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BLUESTONE INDEPENDENT BBAPTIST CHURCH
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One of the most amazing and bloodiest stories of all times is the chronicles of the church. The church of the living God, in every century, has faced more persecutions, afflictions, martyrdoms, and hardships than any other group on planet earth. When Jesus said that the world would hate the church, He was not kidding!

“Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.”

John penned the words down that revealed the future trials that the church would face for the cause of Christ. *“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.”*

Despite the great persecution that rages against the local church, Jesus is still fulfilling His promise found in Matthew 16:18. When He said that He would build His church, He meant it. When ruthless tyrants try to stomp out the fires of the church, they just spread. One authority, concerning the imprisoned Baptists in America, said, “These heretics make more converts in jail than they do out.” (1) Certainly, genuine men of God rejoice in the fact that they were counted worthy to suffer for the cause of Christ. *“And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.”*

Our studies lead us to one question and that is, “Who is the church?” In the days we are living, there are so many different denominations, cults, and religions. Each teaches a different gospel and the way to heaven. They vary in their doctrine and usually contradict each other. However, in the midst of this religious chaos, we must remember that Jesus said, *“I will build my church”*. According to this statement (since *“church”* is singular and not plural) there is only one *“church”* that Jesus will build. There must be perpetuity in the succession of the church that Jesus said He would build.

The only way to trace the pure lineage of the church is to find out what their doctrines and practices were in the New Testament. Once this is accomplished, you can see the series of believers that hold to the *“apostles’ doctrine”* (Acts 2:42). The question is not, “Did the apostles believe like we believe today?” On the other hand, the question should be, “Do we believe like the apostles believed?” The apostles got their doctrine from Jesus, which got His doctrine from the God the Father. *“Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.”*

When we view the several religions, sects, cults, and organizations throughout the pages of history, we must conclude that there is only one group of people that hold to the doctrines of the Word of God. Today, this body of believers is known as the Baptists. Despite the assaults launched toward them, they have withstood the test of time and maintained purity in their doctrine, morality, and testimony.

From the times of Jesus to the present, the Baptists have always existed. They are the only group that can trace their commencement under the ministry of Christ. It is the conviction of the author that the church that Jesus said that He would build in Matthew 16:18 is the Baptist church.

Why did Jesus go to John the Baptist to be baptized (Matthew 3:13- *“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.”*)? Would this display a

connection between Jesus and the Baptists? What were Jesus' comments about the Baptist that baptized Him (Luke 7:28- "*For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.*")? Keep in mind that it was not John the Methodist, John the Presbyterian, or John the Pope, but it was John the Baptist. In fact, the word "Baptist" is found 15 times in the King James Bible. Why is not Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, or Catholic found in the Bible? The truth is that they were not formed until several years after the ministry of Christ. Why would Jesus wait 300 to 1500 years before He would reveal His church to the world? Apparently, the "churches" that were formed before, during, and after the Reformation are not the authentic "church" Jesus said He would build.

Even Catholic and Protestant writers have always traced Baptist history (the story of the church) back to the early New Testament churches. The Baptists have always been a group of people that have rejected the teachings of man and accepted what the Scriptures said. (2) As studied previously in Baptist Distinctives (the separation of the church), we see their uncorrupt doctrine that has been preserved from century to century as they stood against heretical tyrants. It is the desire of the author to look at the perpetual line of the Baptists and the story of the church in a way that J.M. Carroll titled it, "The Trail of Blood". (3)

Before we view Baptist history, we should first note what is not Baptist. Many have confused Baptists with Protestants. This is a false and erroneous view. There are only three views in our day about "Christian" religions. These are Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish. However, there are four, which are Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Baptist. Each is separate and distinct from each other.

It will help to do a study on the beginning of these organizations (Catholic and Protestant). Doing so will reveal their corruption in their doctrine and how they are separate from the Baptist. The following is a brief outline of the development of the Catholics and Protestants, which we will look at to an extent. This outline was formulated from the charts that J.M. Carroll and W.A. Jarrel offered in their books.

