to a character named John Wycliffe. Why he was important? Did you know he was a Catholic priest? He is referred to in history as "The Morning Star of the Reformation." I don't like this title. Who can tell me why? (see Rev. 2:28; 22:16). Who is called the "morning star" one modern translation? (see Isaiah 14:12 in NIV) For some homework find out who the **Day Star** is. BTW in Hebrew it says: הֵיְלֵל בֶּן-שַׁחַר *heylel ben-shachar* (*light-bearer son-morning*).

John Wycliffe had the courage to attempt a real reformation inside the Catholic Church. He was hated by the leaders of the Catholic hierarchy and his life was persistently sought. He finally died of paralysis. But years later, so great was Catholic hatred toward him, his bones were dug and burned, and his ashes scattered upon the waters. In 1382 he translated the Latin Vulgate into Middle English (1150 to 1470 AD), known as Wycliffe's Bible. FYI Old English, the language of the Anglo-Saxons, was from around 5th - 6th centuries to 1150 AD; it was first written in runes but shifted to the Latin alphabet around the 9th century. Modern English was from 1470 AD to present; minor changes occurred in the 17th century (thee and thou dropped among others); the KJV is considered by scholars to be written in modern English.

Wycliffe, John 3:16: For God louede so the world, that he yaf his `oon bigetun sone, that ech man that bileueth in him perische not, but haue euerlastynge lijf.

Anglo-Saxon (995 AD) **16 God lufode middan-eard swá, ðæt
he sealde his án-cennedan sunu, ðæt
nán ne forweorde ðe on hine gelyf
ac hæbbe ðæt éce lif.**

<https://archive.org/details/gothicandanglos00ulfgoog/page/n500>

He was followed by other notable reformers, John Huss (1373-1415 AD) of Bohemia (present-day Czech Republic) and Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498 AD) an Italian Dominican friar. Both John Huss and Savonarola were burned at the stake.

Now as we get into the "thick" of the reformation I want to remind you that Baptists did not come out of the reformation, we have covered this extensively in previous lessons. There is no Baptist "religion."

Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531 AD)

Zwingli was a leader of the Reformation in Switzerland. He attended the University of Vienna and the University of Basel while he served as a pastor in Glarus and later in Einsiedeln, where he was influenced by the writings of Erasmus (more on him later).

In 1519, Zwingli became the pastor of the Grossmünster in Zürich where he began to preach ideas on reforming the Catholic Church. He attacked the custom of fasting during Lent, he noted corruption in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, he promoted clerical marriage, and attacked the use of images in places of worship. In 1525, Zwingli introduced a new communion liturgy to replace the Mass. Zwingli also clashed with the Anabaptists, which resulted in their persecution.

The Anabaptists

Here we take a break from discussing the reformers and take a look at this group. The Anabaptist movement began in 1525 AD (given because at this date Zwingli parted company, but their origins are uncertain). The reformers wanted to change “the church” from within and when their movements led them away from Catholicism, many practices were changed; but infant baptism, the accepted mode for most of Christian history, was not.

These reformers (Anabaptists) didn’t feel the reformation was going far enough. They completely broke away and wanted a more pure church, a self-governing church, free of government influence.

They also believed that only adults should be baptized (and we know why). This would then require their members to be re-baptized after conversion; hence they were called “Anabaptists” or “re-baptizers”. “Ana-” meaning “re-” in Greek and “baptism” meaning “immersion.” Remember, refusing infant baptism was considered a capital offense by the Roman Catholic Church.

Their movement is also known as the Radical Reformation. Because their ideas seemed radical they were even persecuted by the reformers, Zwingli as perfect example. Calvin labeled them as “poor fools”, “scatterbrains”, “ignoramus” and “enemies of the government”, and the Catholics associated them with the Devil, labeling them “messengers of the Antichrist.”

For the next 200 years or so the Anabaptists spread throughout central Europe, and were known as the Dutch Mennonites, the South and Central German Anabaptists, the Swiss Brethren, and the Moravian Anabaptists.

Martin Luther (1483 – 1546 AD)

Martin Luther was perhaps the most noted of all the 15th and 16th century reformers. What Luther learned from his predecessors and from their hard experience was that a genuine reformation inside the Catholic Church would be utterly impossible.

He too had fought hard battles with the leaders of Catholicism, and aided by Melancthon and other prominent Germans eventually founded the Lutheran Church in 1530 AD.

This was the first of the new organizations to come directly out of Rome and renounce all allegiance to the Catholic Mother Church.

Another such organization was the Church of England, though Henry VIII separated from Rome because they wouldn't annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon so he could marry Anne Boleyn. Funny though, he never became a Protestant, he died a Catholic.

Martin Luther is best known for nailing his 95 theses at Wittenberg in 1517 AD which stirred Germany and Europe in a matter of months. Martin Luther was converted when he read the book of Romans and realized that justification was by faith alone and not of works.

John Calvin (1509 - 1564 AD)

Another reformer of note was a Frenchman named John Calvin, a contemporary of Martin Luther, who lived in Switzerland. We mention John Calvin because he was a fierce reformer, and endeavored to turn the city of Geneva into a theocracy.

Calvin is credited as being the founder of the Presbyterian Church. Some historians, however, give that credit to Zwingli. Calvin was a staunch advocate of infant Baptism; he believed the abrogation of infant baptism was a violation of God's will. John Calvin wrote that because the Jews did not "reciprocate" as willing partners in God's covenant, "they deserve to be repudiated."

He developed the system of Christian theology later called Calvinism, aspects of which include the doctrines of predestination and of the absolute sovereignty of God in salvation of the human soul. Predestination (in regards to salvation) was not taught by the early church fathers, even Calvin attests to this fact. As independent Baptists we greatly differ with the theology of Calvin.

John Knox, a disciple of Calvin, established the first Presbyterian Church in Scotland, and just thirty-two years later, in 1592 AD, the Presbyterian became the State Church of Scotland.

Aside from the Anabaptists the sad result of the reformers was that they founded churches that eventually became in their own right, Established Churches; and today these churches are slowly making their way back to the “mother” church.

In the beginning of their founding, many of these protestant churches persecuted one another, and they even persecuted Christians who did not believe as they did. And in England the Protestants began persecuting the Catholics.

The Puritans (16th – 17th century)

The Puritans trace their lineage to John Calvin (they adopted Reformed theology and, in that sense, were Calvinists). One major issue (among others) I have with Reformed Theology is their belief that the promises to Israel are completely fulfilled in the New Testament church.

The Puritans were English Protestants who sought to “purify” the Church of England of Roman Catholic practices, maintaining that the Church of England had not been fully reformed and needed to become more Protestant.

Even though many Puritans contributed to the King James translation, as a group they opposed it preferring the Geneva Bible.

Bloody Mary (1516 – 1558 AD)

Remember King Henry VIII divorce? He had a daughter with first wife, Catherine of Aragon—Mary Tudor. When she ascended to the throne in 1553 she tried to undo the reformation.

Known as “Bloody Mary,” she wanted to bring Church of English throne back under the papal power. She had 280 dissenter burned at the stake.

When her half-sister, Elizabeth I, came to the throne after Mary's death, she made England Protestant again.

Eastern Europe

The reformation never took hold in Eastern Europe. Most of southeastern Europe was eventually invaded by the Ottoman Turks. The Ottoman Empire came into its own when Mehmed II captured the Byzantine Empire's capital, Constantinople (now Istanbul), in 1453 AD.

Even though the Muslim Turks considered Jews and Christians as Dhimmi (status of non-Muslim subjects in an Islamic polity who had to pay the jizya, a per capita yearly tax) they afforded them religious tolerance.

What the Ottoman invasion did was cause migration waves of Byzantine scholars and émigrés (persons who emigrated, often with a connotation of political or social self-exile) in the period following the sacking of Constantinople. This migration is considered by many scholars key to the revival of Greek and Roman studies that led to the development of the Renaissance in Western Europe. These émigrés brought to Western Europe the relatively well-preserved remnants and accumulated knowledge of their own (Greek) civilization, which had mostly not survived the Dark Ages in the West.

They also brought with them the Greek language and the Byzantine NT texts, which too had been largely lost in the West (remember the burnings of religious texts and materials by the Catholics?).

Erasmus (1466 – 1536 AD)

One individual who contributed greatly to reformation was Erasmus, known as Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus. In 1516 AD he produced the first edition of the Greek NT from the “Byzantine” manuscripts available to him. This text was called the Textus Receptus (Latin for Received Text). He was a Dutch Renaissance humanist, Catholic priest, social critic, teacher, and theologian; he was born Gerard Gerardson in 1466.

Often you will hear that he employed humanist techniques for working on texts; this not true. He was an honest scholar and stuck to the manuscripts.

Martin Luther used Erasmus’ second edition (1519) of the Textus Receptus and translated it into German sparking the reformation. This created a renewed interest in the Scriptures; they believed, and rightly so, that they had the copies of the words spoken by the Holy Spirit. Since that time they only had the Latin Vulgate.

Psalms 12:6: The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

Psalms 12:7: Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.

Since there have been many editions of Textus Receptus, each differing very little from each other...topic for another lesson.

Critics accuse the Textus Receptus of coming from late medieval Byzantine texts. But they do not tell you that these Byzantine texts were not corrupted as were the so-called early “Latin” texts. And this fact is demonstrable. A manuscript that is well used will need to be copied over and over again, look at your Bibles.

The Latin Vulgate was copied by Jerome (an ascetic) from the Old Latin or Italia Version in 150 AD. That Latin Vulgate was a corruption of the Old Latin produced by Jerome.

2 Cor. 2:17: For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

The scriptures were being corrupted even in Paul's day.

Erasmus was very critical of the abuses within the Catholic Church and called for reform, but kept his distance from Luther and Melancthon. He held to the doctrine such as that of free will, which some Reformers rejected in favor of the Augustinian doctrine of predestination; Augustine (a Catholic theologian) in 396 AD...a topic for further study.

Summary

Before the close of the 16th century, there were five established Churches (churches backed up by civil governments) the Roman Catholics (Holy Roman Empire), Greek Orthodox (Byzantine Empire), the Church of England, the Lutheran, or Church of Germany, and the Church of Scotland, now known as the Presbyterian. All of them were bitter in their hatred and persecution of the people called Ana-Baptists, Waldenses and all other non-established churches, churches which never in any way had been connected with the Catholics.

Their struggle for reformation had been forgotten. Many more thousands, including both women and children were constantly perishing every day in the yet unending persecutions.

True Christian remnants were finding refuge in the friendly Alps and other hiding places over the world.

Lutherans and Catholics made peace at a council held at Augsburg in 1555, a treaty of peace, known as the "Peace of Augsburg." They agreed not to persecute each other. "You let us alone, and we will let you alone." For Catholics to fight Lutherans meant war with Germany, and for Lutherans to fight or persecute Catholics meant war with all the countries where Catholicism predominated.

Important date: In August of **1492 AD** Columbus left Spain in search of a new world, after a stopover in the Canary Islands he made landfall in the Americas on 12 October in what is now the Bahamas (this day is now celebrated as Columbus Day). He arrived back in Spain in early 1493, bringing a number of captive natives with him.

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 9

I want to start by reading a quote from Charles Spurgeon (From *The New Park Street Pulpit*, Vol. VII, Page 225).

“We believe that the Baptists are the original Christians. We did not commence our existence at the reformation, we were reformers before Luther or Calvin were born; we never came from the Church of Rome, for we were never in it, but we have an unbroken line up to the apostles themselves. We have always existed from the very days of Christ, and our principles, sometimes veiled and forgotten, like a river which may travel underground for a little season, have always had honest and holy adherents. Persecuted alike by Romanists and Protestants of almost every sect, yet there has never existed a Government holding Baptist principles which persecuted others; nor I believe any body of Baptists ever held it to be right to put the consciences of others under the control of man. We have ever been ready to suffer, as our martyrologies will prove, but we are not ready to accept any help from the State, to prostitute the purity of the Bride of Christ to any alliance with the government, and we will never make the Church, although the Queen, the despot over the consciences of men.”

Summary of Reformation

The Protestant Reformation was the internal upheaval of the Catholic Church that splintered it and set in place structures and beliefs that would define Europe for centuries to come.

In northern and central Europe, reformers like Martin Luther, John Calvin and Henry VIII challenged papal authority and questioned the Catholic Church's authority to define Christian practice.

They pushed for a redistribution of power from one central authority into the hands of Bible and pamphlet reading pastors and princes.

The upheaval resulted in wars, persecutions and the Counter-Reformation, which was the Catholic Church's delayed but forceful response to the Protestants.

Counter-Reformation brought about the Council of Trent (1545-1563 AD) where Catholic reaffirmed their doctrine. The Jesuit order becomes the defender of the Catholic Church and begins sending missionaries abroad.

It was because Luther and other reformers turned to the Bible as the only reliable source of instruction versus trusting in the teachings of the Church that the reformation occurred. Up until this time, Bible believing Christians were hunted down and killed by this established religion.

Luther protested the pope's sale of reprieves from penance, or indulgences. He understood that salvation was by grace through faith, and not of works. He recognized the priesthood of all believers.

The is the "P" in BAPTISTS. Priesthood of the believer.

1 Peter 2:5: Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

1Peter 2:9: But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

(See also Rev. 1:5-6)

The invention of the printing press in 1439 by a German, Johannes Gutenberg, a goldsmith by profession, together with the translation of the Bible into the vernacular (the common languages of French, Italian, German, English, etc.) meant that it was now possible for those that could read to learn directly from Bible without having to rely on a priest or other church officials to teach them the Bible.

Before this time, the Bible was available in Latin, the ancient language of Rome spoken by the Catholic clergy. In addition, the Catholic Church held the position that the writings of the "Church Fathers" and the decrees of the Catholic Church and the infallible declarations of Pope were just as authoritative as the Bible.

We need to be reminded that the Catholic forbade common people from reading the Bible, and collected and burned any texts or religious materials that the people possessed. The Bible was reserved for the clergy alone. At Council of Toulouse in 1229 AD, which was called by Folquet de Marselha, the Bishop of Toulouse, the Roman Catholic made it illegal for laity (non-clergy) to read vernacular translations of the Bible.

The rebuttal Catholics give for keeping the word or from the people is to prevent their private interpretation of it; i.e. they may err if they misinterpret it.

2 Peter 1:20: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

Before the printing press, books were hand written and extremely expensive. The invention of the printing press and the translation of the bible into the vernacular meant that for the first time in history, the Bible was available to those outside of the Church. And now, a direct relationship to God, unmediated by the Catholic Church, was possible.

When Luther and other reformers looked to the words of the Bible (renewed by the influx of Greek manuscripts from Byzantine scholars) they found that many of the practices and teachings of the Church did not match Christ's teaching, especially regarding salvation.

The reformers based their faith on the supreme authority of the Bible. They stressed the importance of "sola scriptura" (Scripture alone).

John 17:17: Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

2 Tim. 3:16: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Heb. 4:12: For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Because as believers we view the Bible as our only authority on all matters of faith and practice, there could never be a satisfactory debate between us and the Catholics; there could never possibly be a basis of final agreement. The Bible alone can never settle anything so far as the Catholics are concerned.

We are reminded of the attitude the Jews had toward Jesus:

John 5:39: Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

John 5:40: And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

1601 AD – 1800 AD

England begins to establish colonies in North America, many with the purpose of spreading Christianity or establishing more Biblical Christian governments. Jamestown in Virginia established in 1607 AD was the first permanent English settlement in the Americas. The Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock in 1620 AD, and the Puritans established the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630 AD. The Bible they brought over to America was the 1599 Geneva Bible; it was first translated between 1557-1560 AD and revised in 1599.

In 1611 AD the King James Version of the English Bible was released. This Bible shaped and molded the English language for over three centuries. It is still in use today; we use the 1769 Blaney edition, also known as the Oxford Edition.

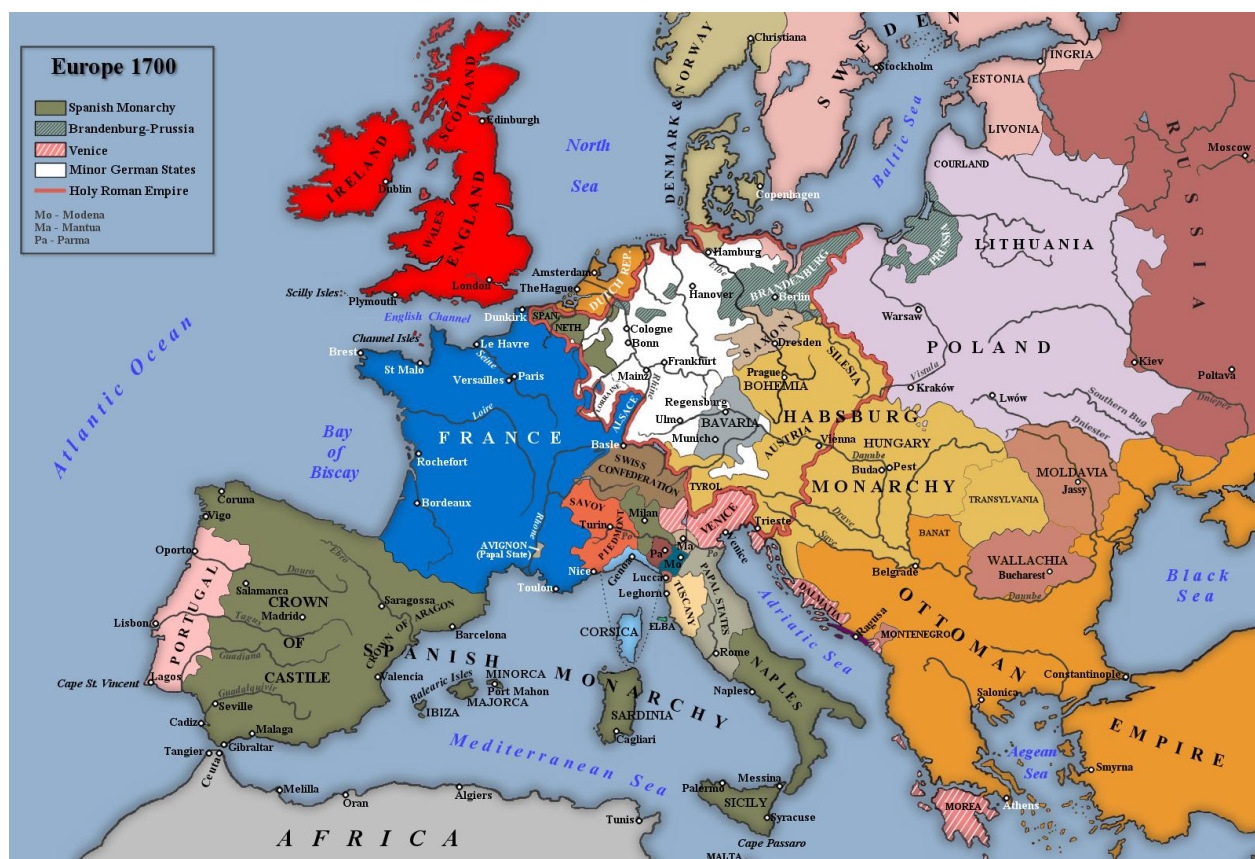
In 1769 AD Dr. Benjamin Blayney revised the King James Bible from Dr. Samuel Johnson's edition of 1755 AD. Only some spelling, punctuation, and grammar were updated.

The KJV is the only current English translation in use to have been exclusively translated from the Greek Textus Receptus and the Masoretic Hebrew text.

It is incredible how the invention of the printing press coincided with the reformation. The scriptures are now becoming available to the common people.

Keep in mind, that wasn't only one reformation, but many: Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Tyndale, the Anabaptists. Etc. each influencing their communities with the gospel of Christ. I believe it was a movement by the Holy Spirit brought about with a renewed interest in God's word.

The reformation also brought about political change, resulting in the development of modern states in Europe.