1. Hierarchy (Early 300 A.D.)
2. Catholic (Middle 600 A.D.)
3. Greek Catholic (Division in 869 A.D.)
4. Roman Catholic (Division in 869 A.D.)
 - (Protestants—Leader Zwingli in Zurich)
 - a. Lutherans (1530 A.D.)
 - b. Church of England/Episcopal/Anglican (1531 A.D.)
 - (1) Methodist (1785 A.D.)
 - c. Presbyterians (1541 A.D.)
 - (1) Cumberland (1810 A.D.)
 - (2) Disciples (1812 A.D.)
 - (3) Campbellism
 - d. Congregationalists (1602 A.D.)
 - e. Puritans
 - (1) Brownists
 - (2) Separatists

- (3) Pilgrims
- f. Mennonites
- g. Quakers
- (1) Amish

The major doctrines, along with several others, that separate these Catholic and Protestant organizations from the Baptists are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Teaching baptismal regeneration, infant baptism, and proxy (substitute) baptism, as the means of salvation, is what branded these denominations heretics in the sight of God and the Baptists. All of these associations have the same common heresy concerning baptism.

Before we look at these individually, let us notice what their founders taught about baptism. Charles Hodge of the Presbyterians (John Calvin was the founder) stated, "Baptism is not only a sign and a *seal*, it is a *means* of grace." (4) Referring to infant baptism he said, "It *assures* them of salvation if they do not renounce their covenants." (5) John Wesley (the founder of the Methodists) said, "By baptism, we, who are 'by nature the children of wrath' are made the children of God." (6) Certainly, these statements reveal the false doctrine of salvation that was promoted amongst these blinded individuals.

Hierarchy and the Catholics

The Catholic organization had an unusual development. It almost seems as if they evolved throughout the centuries as new doctrine began to prevail. Nonetheless, we will try to see its original concept and the leaders that shaped this diabolical force, the Catholics.

Its concepts began with Greek philosophers as they influenced the region of Greece and Rome. These writers were Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle. Through their writings, these lands would begin to shape their government, science, academics, and soon, their religion. Their views led to Pantheism and Gnosticism. (7) According to Noah Webster, Pantheism is, "The doctrine that the universe is God, or the system of theology in which it is maintained that the universe is the supreme God." (8) In reference to Gnosticism, Webster states,

"The Gnostics were a sect of philosophers that arose in the first ages of Christianity, who pretended they were the only men who had a true knowledge of the Christian religion. They formed for themselves a system of theology, agreeable to the philosophy of Pythagoras and Plato, to which they accommodated their interpretations of scripture. They held that all natures, intelligible, intellectual and material, are derived by successive emanations from the infinite fountain of deity. These emanations they called oons. These doctrines were derived from the oriental philosophy." (9)

These doctrines were believed and maintained as true. Therefore, this would pave the way for the false views of the Catholics.

Plato, in his writings, emphasized the contrast between the particular and the universal. This concept led to catholicity. Catholicity was the product of Pantheism.

Later, Ignatius would take this idea and run with it. He merged the idea of catholicity with the church. He stated, “wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.” (10) Ignatius further said, “apart from these [Deacons, Bishop, Presbyters], there is no church”. (11)

Cyprian advanced this thought in the third century. Strouse states,

“Cyprian (AD 200-258) advanced the necessity of this external, catholic institution with his famous expression *extra nulla salus ecclesiam* (‘outside the church there is no salvation’). His concept established the connecting link between soteriology and ecclesiology in the thinking of the Patristics. Berkof states, ‘Thus Cyprian was the first to bring out clearly and distinctly the idea of a catholic Church, comprehending all true branches of the Church of Christ, and bound together by a visible and external unity.’ By the end of the 4th century the concept of ‘*catholic church*’ was firmly fixed in ecclesiastical writings and practice.” (12)

From this point, it is the teachings of Cyprian that shaped the Catholics into a “church”. Again, this concept would develop even more with Constantine.