From: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Europe,_1700%E2%80%94941714.png

Each state was now establishing their “own church” apart from Rome, and without influence from Rome.

England: Church of England

Spain, Portugal and France remain Roman Catholic

Denmark, Norway, Sweden: Lutheran

Habsburg Monarchy (later Austria–Hungary): Mostly Catholic, but other religions were recognized.

Holy Roman Empire: Roman Catholic with Lutherans officially recognized in the Peace of Augsburg of 1555, Calvinism in the Peace of Westphalia of 1648. Anabaptists and Arminians (free will to believe and conditional salvation), and others coexisted illegally within the Empire.

Peace of Westphalia

The Peace of Westphalia refers to a pair of treaties (the Treaty of Münster and the Treaty of Osnabrück) signed in October and May 1648 which ended both the Thirty Years' War (Holy Roman Empire war between Catholic and Protestant states) and the Eighty Years' War (Benelux freedom from Spain).

The peace resulting from this treaty is often used by historians to mark the beginning of the modern era. Each ruler would have the right to determine their state's religion—thus, by law, Protestantism and Catholicism were equal.

In church history we use this date to mark the start of the Philadelphian church age or period. It is characterized by a love for God's word and noted for the great missionary movements that began in that era.

Congregationalists

This was a Christian movement that arose in England in the late 16th and 17th centuries. Congregationalist churches (also Congregational) were Protestant churches (from the reformation) that began practicing congregationalist church governance. Each congregation independently and autonomously was running its own affairs. They were originally called "independents" and still called that in Welsh speaking communities.

These new "organizations" brought upon themselves bitter persecution from Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian and Church of England adherents (all the established churches). But regrettably they retained many of the Catholic errors, such as infant baptism, pouring or sprinkling for baptism, and later adopted and practiced the church and state idea. And, after leaving for refuge to America, they themselves, became very bitter persecutors; the irony of it all.

The principles of the English Congregationalists as given in Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia are as follows:

1. That Jesus Christ is the only head of the church and that the word of God is its only statute book.
2. That visible churches are distinct assemblies of Godly men gathered out of the world for purely religious purposes, and not to be confounded with the world.
3. That these separate churches have full power to choose their own officers and to maintain discipline.
4. That in respect to their internal management they are each independent of all other churches and equally independent of state control.

Persecution Continues

During the 17th century persecution of the Waldenses, Ana-Baptists, and Baptists (in some places the “Ana” was being left off) was severe in England and carried out by the Church of England, as John Bunyan and many others testify.

In Germany persecution by the Lutherans; in Scotland persecution by the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian); in Italy, in France, and in every other place where the papacy was in power, persecution by the Catholics. The state churches are persecuting those who do not agree with them.

Ana-baptists are now being called “Baptists.” It was a nickname used by their enemies.

The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, under *History of Baptists in Europe*, Vol. 1, page 210, says: “The Baptists appeared first in Switzerland about 1523, where they were persecuted by Zwingle and the Romanists. They are found in the following years, 1525-1530, with large churches fully organized, in Southern Germany, Tyrol and in middle Germany. In all these places persecutions made their lives bitter.”

(Note, all this is prior to the founding of the Protestant churches)

“Moravia promised a home of greater freedom, and thither many Baptists migrated, only to find their hopes deceived. After 1534 AD they were numerous in Northern Germany, Holland, Belgium, and the Walloon provinces. They increased even during Alva’s (the Iron Duke) rule, in the Low Countries (Benelux), and developed a wonderful missionary zeal.”

So where did these Baptists come from? They did not come out of the Catholics during the Reformation. They had large churches prior to the Reformation.

Christianity in Early England

The gospel was carried to England by early Christians (see Welch Baptists) and not by the reformers. Early Christianity in England was in the “apostolic” form until the beginning of the

fourth century, and then came under the power of the Hierarchy which was rapidly developing into the Catholic Church.

It remained Catholic until the split in 1534-1535 AD, during the reign of Henry VIII. It was then called the Church of England. Eighteen years later, 1553-1558 AD, during the reign of Queen Mary ("Bloody Mary") England was Catholic again. The Catholics were again overthrown when Elizabeth I (the half-sister of Mary, the daughter of Anna Boleyn) became queen in 1558 AD and again the Church of England came into power. A century later the Presbyterian Church was in charge, but following the time of Oliver Cromwell, the Church of England came back and has remained the established **Church of England** ever since.

England passed the first toleration act in 1688 AD, one hundred and fifty-four years after the beginning of this church. This act permitted the worship of all denominations in England except two: the Catholics and the Unitarians (no trinity and Jesus was not God). I wonder why?

The second toleration act came in 1778 AD, this act included in the toleration of Catholics, but still excluded the Unitarians.

The third toleration act came in 1813 AD, thirty-five years later and this included the Unitarians.

In 1828-1829 AD England repealed the "Test Acts," a series of penal laws that served as a religious test for public office and imposed various civil disabilities on Roman Catholics and nonconformists. Only people taking communion in the established Church of England were eligible for public employment; severe penalties were levied on those who disobeyed.

In 1836-37 AD and 1844 AD came the "Registration" and "Marriage" acts. These two acts made legal baptisms and marriages performed by "dissenters."

The "Reform Bill" came in 1854 AD. This bill opened the doors of Oxford and Cambridge Universities to dissenting students. Up to this time no child of a "dissenter" could enter one of these great institutions.

Thus was the progress of "religious liberty" in England. But it is true that real religious liberty can never come into any country where there is and is to remain an established church. At best, it can only be toleration. This is what it means to believe in separation of church and state.

2 Cor. 3:17: Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

In the beginning of the 18th century there were three born in England who left the world with a deep and unfading impression: John and Charles Wesley, and George Whitfield.

John and Charles Wesley were born at Epworth, the former June 28, 1703, and the latter March 29, 1708. George Whitfield was born in Gloucester, December 27, 1714. These three men

became the fathers and founders of Methodism. They were all three members of the Church of England and all studying for the ministry; and yet at that time, not one of them was converted (for that time this was not unusual among the English clergy).

They had an earnest desire for a revival of pure religion and a genuine spiritual reformation in the Church of England. This they tried in both England and America. But how did you think that worked out for them?

Their first annual conference in England was held in 1744 AD. The Methodist Episcopal Church was officially organized in America, in Baltimore in 1784 AD. But as many reformers, they too brought with them a number of the errors from the mother and grandmother church. Examples are: the Episcopacy (a preacher-church government), Infant Baptism and sprinkling for baptism.

John Bunyan (1628 – 1688 AD)

John Bunyan is one of the most celebrated men in English history and even in world history. He was a Baptist preacher and writer. He spent twelve years in Bedford jail for preaching. While confined in jail, he wrote one of the most celebrated and most widely circulated book, next to the Bible: *Pilgrim's Progress*, an example of the bitterness of Christian persecution.

Welch Baptists

Many early Baptists of the United States trace their history to Wales. Many Welch Baptists migrated in a body from Wales to the United States.

Historians believe that Claudia and Pudens were from Wales went to Rome, were converted by Paul and returned, carrying the gospel back to Wales (Acts 28:30-31; 2 Tim. 4:21).

The British story says that Claudia was a beautiful and talented British princess, who meets and falls in love with Pudens, a wealthy young Roman aristocrat and officer in the Roman army, during the invasion of Britain. The happy couple marry and move to Rome where they become Christians and close friends of the apostle Paul. Sadly, the story ends with their children all dying as Christian martyrs.

Pudens has been identified as the second in command of the Roman forces in Britain, under Aulus Plautius.

<https://ensignmessage.com/articles/the-incredible-history-of-gods-true-church-5-the-end/>

Next week we are going to look at several missionary movements and Baptist history in the US.

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 10

Religion in the United States

Many colonists came to America from Europe in search of religious freedom. But the history of religious freedom in America was a violent one. As the colonists came to America, they brought their own religion with them. And guess what? They persecuted each other and often fought pitched battles where people were killed.

The Pilgrims came to America aboard the Mayflower in search of religious freedom in 1620. The Puritans soon followed, for the same reason. But before them came the Huguenots (French Protestants) in 1564 and established a colony at Fort Caroline (near modern Jacksonville, Florida). The French pilgrims too had come to America in search of religious freedom.

But the Spanish didn't take kindly to the arrival of the French. In 1565, they established a forward operating base at St. Augustine and proceeded to wipe out the Fort Caroline colony. Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, the Spanish commander, hanged all those he had found in Fort Caroline because...they were scattering the odious Lutheran doctrine.

When hundreds of survivors of a shipwrecked French fleet washed up on the beaches of Florida, they were slaughtered by the Matanzas. The first encounter between European Christians in America ended in a blood bath.

In Massachusetts, only Christians were allowed to hold public office, and Catholics were allowed to do so only after they renounced papal authority. In 1777, New York State's constitution banned Catholics from public office (it was changed in 1806). In Maryland, Catholics had full civil rights, but Jews did not. In 1776 the Delaware constitution required officeholders to swear belief in the Trinity. Several states, including Massachusetts and South Carolina, had official, state-supported churches.

Fleeing Europe for religious freedom, many pilgrims practiced what they were escaping.

As Baptists we believe in religious freedom, but are aware that others don't. Religious freedom is a double-edged sword. The other person's religion may tell him he ought to kill you for not believing like he does.

The Baptists were persecuted because they were outspoken in their beliefs, insisting that the baptism of believers by immersion was the biblical method. They refused to attend the state-backed churches and to pay religious taxes to support those churches. They also refused to acquire licenses from the government to preach. Baptist itinerant preachers traveled throughout the colonies, often holding outdoor baptismal services in rivers and lakes, drawing crowds of mockers.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony began in 1628 and within 20 years they established a state church—Congregational. They passed laws against the Baptists and others. The following is a sample of one laws:

“It is ordered and agreed, that if any person or persons, within this jurisdiction, shall either openly condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants, or go about secretly to seduce others from the approbation or use thereof, or shall purposely depart the congregation at the ministration of the ordinance...after due time and means of conviction—every such person or persons shall be sentenced to banishment.”

[https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:History_of_Barrington,_Rhode_Island_\(Bicknell\).djvu/152](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:History_of_Barrington,_Rhode_Island_(Bicknell).djvu/152)

In 1645 Massachusetts passed a law that specifically banned Baptists from the colony, calling them “the incendiaries of commonwealths”...

Baptists, Quakers, and other nonconformists (dissenters from the established Church) suffered discrimination and ill-treatment in the American colonies. For example, in 1651 a man named Obadiah Holmes (part of John Clarke’s church—see Rhode Island) was accused of proselytizing for the Baptists and thrown in Boston’s prison. Weeks later, because he refused to pay his fine) he was taken from his cell to receive a punishment of thirty lashes with a three-corded whip.

Virginia, North and South Carolina were settled mainly by the adherents of the Church of England. The peculiar views of the Church were made the established religion of these colonies.

In Virginia during the 1760s and 1770s, more than thirty Baptist pastors were jailed for illegal preaching in the colony.

South and Central America was mostly settled by Spaniards and Portuguese, with the English, Dutch and French settling in the Guyanas. Today Dutch is spoken in Suriname, English is spoken in Guyana, and French is spoken in French Guyana. The first two Guyanas are majority non-Catholic Christians. All other Latin American countries are predominantly Catholic.

Keep in mind the continuation of the Roman Empire today is none other than the Roman Catholic Church. (see <http://www.jamesjpn.net/current-view-of-who-runs-the-world/>)

Rhode Island

Rhode Island deserves special mention, because it was the first colony where Baptists enjoyed religious freedom.

In 1636, Roger Williams and others were banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony for their religious views. Banishment in America in those days was something desperately serious. It meant to go and live among the Indians.

Williams settled at the top of Narragansett Bay on land sold or given to him by Narragansett sachem (chief) Canonicus. He named the site Providence Plantations because he believed it was due to divine providence: “having a sense of God’s merciful providence unto me in my distress”; it became a place of religious freedom where all were welcome.

Two years later, Anne Hutchinson, William Coddington, John Clarke (a Baptist preacher), Philip Sherman, and other religious dissenters joined Williams and decided to form their own colony; they settled on Aquidneck Island (then known as Rhode Island, the only land yet unclaimed by surrounding colonies), which was purchased from the local tribes who called it Pocasset. This settlement was called Portsmouth and was governed by the Portsmouth Compact.

The first Baptist church in America was founded by Roger Williams in 1638 and in 1776 they built a building which still stands today: the First Baptist Church of Providence.

But organizing a colony was not a small task; they need a charter, legal authority, from England. In 1651(?) Roger Williams and John Clarke were sent by the colony to England to secure a charter.

When they reached England, Oliver Cromwell was in charge of the government, but he failed to grant their request. Roger Williams then returned home to America.

(see notes on Oliver Cromwell, a key figure in England’s history)

John Clarke though, remained in England to continue to press his plea. Year after year went by. Clarke continued to remain. Finally Cromwell died and Charles II sat upon the throne of England. While Charles is regarded in history as one of more bitter persecutors of Christians, he finally, in 1663, granted that charter. So Clarke, after 12 long years of waiting returned home with that charter. So in 1663, the Rhode Island colony became a real legal institution, and the Baptists could write their own constitution.

1st Amendment in the US Constitution

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

It was Baptists who played a key role in the guarantee of religious liberty in the first amendment of our Bill of Rights (first 10 amendments). When Virginia ratified the Bill of Rights on December 15, 1791 (the last state to do so) they became part of the Constitution.

There is a small park in Virginia called the Leland-Madison Memorial Park.



There is a monument (see picture above) in this park and it reads as follows:

ELDER JOHN LELAND, COURAGEOUS LEADER OF THE BAPTIST DOCTRINE

ARDENT ADVOCATE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY

VINDICATOR OF SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

NEAR THIS SPOT IN 1788, ELDER JOHN LELAND AND JAMES MADISON, THE FATHER OF THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION HELD A SIGNIFICANT INTERVIEW WHICH RESULTED IN THE ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION BY VIRGINIA. THEN MADISON, A MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM ORANGE PRESENTED THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION GUARANTEEING RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, FREE SPEECH AND A FREE PRESS. THIS SATISFIED LELAND AND HIS BAPTIST FOLLOWERS.

PRESENTED BY EUGENE BUCKLIN BOWEN, PRESIDENT BERKSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

The 1st amendment means that:

- The U.S. government cannot mandate a certain religion for all its citizens. U.S. citizens have the right to choose what faith they want to follow.

- The U.S. government cannot subject its citizens to rules and laws that prohibit them from speaking their minds.
- The press can print and circulate the news without fear of reprisal, even if that news is less than favorable regarding our country or government.
- U.S. citizens have the right to gather toward common goals and interests without interference from the government or the authorities.
- U.S. Citizens can petition the government to suggest changes and voice concerns.

Several prominent American Baptists such as Isaac Backus and John Leland wanted more done for religious liberty.

John Leland (1754– 1841), a Baptist preacher directly petitioned his Virginia legislator, James Madison, regarding this concern (remember all the Baptist pastors put in prison). At that time Baptists represented a significant portion of the vote in Madison's district; Leland's threatened to run for Madison's seat in the House of Representatives resulting in a visit by Madison to his home.

Coming out of that meeting was a compromise that included Leland agreeing not to run for Madison's seat and Madison agreeing to champion Leland's and his fellow Baptists' concern for religious liberty. Madison kept his word and pushed for the Bill of Rights. Without Baptist involvement in the political process, it is possible that the protection of religious liberty from Congress would not exist.

2 Cor. 3:17: Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

It was the Holy Spirit who prompted Leland to seek additional religious freedoms. And today, we can do what we do because of the 1st amendment.

Background:

The matter of state religion was deeply discussed by congressional leaders. In one early Congressional incident there arose the question of whether the United States should have an established church or several established churches, or simply "religious liberty" for all.

Several different bills were offered, one recommending the Church of England as the established church; and another the Congregationalist Church, and yet another the Presbyterian Church. The Baptists, though probably none of them members of Congress, were earnestly contending for absolute religious liberty. James Madison (afterwards President) was their main supporter (remember why?).

Patrick Henry arose and offered a substitute bill for them all, "That four churches (or denominations) instead of one be established—the Church of England, or Episcopal,

Congregationalist, Presbyterian, and the Baptist". Finally when each group saw that they could not be made the sole established church, they each agreed to accept Henry's compromise. (This compromise bill stated that each person taxed would have the right to say to which denomination of these four his money should go.) The Baptists continued to fight against it all; that any combination of Church and State was against their fundamental principles, that they could not accept it even if voted. Henry pleaded with them, said he was trying to help them, that they could not live without it, but they still protested. The vote was taken—it carried nearly unanimously. But the measure had to be voted on three times. The Baptists, led by Madison and possibly others continued to protest. The second vote came. It also carried almost unanimously, swept by Henry's eloquence. But the third vote had yet to be taken. Now God seemingly intervened. Henry was made Governor of Virginia and left Congress. When the third vote came, deprived of Henry's irresistible eloquence, the vote was lost.

Had the Baptists of that day kept quiet, today we would have been part of an established denomination. But they didn't; they protested.

Do you see how they were involved in influencing government? They did not remain quiet.

Paul protested from being whipped:

Acts 22:25: And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?

Acts 22:26: When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.

Acts 22:27: Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.

Paul protested against being judged by the Jews:

Acts 25:10: Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.

Acts 25:11: For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar.

Acts 25:12: Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go.

Great Awakening

It was not all doom and gloom, in the midst of persecution the church experiences its greatest growth. The Great Awakening was a religious revival that impacted the English colonies in America during the 1730's and 1740's.

An Evangelical Awakening spread throughout England and America under the preaching of George Whitefield, the Wesley brothers (Whitefield and the Wesley brothers found the Methodist church in England), and Jonathan Edwards.

The First Great Awakening affected British North America in the 1730s and 40s. It was spiritual revival that saw many saved and many get right with God. Prior to this there was a renewed interest in the human decision regarding matters of religion and morality. This was brought about in the 1700s, by a European philosophical movement called the Enlightenment (which also came to America), a new thought movement that emphasized a scientific, rather than religious, worldview. It respected each individual's feelings and emotions. In stark contrast to Puritanism, which emphasized outward actions as proof of salvation, the Great Awakening focused on inward changes in the Christian's heart. When the Puritans and pilgrims arrived in America they had a fervent faith and vision for establishing a godly nation. Within a century the zeal had cooled. The children of the original immigrants were more concerned with increasing wealth and comfortable living than furthering the Kingdom of God. It was under these conditions that the First Great Awakening took hold.

Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield were two of the most popular preachers during the First Great Awakening. Both taught that people needed to have changed and repentant hearts.

Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) was a Congregational minister in New England, he was not a powerful preacher, spoke in a monotone voice but had a way with words. He once said: "The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked: his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours." Jonathan Edwards is often credited with starting the First Great Awakening in 1741 with his famous sermon Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God. Though this was not typical of his sermons, it has become a classic of early American literature

George Whitefield was English Anglican minister; in 1740 he came to America and became an itinerant preacher and evangelist. He was cross-eyed, yet a powerful orator with charismatic appeal and preached with boldness. He said, "I will not be a velvet-mouthed Preacher!" George Whitefield believed that people weren't going to church because "dead men preach to them."

An estimated 80% of America's 900,000 Colonists personally heard Whitfield preach, he became America's first celebrity. Compare that to today!

Unfortunately, many ministers became jealous of George Whitefield's God-given ability. In Bristol, the churches refused to allow him use of their buildings. Whitefield was undeterred, he preached outside to thousands. He spoke persuasively with a loud, commanding, pleasant voice, and presented the gospel of Christ with vigor and enthusiasm. He broke through denominational boundaries (remember the time) and once said, "Father Abraham, who have you in heaven? Any Episcopalians? No! Any Presbyterians? No! Any Independents or Methodist? No, no, no! Whom have you there, then Father Abraham? We don't know those names here! All who are here are Christians—believers in Christ, men who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of his testimony. Oh, is that the case? Then God help me, God help us all, to forget having names and to become Christians in deed and in truth!" During his lifetime he made seven tours of the colonies and preached 18,000 sermons.