Constantine, in the fourth century, had an unusual vision one day. He professed that he saw a cross in the sky. After his “vision”, he made certain that his army was baptized into his state church, which was the Roman Catholic Organization. This act created a doctrine that the way to become a member of the “church” was to be baptized first.

Then, Augustine began another development of the Catholic organization. Evolution played a major role in the growth of the Catholics and their doctrine. Strouse further explains this idea.

“Augustine (AD 354-430) was a Neo-platonist whose work ‘represents the climax of Platonic spirituality.’ Augustine’s controversy with the Donatists helped shape catholic ecclesiology for centuries to come. The Donatists criticized the ‘visible church’ because of its lack of a pure membership, asking if the church was actually split into two churches, the mixed church of the present and the pure church of the future. In seeing the Donatists’ legitimate criticism of the impure ‘visible church,’ Augustine was forced to couple his concept of the predestination of the elect with his Cyprianic concept of the *catholic Church*. Berkhof sums up Augustine’s position by stating ‘the real unity of the saints and therefore of the church is an invisible one. At the same time it exists only within the catholic Church, for it is there only that the Spirit works and that true love dwells.’

His theological ingenuity had a two-fold effect. It not only helped Augustine to neatly sidestep the Donatists’ objection, but it also was the source for later ecclesiological error. Although Augustine did not use the term ‘invisible’ with catholic Church, he did originate the concept of ‘invisible catholic church’ out of theological necessity. So by the 5th

century there were at least two different concepts to ‘church.’ To the Augustinian catholic, the true church was within the visible, catholic institution entered into by baptism and maintained by the sacraments. To the Donatist, the true church was the assembly of immersed believers in a particular locale, Christ’s *My Church*.” (13)

Therefore, we have the development of the Catholic organization. It was nothing more than a mishap of their evolution. Further developments of the Catholics are as follows.

*Dogmas Introduced into Roman Catholicism
(approximate dates)*

Prayers for the dead	A.D. 330
The sign of the cross	A.D. 330
Worship of Mary and use of the title “Mother of God”	A.D. 431
Latin language used exclusively in worship	A.D. 600
Title “pope” officially given to the Bishop of Rome	A.D. 610
Kissing of pope’s feet	A.D. 709
(Pagans by custom kissed the emperor’s feet. The Bible forbids this in Acts 10:25, 26; Rev. 19:10; 22:9)	
Temporal power of popes	A.D. 750
When Pepin, the usurper of the throne of France, invaded Italy and conquered the Lombards, he gave the city of Rome and surrounding territory to the Pope. Jesus forbids such a thing and refused worldly kingship (Matt. 4:8, 9; 20:25, 26; John 18:38)	
Adoration of saints	A.D. 788
Adoration of the cross, images, and relics	A.D. 788
Blessing of bells	A.D. 965
Fasting: Lent, Advent, and Fridays	A.D. 998
Fabrication of holy water	A.D. 1009
Marriage of priests forbidden	A.D. 1070
Rosary beads invented	A.D. 1090
Sale of Indulgences	A.D. 1190
Sacrifice of Mass officially recognized	A.D. 1215
Transubstantiation of bread	A.D. 1215
Articular confession of sins to a priest	A.D. 1215
Adoration of the water	A.D. 1220
People forbidden to take cup of communion wine	A.D. 1414
Purgatory proclaimed	A.D. 1438
Tradition held equal with the Bible	A.D. 1545
By tradition is meant human teachings. The Pharisees believed the same way, and Jesus condemned them, for by human tradition, they annulled the commandments	

of God (Mark 7:1-13; Col. 2:8; Rev. 22:18)	
Apocryphal books added to the Bible	A.D. 1546
Immaculate conception of Mary made official	A.D. 1845
Infallibility of the pope made official	A.D. 1870
(14)	

This would be the organization that birthed other false churches. People began to perceive the double standards and heretical teachings of the Catholics and began to protest against them. Therefore, we have the Protestant Reformation that began after the Dark Ages (500-1500 A.D.).