Some believe that the Great Awakening actually began years earlier in the 1720s with the most significant years being 1740-1742, this revival continued until the 1760s.

Some other men of note were Theodore Frelinghuysen and Gilbert Tennent. The former a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church came to pastor in New Jersey during the 1720s and was shocked by the deadness of the churches in America. The later was a Presbyterian who was heavily influenced by Frelinghuysen and brought revival to his own denomination. Frelinghuysen preached the need for conversion and Tennent believed the deadness of the churches was in part due to so many pastors having never been converted themselves! Tennent's book on *The Dangers of an Unconverted Ministry* caused a stir. Does this sound familiar?

What needs to pointed out the Great Awakening was not simply sparked by fiery preaching but its foundation was the faith and prayers of the righteous leaders who saw a need for a revival. Before a meeting, George Whitefield would spend hours—and sometimes all night—bathing an event in prayers. Fervent church members kept the revival going through their genuine petitions for God's intervention in the lives of their communities. It is noteworthy to mention that revival first began in heats of the young people.

The effects of the Great Awakening were far-reaching. Truly converted members filled the pews. In New England, from 1740 to 1742, church membership increased from 25,000 to 50,000; hundreds of new churches were formed. There was a renewed concern with missions, and work among the Indians increased. As young men began to answer the call to preach a concern for higher education grew. Princeton, Rutgers, Brown, and Dartmouth universities were all established as a direct result of the Great Awakening. The Great Awakening not only

united the colonies religiously but also politically; they were freed from sin and they were now seeking freedom from external tyrants. God was preparing their hearts for war with England—the motto of the Revolutionary War was, “No King but King Jesus!”

Not everyone welcomed the Great Awakening. One of its principal opponents was Charles Chauncy, a minister in Boston. Chauncy was critical of Whitefield’s preaching and instead supported a more traditional, formal style of religion—dead preaching.

Baptist Missionary Society (Now BMS World Mission)

In England there was a gathering of young ministers who met in Mrs. Beeby Wallis’ parlor on October 2, 1792. Twelve ministers all from small churches in the district of Kettering, England had become increasingly convinced that their churches should send the gospel message to the four corners of the globe. Many Christians in the 18th century accepted the argument that the heathen had rejected the gospel and would be held accountable for their rejection on the coming Day of Judgment. Some even argued that if God wanted the heathen saved, he would enlighten them without any human help.

One young pastor William Carey couldn’t accept such views. He said the Apostles were commanded to go to all nations and this was still true. Carey wrote down his thoughts on the state of the world in his day, the need for missions, and the methods which should be used in carrying out the task. In May 1792 he published these as *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*. Point by point Carey answered objections which had been put forward against missionary activity.

Not only did Carey talk about the need for missions, he was willing to go. The next year the society sent out William Carey to India. He translated the NT into Bengali and his influence extended throughout much of the East, to Burma, the East Indies, and even China.

The Baptist Missionary Society was the **first** foreign missionary society created by the Evangelical Revival of the last half of the eighteenth century. Soon other missionary societies were established, and a new era in missions began as the gospel was increasingly spread outside of the West, to the regions of Africa and Asia.

The work which began in Mrs. Wallis’ parlor continues today. The Baptist Missionary Society still works in India, throughout Asia and Africa. William Carey said, “Expect great things from God; Attempt great things for God.”

Oliver Cromwell

Oliver Cromwell (25 April 1599 – 3 September 1658) was an English military and political leader and Puritan. He served as Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England (including Wales and Ireland).

Puritans sought major reforms in the Church of England.

After Cromwell got saved he started fighting for the cause of the Protestant Reformation in England and ridding the church of its Catholic influences. In 1628, Cromwell was elected to the House of Commons.

In 1640, tensions began to rise between King Charles I and Parliament. Parliament objected to Charles's raising taxes without first consulting them. Some were also concerned because the king's wife Queen Henrietta Maria was a Catholic. Eventually English Civil War resulted in August 1642. Cromwell backed by Parliament raised an army and defeated the Royalists (the King's forces).

Cromwell emerged as a hero and the leader of the Parliament's army (the New Model Army). King Charles I was executed in January 1649. He rose to the position of first chairman of the new Council of State.

Cromwell further bolstered his reputation by leading a series of military campaigns in both Ireland and Scotland. After this, when he returned to Parliament in 1653, Cromwell was disgusted with the constant debating, and used the Army to forcibly dissolve the House of Commons. A new Parliament was elected, but after a coup d'état in December 1653, Cromwell was named Lord Protector of the British Republic and given full power.

Although he wielded his power like the kings before him, Cromwell declined the crown. He continued changing laws in the name of the Reformation and of the new regime, which included religious tolerance to all minority Protestant factions.

In 1657 Cromwell allowed the reestablishment of the House of Lords and agreed to make the office of Lord Protector a hereditary position. For much of his career as Lord Protector, Cromwell had to strike a balance between the country's remaining royalist and republican interests, but never succeeded in fully winning over any of these groups to his side.

In the last years of his life he became melancholic and bitter; he died of pneumonia. He was succeeded by his son Richard and received a great state funeral. After the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660 Cromwell's body was disinterred and publicly hanged.

Next week we will look at God's providence in War of Independence, the Second Great Awakening, revival during the Civil War, and what started the Laodicean Church Age...

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 11

God's providence during the revolutionary war

What followed the first great awakening was not only a spiritual revival but a desire to also be free from tyranny, especially tyranny from King George III.

History tells that God's Providence had a lot to do with the victory of the American colonists in their war of independence against Great Britain, the world's super power at that time. The colonies had been founded by those with deep Biblical convictions; though in their zeal they persecuted those who disagreed with them. Regardless, the Puritans and the Pilgrims in New England had come to the New World to establish a civilization based on the Bible, as they saw it.

Thus, the colonists believed that it was their duty to oppose a tyranny that violated God's law and the concept of Christian freedom. This was the spiritual resolve that led the leaders of the colonies to write the Declaration of Independence.

Religion played a major role in the American Revolution by offering a moral sanction for opposition to the British; ministers assured the average American that revolution was justified in the sight of God. Colonial resistance was heralded by local ministers as a righteous cause.

Many ministers served the American cause in various capacities during the Revolution: as military chaplains, as penmen for committees of correspondence, and as members of state legislatures, constitutional conventions and the national Congress. Some even took up arms, leading Continental troops in battle.

The Revolution also split some denominations, mainly the Church of England, whose ministers were bound by oath to support the King, and the Quakers, who were pacifists.

Some ministers were persuaded that, with God's help, America might become "the principal Seat of the glorious Kingdom which Christ shall erect upon Earth in the latter Days."

Victory over the British was taken as a sign of God's partiality for America and revived millennialist expectations—the conviction that Christ would rule on earth for 1,000 years.

<https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/rel03.html>

Note: America is not mentioned in the Bible. God only talks about those who have direct involvement in or affect the nation of Israel. There is only one individual who will bring in the millennial kingdom: Jesus Christ.

Rev. 11:15: And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

It was Thomas Jefferson who penned the Declaration of Independence. Though he was a deist, he said this:

“...God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect God is just, that his justice cannot sleep forever...”

Note: Jefferson rejected the doctrine that Jesus was the promised Messiah and the incarnate Son of God.

Deists do consider themselves to be disciples of Jesus only because Jesus taught the natural laws of God. Deists believe that Jesus was only human. At the time of the founding fathers, next to Christianity, deism was probably the most common religious belief throughout the western world.

Peter Muhlenberg was an Anglican minister who joined the army after preaching to his congregation on Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 “To every thing there is a season...a time of war, and a time of peace.” Muhlenberg delivered his last sermon to his congregation in Woodstock, Virginia, in January 1776, saying: “There is a time for all things, a time to preach and a time to pray, but those times have passed away. There is a time to fight, and that time has now come.”

<https://lehrmaninstitute.org/history/the-founders-faith.html>

George Washington

George Washington (February 22, 1732, - December 14, 1799) is considered as the Founding Father of the United States and also served as our first president. He was an Anglican—a religious man—but was very private regarding his religious beliefs. He believed in God but never made a public confession of believing in Jesus Christ as his Savior, even when asked. It is important to keep in mind that he was a Master Mason; he joined the freemasons when he was 20.

Even though he was not a Christian as we define what being a Christian is, he was nevertheless used by God to establish this nation.

In October 1770, George Washington, his personal physician Dr. James Craik, and a group of fellow soldiers journeyed to the Ohio Country. According to Dr. Craik an indigenous sachem (local chief) visited Washington and recalled his experience during the Battle of Monongahela,

fought 15 years earlier on July 9, 1755 alongside the French. 1300 Englishmen were ambushed in the battle, and only 30 survived, Washington was specifically targeted by the Indians because he was an officer on horseback; he survived—no bullets had harmed him while twice his horse was shot out from under him. Awed at Washington's seeming invincibility, the sachem prophesized that Washington would someday lead a powerful empire. Although this was not recorded, Dr. Craik attested to this "Indian Prophecy" repeatedly.

This what the sachem said:

"I am a chief and ruler over my tribes. My influence extends to the waters of the great lakes and to the far blue mountains. I have traveled a long and weary path that I might see the young warrior of the great battle. It was on the day when the white man's blood mixed with the streams of our forest that I first beheld this chief (*Washington*). I called to my young men and said, mark yon tall and daring warrior? He is not of the red-coat tribe—he hath an Indian's wisdom, and his warriors fight as we do—himself is alone exposed. Quick, let your aim be certain, and he dies. Our rifles were leveled, rifles which, but for you, knew not how to miss—'twas all in vain, a power mightier far than we, shielded you. Seeing you were under the special guardship of the Great Spirit, we immediately ceased to fire at you. I am old and soon shall be gathered to the great council fire of my fathers in the land of shades, but ere I go, there is something bids me speak in the voice of prophecy. Listen! The Great Spirit protects that man (*pointing at Washington*), and guides his destinies—he will become the chief of nations, and a people yet unborn will hail him as the founder of a mighty empire. I am come to pay homage to the man who is the particular favorite of Heaven, and who can never die in battle."

During another occasion on June 1, 1774, when the Colonies were seeking God's will in making the momentous decision to sever their ties with England, Washington wrote in his diary: "Went to church and fasted all day."

When he became Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army he appointed chaplains for every regiment, recognizing that his men needed spiritual guidance and believed that this was a war that could not be won without miracles.

One such miracle occurred on August 27, 1776. British General Howe had trapped Washington and his 8,000 troops on Brooklyn Heights on Long Island, and he intended to advance the next morning to annihilate them. But Washington gathered every boat he could find and spent all night ferrying his men across the East River. In the morning there was still a large number of soldiers facing annihilation by Howe. But a heavy fog descended on the area enabling the rest of Washington's troops to escape the British trap.

When Washington became our first President under the new Constitution of the United States, he said at his Inaugural Address:

“No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency... We ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained.

Many of our legislators and judges seem to have forgotten what Washington said.

Proverbs 14:34: Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

Proverbs 29:2: When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

Is it possible to be a good man, believe in God and end up in hell? The answer is “yes!”

Matt. 7:22: Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

Civil War Revival

During the American Civil War, many revivals took place in both the northern and southern armies. There is nothing like death staring a man in the face to cause him to reflect on the prospect of meeting God.

Psalms:85:6: Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?

In the months leading to the American Civil War armies began assembling consisting of thousands of young men that had never before been away from home. Army chaplains complained that “seductive influences of sin” and “legions of devils” infested the camps such as drinking, card playing, gambling, profanity, and fast women. One Confederate soldier said that “if the South is overthrown, the epitaph should be ‘died of whiskey.’”

Abraham Lincoln recognized the value of spiritual guidance to soldiers as a stabilizing force in the Union army and on May 4, 1861, he ordered all commanders to appoint chaplains for their units. Lincoln also supported the United States Christian Commission, an organization primarily dedicated to the spreading of the Gospel in the Union armies. This commission was in way a civilian "army" of men and women that lived in or near the army camps, passing out religious tracts and Testaments, organizing worship services, acting as nurses in the hospitals, and doing their best to spread the Gospel.

Unfortunately, the south did not recognize this need appointing only a few chaplains and did not fully support them as the north did. As one historian put it: “The Confederate government

was more anxious to have ‘fighting men’ than ‘preaching men.’” Nonetheless southern Christian leaders endeavored to provide the soldiers with Bibles, New Testaments, and religious tracts.

What the Davis administration lacked the Confederate military leaders supplied. Robert E. Lee, T. J. “Stonewall” Jackson, and Leonidas Polk did all within their power to encourage the spreading of the Gospel. Jackson encouraged the troops to keep the Sabbath holy and attend worship services. He tried to avoid battle on the Sabbath, and if not possible to do so he would try to set aside a subsequent day of rest. Jackson was frequently seen in prayer, both before and during battle and always acknowledged God as the author of his military victories

In the North, Union General George B. McClellan decreed that the North’s “holy cause” justified divine services every Sunday morning. Union General Oliver O. Howard would preach to the troops when a regular chaplain or minister was not available.

What I find ironic is the Christians were fighting Christians; they served the same Lord, the same God, but their political ideologies and geography put them at odds against each other.

It was recorded that revivals took place throughout the war, but it wasn’t until late fall of 1863 through summer of 1864 that what was subsequently called the “Great Revival” occurred. This revival took place in both northern and southern armies.

According to J. William Jones, Confederate Chaplain and author of one of the best documentaries of the Great Revival, virtually every Confederate brigade was affected—and approximately ten percent of the soldiers in the Army of Northern Virginia accepted Christ. Night after night troops participated in prayer meetings, worshipped, and listened to ministers proclaim the good news. Virtually every gathering ended with soldiers coming forward to accept Christ or receive prayer. When a pond or river was nearby, the soldiers would frequently step forward for baptisms regardless of how cold the weather was.

Revival occurred in Tennessee, in north Virginia, by the Potomac where the North’s principle eastern army was, in Georgia, and across the Carolinas.

It is estimated that over 100,000 Confederate and somewhere between 100,000 and 200,000 Union troops accepted Christ during the Civil War, roughly ten percent of the men engaged in battle.

A Floridian by the name of Major P. B. Bird, when mortally wounded in the trenches of Richmond near the end of the war said, “But for leaving my wife and children, I should not feel sad at the prospect of dying. There is no cloud between God and me now.”

During one prayer meeting, a young soldier cried aloud “O that my mother were here!” When asked why, he replied “Because she has so long been praying for me, and now I have found the Saviour.” Another wounded Christian soldier asked a friend to “Tell my mother that I read my Testament and put all my trust in the Lord....I am not afraid to die.”

In our nation’s greatest conflict, countless met the Lord Jesus Christ along the way.

<https://greatamericanhistory.net/revival.htm>

Second Great Awakening

The Second Great Awakening was an American religious revival that began in the late 18th century and lasted until the middle of the 19th century. It started in upstate New York and spread to New England and the Midwest.

During the time of this revival membership rose rapidly among Baptist and Methodist congregations whose preachers led the movement.

The US temperance and abolitionist movements were both greatly influenced by this revival movement and its messages.

Preceding this revival—by the late 1700s, many people in the US no longer regularly attended church services. The predominant belief was that God did not play an important role in everyday life and God was supposedly unconcerned with a person's church attendance, rather, God would judge the person on how he or she had lived his or her life on Earth.

Most of the religious revivals occurred as camp meetings. Adherents and interested parties would spend several days hearing the word of God from various religious leaders. Many people in the U.S. living on the frontier did not have regular contact with their neighbors. The revivals allowed these people an opportunity to hear God's word, but they also provided rural families an opportunity to talk and trade with one another.

Perhaps the most influential evangelist of the Second Great Awakening was Charles Finney. He began to spread his message in western New York during the early 1820s.

Finney said, “If the presence of God is in the church, the church will draw the world in. If the presence of God is not in the church, the world will draw the church out.”

“It is the business of every Christian to save souls.”

Some estimate that between 1857–1858 over 100,000 people were led to Christ as the direct or indirect result of Finney’s labors, while 500,000 professed conversion to Christ in the great revival which began in his meetings.

Other preachers of note were: Henry Ward Beecher, Lyman Beecher, Edward Everett and Joseph Smith.

China Inland Mission

The China Inland Mission was a missionary organization formed in Britain in 1865 by Hudson Taylor (1832–1905), a medical doctor, to reach the Chinese with the message of Christ. Taylor was raised Methodist but in the course of his life he was a member of the Westbourne Grove Church, a Baptist church pastored by William Garrett Lewis.

During his 51 years of service in China, the China Inland Mission established 20 mission stations, brought 849 missionaries to the field (968 by 1911), trained some 700 Chinese workers, raised 4 million dollars by faith (following Mueller's example), and developed a witnessing Chinese church of 125,000. It is estimated at least 35,000 were his own converts and that he baptized some 50,000. His gift for inspiring people to give themselves and their possessions to Christ was amazing.

It is said of him that no other missionary in the nineteen centuries since the Apostle Paul has had a wider vision and has carried out a more systematized plan of evangelizing a broad geographical area than Hudson Taylor.

Quotes:

"It does not matter where He places me, or how, that is for Him to consider, not me, for in the easiest positions He will give me grace, and in the most difficult ones His grace is sufficient."

"You so not need a great faith but faith in a great God."

"When we pray, God works."

"The real secret of an unsatisfied life lies too often in an unsundered will."

"Let us never forget that what we are is more important than what we do."

The China Inland Mission's early years inland were hazardous, faced with riots, internal dissension, and opposition from established Christian missionaries, they still prevailed.

By 1880 it was systematically organized. In every province the first station was established in the capital city, later opening stations in designated major cities in the province. Missionaries mostly came from Britain, but first had to learn the language and customs.

Taylor lived to see the horrible Boxer Rebellion. The Chinese viewed foreigners as barbarians. The Boxers' goal was to eradicate all foreign presence and influence in China. "Boxers" was a

name that foreigners gave to this Chinese secret society known as the Yihequan (“Righteous and Harmonious Fists”). It was an anti-imperialist, anti-colonial, and anti-Christian uprising that took place between 1899 and 1901. The rebellion ended in 1901 as the Japanese and the Western powers created a force to deal with the rebellion.

During that time the China Inland Mission lost 58 adults and 21 children to the desire of the Boxers to kill foreign missionaries and Christians. It is estimated that about 100,000 people died in the conflict, the majority of those killed were civilians, including thousands of Chinese Christians and approximately 200 to 250 foreign nationals (mostly Christian missionaries).

FYI, the Communist victory in 1949 forced the removal of all the agency’s Europeans, and nearly 1000 missionaries.

<https://www.wholesomewords.org/missions/biotaylor2.html>

Today the China Inland Mission is known as OMF International (Overseas Missionary Fellowship) and has about 1600 missionaries. Its international headquarters is in Singapore, and the mission is led by Patrick Fung, who is Chinese. They now operate mission stations across Asia with special emphasis on the Chinese diaspora.

Westcott and Hort

One website says: “Brooke Westcott and Fenton Hort were 19th century theologians and Bible scholars. Together, they produced The New Testament in the Original Greek, one of the earliest examples of modern textual criticism. Since its publication in 1881, Westcott and Hort’s work has proved to be **impressively accurate**, though far from perfect. Their approach not only advanced the science of textual criticism, but it added considerable weight to the claim that the Bible had been **preserved from tampering and corruption**.”

This couldn’t be further from the truth. Their text was developed by several corrupt manuscripts. The original text has been revised 28 times (Critical Text) and each time it gets closer and closer to the Textus Receptus (see notes below).

In 1870 the Church of England proposed a revision of the King James Bible and this provided the opportunity for Westcott and Hort to introduce their New Testament Greek text.