Protestants

The Catholic “church” would dominate during the Dark Ages. If anyone opposed their doctrines or practices, they were severely persecuted or martyred. Because of their state church mentality, the Catholics seized control of the European nations. This was achieved under the leadership of Pope Innocent III (He was anything but innocent!). Dr. Phil Stringer describes this political autocrat.

“He has been called the most powerful man who ever lived, and maybe he was. Innocent III threatened to condemn to Hell all the citizens of a nation if the ruler of that nation did not obey him! This was called placing a nation under interdict. The pope’s power to do this was so widely believed that no king could oppose him. Eighty-five times he threatened kings with interdict, and all eighty-five times they gave in to him! The Pope forced one king to sign the entire nation over to him.

Innocent III was very aware of the independent churches and, at least twice he attended independent church services without those congregations knowing who he was. From his description, at least one of these churches was Baptist. At first, Innocent III ordered numerous missions to preach to the independents. When this was unsuccessful, he ordered all nations to execute all non-conformists and to close all independent churches. He also ordered vicious campaigns against the Jews. He threatened to place any country under interdict which did not destroy its independent churches.” (15)

Because of this ruling, Christians would face one of the bloodiest times of all. No other persecution would be seen in the world as severe as this one until Adolph Hitler arrived on the scene. (16)

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Europe would see a new wave of opposition toward the Catholic organization. People began to grow weary of the intolerance that the cruel Catholics possessed. Many started to side with the Baptists, but not for long. Once they achieved their “religious freedom”, they turned on the Baptists. Stringer describes this account.

“Brave individuals still continued to raise a voice for religious freedom, but their cry was to go largely unheeded until the Sixteenth Century. During the early years of the Reformation, the independents often joined hands with the Reformers to overthrow the Catholic state churches. In those early days, most of the Reformers advocated religious freedom. Many of Zwingli’s early soldiers were Anabaptists. Even Luther cooperated with the German Anabaptists during his first few years as an outcast from Roman Catholicism. It is easy, however, to be opposed to the idea of a state church when you are not in power. Wherever the power of Romanism was broken, other tyrants soon rose up to take their place. Soon Luther in Germany and Zwingli in Switzerland promoted their own form of state churches, and they attacked those with whom they had once joined in the struggle for religious liberty.” (17)

Therefore, the Reformation Era only gave religious liberty to the Protestants. Zwingli, Luther, and Calvin would continue the onslaught to the Baptist believers. Baptists would now face opposition from two sides, the Catholics and the Protestants. In their own eyes (Judges 17:6- *“In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”*), Protestants believed that the Catholic “church” was the genuine “church”. Their intentions were not to separate from them, but to purify it from within. However, how can you bring a clean thing out of an unclean (Job 14:4- *“Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.”*)? Protestants title the Catholics as a “good movement gone bad” and believed that it only needed to be reformed. However, Catholicism was not a “good movement”, but a gruesome tyrant.

Many promote Zwingli as a great “Christian” and a friend to the Baptists. They say that he “was used of God” in the beginnings of the Reformation (One of these is Beka Horton in Book of the Revelation: Church History and Things to Come on page 45). However, Armitage (and other Baptist historians) presents a different view of this infidel.

“At first, Zwingli and the Council were content with the fine and imprisonment of their victims, but when this failed to cure them they were loaded with chains. On the 7th of March, 1526, the Council of Zurich decreed that those who baptized any person who had been previously christened, should, if condemned, be drowned without mercy. On this ordinance Fusslin makes these remarks: ‘If anyone asks with what kind of justice this was done, the Papists would have an answer. They would say, according to papal law heretics must die. There is no need to inquire further. The maxim is applicable here. What the papacy condemns is condemned. But those who hold to evangelical faith renounce the pope and papal authority, and the question now arises, with what propriety do they compel people to renounce their views or religion, and in case of their refusal inflict upon them capital punishment?’ Upon the plea that Zwingli tried to induce the Council to be less severe, the attempt has been made to relieve him entirely of odium; and happy would it be for his memory if his name could be purged of this blot. He had opportunity enough to have sent his protest down to posterity had he desired to do so. But this is all he

seems to have said on the subject, and without dissent: ‘The most noble Senate determined to immerse in water, whoever shall have immersed in baptism, one who had previously emerged.’ Hence, it soon passed into a sneering proverb: ‘He that baptizes will be baptized himself’.” (18)