Instead of a revision of the King James the committee produced the Revised English Version in 1885 based on the Critical Text. This started a landslide of English versions, since that day there have been over 450 new English translations of the Bible!

<https://www.jesus-is-lord.com/hort.htm>

I believe this mode of thinking and the critical text initiated by Westcott and Hort ushered in the church of Laodicea.

Rev. 3:8: I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

Independent Baptists hold that the King James Version of the Bible is God's word for the English speaking people.

Verses that have been changed or missing in most modern versions:

Verse	KJV	Modern Versions
Matthew 5:22	But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment...	But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court... NASB
Matthew 17:21	Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.	<i>missing</i> NIV
Mark 10:24	...how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!	... how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! NASB
1 Timothy 3:16	And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: <u>God</u> was manifest in the flesh...	By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: <u>He</u> who was revealed in the flesh... NASB
Colossians 1:14	In whom we have redemption through his blood, <i>even</i> the forgiveness of sins:	in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. NASB
1 John 5:7	For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.	For there are three that testify: NASB
Revelation 1:11	Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book...	saying, "Write in a book what you see... NASB

More on verses changed see: <http://www.av1611.org/biblecom.html>

More on verses taken away see: <http://www.av1611.org/biblevs.html>

Background on the Byzantine text-type

The originals are all gone, no one has them. There are over 5,300 extant (existing) Greek manuscripts of the New Testament and about 95-97% of them agree together. They are called the Majority Text (Byzantine Text). Note the Majority Text is not the Textus Receptus that the KJV was translated from but it agrees with it 98% (Daniel Wallace tallies the differences to 1,838—of those 1,005 do not affect translation, i.e. different spelling and word endings). The others do not affect doctrine. FYI there are 109,336 words in the NT of the KJV.

<https://www.biblebelievers.com/believers-org/kjv-stats.html>

The Majority Text differs from the Westcott and Hort's text in about 6,500 places. Many of differences include omissions and are substantive as they affect doctrine. The main manuscripts Westcott and Hort used were the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, these do not even agree among themselves! In fact the Sinaiticus has been corrected by many scribes, evidenced in the manuscript itself.

<http://www.balaams-ass.com/journal/resource/better.htm>

BAPTIST HISTORY PART 12

The Moravians

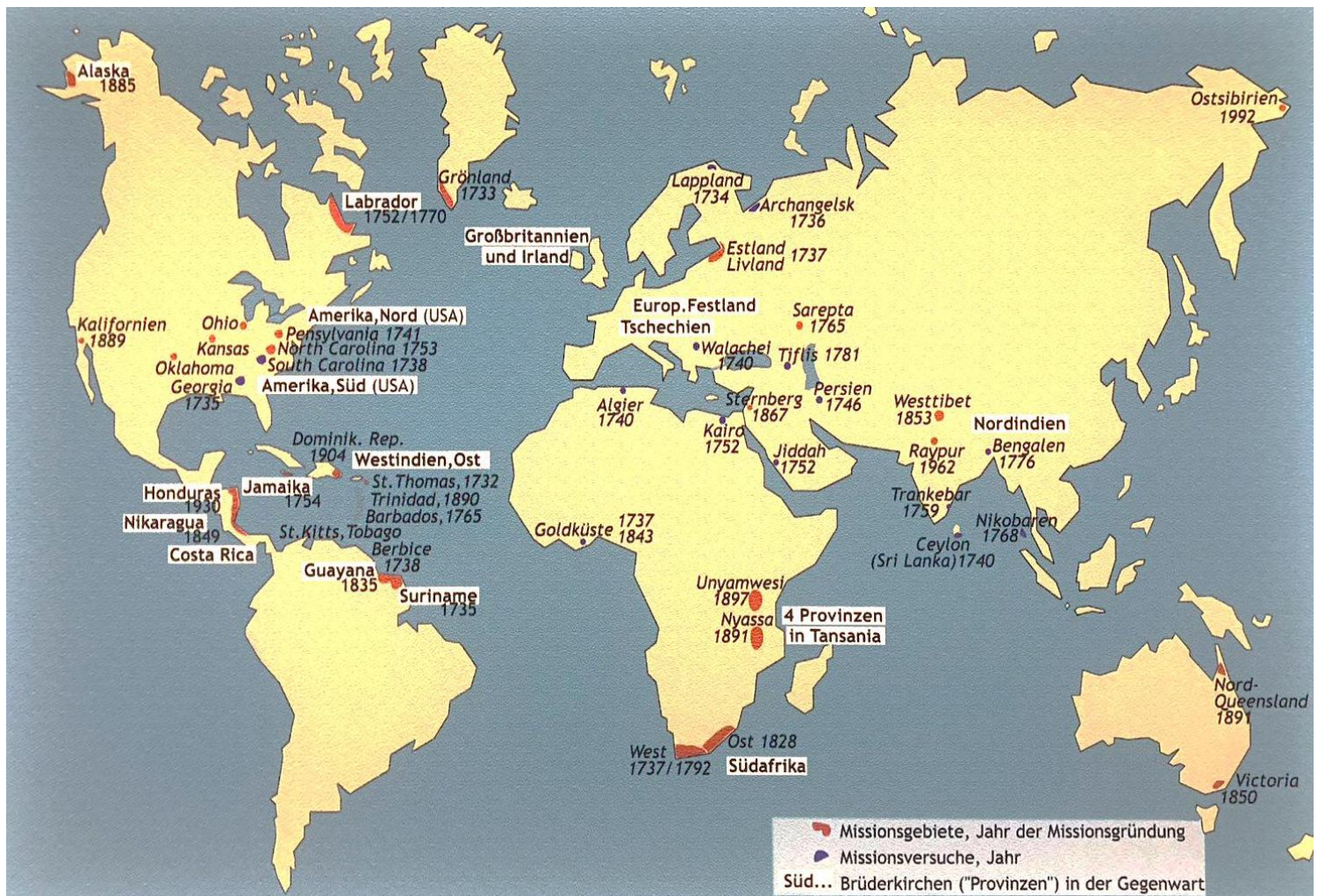
The movement that would develop into the Moravian Church was started by a Czech Catholic priest named John Hus in the early 15th century. John Hus was a reformer and wanted to return the Church in Bohemia and Moravia to the practices of early Christianity. This movement was eventually opposed by Rome forcing the group to split into two; John Hus was burned at the stake for his revolt against the Catholic Church. The Utraquists compromised with Rome, but the Hussites continued to operate outside Roman Catholicism and within fifty years of Hus's death had independently organized as the Unitas Fratrum (Unity of the Brethren) in 1457 AD. This group maintained Hussite theology but later leaned towards Lutheran teachings. The Moravians were the earliest Protestant Church, rebelling against the authority of Rome some fifty years before Martin Luther.

The group was driven underground in the early 1600s and was renewed in the 1720s in Germany by refugees from Moravia and Bohemia. From there, **missionaries** went out to serve in diverse places and among many races: North America, Central America, South America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Europe, Palestine and India.

Moravian missionaries Johann Leonhard Dober and David Nitschmann, from Herrnhut, Germany, in 1732 went to minister to the African slaves on the islands of St. Thomas and St. Croix in the Danish West Indies. But were told they couldn't so they offered to sell themselves as slaves in order to minister to the slaves. "But," said the official, "that is impossible. It will not be allowed. No white man ever works as a slave." "Very well," replied Nitschmann, "I am a carpenter, and will ply my trade."

This story has been embellished in that they actually followed though and were sold as slaves.

From: <http://lowpc.org/story-of-the-moravians/>



Unfortunately, at the end of the 19th century the financial situation of the worldwide Moravian mission work was in dire straits.

Today 3 out of 5 Moravians worldwide live in Tanzania and South Africa.

What was behind their success? In 1727 the Moravian Community of Herrnhut in Saxony started a round-the-clock “prayer watch” that continued nonstop for over a hundred years. On August 27 of that year twenty-four men and twenty-four women covenanted to spend one hour each day in scheduled prayer. By 1791, 65 years after the start of this prayer vigil, this small Moravian community had sent 300 missionaries to the ends of the earth.

The worldwide influence of the 18th century Moravian missionaries was extraordinary. One notable example is the impact they had on John Wesley, leading directly to his conversion experience.

In his journal, Wesley comments on his observations and encounters with the Moravians (often calling them “the Germans”).

On Sunday, January 25, 1736 Wesley is on board a ship bound for the Georgia colony where he observed several Moravians in the midst of a life-threatening storm. The storm was ferocious and shredded the main sail and flooded the decks.

Many of the English passengers aboard screamed in terror fearing that they would soon be swallowed by the deep. But a group of Moravian missionaries from Germany calmly sang throughout the squall. They were unafraid of death. Wesley asked one afterward, “Were you not afraid?” He answered “Thank God, no.” Wesley continued, “But were not your women and children?” “No, our women and children are not afraid to die.” Wesley felt that he had no yet learned Christ.

I am reminded of the story Acts 27:21-25 when Paul found himself in the midst of soon to be shipwreck.

²¹ But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. ²² And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. ²³ For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, ²⁴ Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. ²⁵ Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

Once in America Wesley met one of their pastors, Spengenber, and asked about the ministry. But he asked Wesley, “My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?” Wesley was surprised and knew not what to answer. Sensing his embarrassment Spengenber asked, “Do you know Jesus Christ?” “I know he is the Savior of the world,” replied Wesley. “True,” responded the Moravian, “but do you know that he has saved you?” “I hope he has died to save me,” responded Wesley. Spengenber pressed, “Do you know yourself?” Wesley said, “I do.” But later wrote in his journal, “I fear they were mere words.”

That journey marked Wesley’s first significant encounter with a small Protestant movement that would have an enormous influence on his ministry and the Methodist movement he himself would later start.

While in the colonies Wesley was impressed with the simple beauty of the religious lives of the Moravians, but he himself lamented that he had little effect on the colonists in Savannah. The

Wesley brothers practiced asceticism and rigorous religiosity. Their form of “church” tired the people, which provoked resentment and persecution.

From: *The Ladies' Repository*, Volume 18, pg. 333

Two years later, a disheartened Wesley was back in England wrestling with his Christian faith after a miserable time in Georgia. On May 24, 1738, friends pressed him to attend a Moravian society meeting on Aldersgate Street in London. That night, upon hearing Martin Luther's preface to Romans, Wesley wrote, “I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ alone for salvation.” Wesley's spiritual awakening was a turning point in his life, and arguably it might not have happened without the Moravians.

The Apostasy

As we come to the end of this lesson series, one historic fact should have become evident to you by now, and it is the issue of false doctrine. From the early days of church's founding up until today and up until Christ comes back the devil has been successful in introducing false doctrine into the church.

Many churches from the early era of Christendom fell prey to false doctrine, and under the “leadership” of Constantine they united and formed into the largest organized religious system in the world.

The Bible tells us the in the last days this process will repeat itself once again when Christian churches will break away from true doctrine. Let's look at these warnings in the NT:

2 Thess. 2:1: Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

2 Thess. 2:2: That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

2 Thess. 2:3: Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

1 Tim. 4:1: Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2 Tim. 4:3: For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

And this will continue on into the tribulation:

Matt. 24:11: And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

Matt. 24:24: For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Every dispensation ends in apostasy. The “Church Age” or “Dispensation of Grace” is no different. We are in the days of the church of Laodicea, marked by increased wealth. Most our spiritual forefathers couldn’t amass any wealth; they were hunted down like prey, always running, always hiding, in fear for their lives.

Someone gave 8 signs of a lukewarm Christian (I have modified the content somewhat, but kept the 8 points):

1. Lukewarm Christians only want to be saved; they don’t want to be sanctified. God is just an eternal life insurance policy.
2. Lukewarm Christians are moved by stories about people who do great things for Christ, yet they do not do great things themselves.
3. Lukewarm Christians believe they’re OK because they are not committing “gross” sins. But Jesus didn’t call us to mediocrity; he called us to discipleship. If you are his follower, your life will not be defined only by avoiding sin but also by entering into his suffering.
4. Lukewarm Christians rarely share their faith with their neighbors, coworkers, or friends. Like Charles Spurgeon said, “You are either a missionary or an impostor!”
5. Lukewarm Christians think about life on earth much more often than eternity in heaven.
6. Lukewarm Christians love their luxuries and rarely give in a sacrificial way.
7. Lukewarm Christians do not live by faith; their lives are structured so they never have to. David Platt said, “If you’re not in a place where you feel desperate for the Spirit of God, then there’s no way you are on the front lines of the mission. When we are on the front lines, we feel desperately our need for God’s help.”
8. Lukewarm Christians give God their leftovers—not their first and best. We are too busy for God.

False Teachers

The Bible has many warnings about false teachers

1. Jesus warned about false teachers (Matt. 7:15-17).
2. Paul warned about false teachers (Acts 20:29-30; 2 Tim. 3:13; 2 Tim. 4:3-4).
3. Peter warned about false teachers and said that many will follow them (2 Pet. 2:1-2).
4. John warned about false teachers (1 John 2:18-20).

5. Jude warned about false teachers (Jude 3-4).

Biblical Facts about Doctrine

1. The Bible is given for doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
2. We are to continue in the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42).
3. Preachers are to give themselves to doctrine (1 Tim. 4:13).
4. No false doctrine is to be allowed (1 Tim. 1:3).
5. Our doctrine is to be uncorrupt (Titus 2:10).
6. We are to separate from false doctrine (Rom. 16:17).

False Doctrines of the Catholic Church

- 300 AD – Prayers for the dead
- 300 AD – Making the sign of the cross
- 375 AD – Worship of saints and angels
- 394 AD – Mass first instituted
- 416 AD – Infant Baptism
- 431 AD – Worship of Mary begun
- 440 AD – Title of “Pope” official
- 500 AD – Priests began dressing differently than lay people
- 526 AD – Extreme unction
- 593 AD – Doctrine of purgatory introduced
- 600 AD – Worship services conducted in Latin
- 600 AD – Prayers directed to Mary
- 1095 AD – Indulgences
- 1123 AD – Celibacy of Priests
- 1215 AD – Transubstantiation

1854 AD – Immaculate Conception

<http://www.bible.ca/catholic-doctrine.htm>

<http://www.end-times-prophecy.org/catholic-church-false-doctrine.html>

National Council of Christian Churches

Founded in 1950, the National Council of the Churches of Christ (NCC) in the USA has been pushing ecumenical cooperation among Christians. Several denominations including Protestant, Anglican, Episcopalian, Orthodox, Evangelical, Swedenborgian Church, and others have come together in an effort to witness to our common faith in Jesus Christ. The council church members comprise 45 million persons in more than 100,000 local congregations in communities across the US.

The NCC reflects the diversity of Christianity in the United States. In addition to ecumenical partnerships the NCC promotes harmonious relations among Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, practitioners of traditional Native American religion and many other faith groups in a society that is increasingly multi-religious.

The NCC briefly and vaguely asserts a belief in Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit, but promote salvation by works, not by grace. They do not exclusively teach salvation by faith alone in Christ. Their “creed” includes righteous living and commitment to the entire “social justice” program. FYI social justice: distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society.

Ecumenical Movement

The ecumenical movement or ecumenism is a 20th century movement that originated with the Roman Catholic Church. They are attempting to reconcile with Christians who have become separated from the “mother church” over theological issues.

This is the rouse: “The Uniting Church is an example of ecumenical development as it helps all members of the multicultural community develop and help all with their problems. This is important as it helps the Christian community grow and teach people to treat others equally.”

This movement has a greater agenda in that it seeks to promote worldwide unity among all religions through greater cooperation.

Ex. a Catholic priest may invite a Muslim imam to speak in his pulpit, or a church may get together with a Hindu temple to hold a joint prayer service. Ecumenism is definitely wrong; it is unbiblical! We are not to be “yoked together with unbelievers.”

2 Cor. 6:14: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

Gal. 1:6: I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

Gal. 1:7: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

Gal. 1:8: But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

Unification of all Religions

Rev. 13:4: And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

Rev. 13:8: And **all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him**, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

On February 4 2019 Pope Francis and a leading Imam signed a covenant pushing a one-world religion.

“A historic interfaith covenant was signed in the Middle East...and the mainstream media in the United States has been almost entirely silent about it. Sheikh Ahmed al-Tayeb is considered to be the most important imam in Sunni Islam, and he arrived at the signing ceremony in Abu Dhabi with Pope Francis ‘hand in hand in a symbol of interfaith brotherhood.’ But this wasn’t just a ceremony for Catholics and Muslims. According to a British news source, the signing of this covenant was done ‘in front of a global audience of religious leaders from Christianity, Islam, Judaism and other faiths.’”

This agreement states that it is the will of God that there are hundreds of different religions in the world and that they are all acceptable in His sight.

https://prophecyinthenews.com/world_news/pope-francis-leading-imam-sign-covenant-pushing-one-world-religion/

World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches (WCC) is a worldwide inter-church organization founded in 1948. Its members include the Assyrian Church of the East, the Oriental Orthodox Churches, most Eastern Orthodox Churches, the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, the Old Catholic Church, the Anglican Communion, most mainline Protestant churches (such as the Lutheran,

Mennonite, Methodist, Moravian and Reformed) and some evangelical Protestant churches (such as the Baptist and Pentecostal). The Catholic Church is **not** a member, **but** it sends accredited observers to WCC meetings. The WCC arose out of the ecumenical movement and has as its basis the following statement:

“The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

“It is a community of churches on the way to visible unity in one faith and one **Eucharistic fellowship**, expressed in worship and in common life in Christ. It seeks to advance towards this unity, as Jesus prayed for his followers, ‘so that the world may believe.’”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Council_of_Churches

The key is in the phrase “Eucharistic fellowship,” this implies they will fellowship with the Lord’s communion (as the Orthodox and Catholics define it). The Catholics believe that the host and wine become the literal body and blood of Christ; God calls this the cup of devils.

1 Cor. 10:21: Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

Vatican Openly Declares Lucifer As God At Catholic Mass:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1VyVQQdaDQ>

Today

There are about 50 million Baptists in the United States who make up a significant portion of evangelicals in the United States. Baptists form the second largest religious grouping following Roman Catholics in the United States. About half belong to the following groups: the Southern Baptist Convention (15 million), the National Baptist Convention (7.5 million) and the more liberal Progressive National Baptist Convention (2.5 million). The rest belong to the Calvinistic Baptists, General Baptists, Primitive Baptists, Old Regulars, Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Predestinarian Baptists, and Independent Baptists.

Baptist Christians played a major role in seventeenth-century English religious history, and many Baptists migrated to the English colonies in that century. Baptist theological reflection formed how the colonists understood their presence in the New World, especially in Rhode Island and Providence Plantations through the preaching of Roger Williams, John Clarke, and others.

Someone asked: “What is the briefest outline of Baptist Church History?”

Adherence to the New Testament scriptures which give us the constitution of the church complete and perfect, and the New Testament prophecies give us the outline of its entire career. From that divine foundation we cannot turn aside.

Occupy till I come

The Bible gives us the signs of Christ's return; this return is twofold: first He comes and raptures the Church and then He returns with the church to set His kingdom. Prior to the rapture He warns us that Christians, true Christians, will depart from the faith.

Regardless of what is going on around us we are to stay true to the faith. The message to the church is clear: you better be about the Father's business. We are to assemble together (hold church), we are to read, to pray, to give, to witness, and live holy lives.

God does not want us to sit back on our "pompous piety," waiting for the trumpet.

Luke 19:13: And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

Notes:

The church fathers on baptismal regeneration (against it):

<https://apologeticsandagape.wordpress.com/2016/01/02/refutation-of-baptismal-regeneration-in-the-early-church/>

The church fathers on baptismal regeneration (for it):

<http://www.calledtocommunion.com/2010/06/the-church-fathers-on-baptismal-regeneration/#secondc>

<http://baptisthistoryhomepage.com/histories.html>

<http://baptisthistoryhomepage.com/buckland.bapt.ch.his.1867.html>