Lutherans

Martin Luther began his life early in the Roman Catholic organization. In his youth, he enrolled in an Augustinian monastery and consecrated himself to be a Roman Catholic monk. Then, the next year (1507), he became a priest. He began to teach at the University of Wittenberg in Germany in 1508. By 1510, Luther commenced to see the corruption of the Roman Catholics. In 1517, Luther comprised a *95 Theses* of which he nailed to the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg. This is recognized as the beginning of the Protestant Reformation Era. (19)

To some, Luther is a great hero. However, before we put him on a pedestal, we should continue to study his life. The thesis that he wrote started a new way of thinking. Strouse describes this new theory.

“Later, in Wittenberg, where the Reformation started, men began to emphasize man’s rationalist thinking over and above the Bible, and Rationalism was the outcome of this emphasis on man’s head. Rationalism had its heyday through the 17th-19th centuries. Thus the shift from Platonic Catholicism to Aristotelian individualism led to man’s emphasis on his hands (Renaissance), to his heart (Reformation), and finally to his head (Rationalism).” (20)

Attempts by the Roman Catholics were made to stop Luther and his new light. Charles V introduced the Edict of Worms in 1521 in opposition to Luther. Then, in 1526, Charles V annulled this edict with the Diet of Speyers, which provided some religious toleration (for Protestants). This was a "scratch me on my back and I will scratch yours" ordeal. The deal was toleration for military assistance by the Lutheran princes in Germany.

What about the character of the “great” reformer, Luther? After viewing his life, practices, and doctrines, it is not understood how a Baptist could embrace this heretic. Following his liberation from the strongholds of the Catholics, Luther began to practice a little persecution himself.

“In the OT, those who did not conform to the commandments of the Lord received capital punishment in the form of stoning. Likewise, the sacral societies of Catholicism, Lutheranism, Anglicanism, Presbyterianism, and Methodism practiced persecution, and to a certain extent, capital punishment on theological dissidents in their respective sacral societies. In contrast however, the NT does not teach the persecution of doctrinal heretics, but the church discipline of heretics and evangelism of the heathen. Christ’s My Church movement did not persecute theological enemies but evangelized them.” (21)

Concerning Luther, we might need to look at the edict that came from the council at Spires. This would reveal the true contracts between Charles V and Martin Luther.

“It is important to note that some of these persecutions came from authorities who acknowledged the Roman Catholic Church, others from those who recognized Lutheran Leadership. Both Lutheran and Roman Catholic leaders took the same position with respect to dealing with Baptists and others who taught religious liberty. In 1529, Charles V, Emperor of Germany, dealt with the rise of the Anabaptists. His edict following the church council at Spires reads in part:

‘...clearly ordained that all and every Anabaptist, or rebaptized person, whether male or female, being of ripe years and understanding, should be deprived of life, and, according to the circumstances of the individual, be put to death by fire, sword, or otherwise; and whenever found should be brought to justice, indicted, and convicted; and be no otherwise judged, tried, or dealt with, under pain of heavy and severe punishment.’

The results of this decree led to the deaths of thousands of Baptists; however, the movement continued to spread. In many German states there was massive persecution of Anabaptists.” (22)

Even the men assigned under the leadership of Martin Luther had absolutely no toleration for the Anabaptists of that region. Melanchthon, the chief assistant to Martin Luther, severely persecuted the Anabaptists with the approval of Luther.

“Baptists were also protected in the German town of Wassenburg by a local ruler named Werner von Pallant. Under the leadership of Johannes Campanus, a local preacher, the church in Wassenburg determined to use their freedom as a base for sending missionaries throughout Germany. This so angered Melanchthon, Martin Luther’s chief assistant, that he pressed for persecution of the Baptists in the region. Campanus was arrested and spent 20 years in prison, dying there. Most of the missionaries ordained by his church were also executed. Hubmaier was arrested and burned at the stake. Three days later his wife was drowned.” (23)

Further studies on the life of Luther can be seen by the Baptist historian Thomas Armitage as he portrays the wicked character of Luther. This should be enough information to reveal to any reader that Luther was not the friend of the Baptists. James R. Beller states, “He wrote a violent booklet against the Jews, as well as booklets against the papacy and the Anabaptists.” (24) Not only did he hate the Baptists, but the Jews were also at the top of his list.

Church of England (Anglicans)

The Church of England was created under the headship of Henry VIII. Phil Stringer offers the history of the formation of this new “church”.

“Henry VIII wanted to divorce his first wife, Catherine (whose nephew, Charles V, was the leading supporter of the Pope in Europe and who was, herself, a devout Catholic). Henry wanted to marry Anne Boleyn who was from an evangelical family. Henry applied to the Pope for permission and, for six years, the Pope refused to give Henry a decision either way. Henry had been no friend of the Reformation, having been trained as a Catholic theologian. He had also written a book against Luther, and the Pope had awarded Henry the title, ‘Defender of the Faith.’ But now Henry rebelled against the Pope, declared himself to be the head of the Church of England, divorced Catherine, and married Anne. Protestants and Catholics competed for influence in the newly organized Church of England.” (25)

This newly formed “church” was never stable in their doctrine. Their teachings would change with the feelings of Henry VIII. Shortly, he executed Anne Boleyn and married four more women. (26) Therefore, there was constant turmoil concerning morality and dogma within the “church”. Along with the other Protestants, the Church of England persecuted the Baptists as well.

Methodist

From the Church of England sprouted the Methodist movement headed by John Wesley in the 18th century. Although they shared several views of the Baptists, they still did not completely turn away from the Catholic and Church of England mentality. Stringer describes their practice.

“Methodism was based upon the basic fundamentals of the evangelical Christian faith and union together in a church system. Methodist churches and individuals were left to decide many things for themselves. Most of them accepted the Bible as the final authority for faith and practice. (They could not accept it as the sole authority because they also had the authority of their church system.) Methodist churches have always been allowed more independence than most churches in a denominational system, but the final church authority still remains with the denomination. Most Methodist churches baptize infants and admit them to church membership. Most of their churches practiced immersion, sprinkling, and pouring, leaving the choice to the individual. A few Methodists have been known for holding to baptism by immersion of believers only. Historic Methodists usually hold to only two church ordinances: baptism and the Lord’s Supper.” (27)

John Wesley was Arminian in his views. Noah Webster defines “Arminian” as:

“One of a sect or party of Christians, so called from Arminius or Harmansen, of Holland, who flourished at the close of the 16th century, and beginning of the 17th. The Arminian doctrines are,

1. Conditional election and reprobation, in opposition to absolute predestination
2. Universal redemption, or that the atonement was made by Christ for all mankind, though none but believers can be partakers of the benefit
3. That man, in order to exercise true faith, must be regenerated and renewed by the operation of the Holy Spirit, which is the gift of God; but that this grace is not irresistible and may be lost; so that men may relapse from a state of grace and die in their sins.” (28)

This flowed into the Methodist movement.

Presbyterians

Two men, John Calvin and John Knox, headed the Presbyterian Protestants. Calvin led the movement in Geneva and Knox lead in Scotland. Presbyterians were a split off the Roman Catholic organization in 1541. Their spiritual authority was found, not in the Scriptures, but in the church councils. Therefore, they were subject to the direction of a denominational hierarchy. Believing in covenant theology, Presbyterians allowed children to become church members without the Scriptural method of salvation. This lead to “churches” full of unregenerate sinners. Presbyterians believed in sprinkling rather than complete immersion during baptism. It is recorded that during the 16th and 17th centuries that Presbyterians persecuted Baptists. (29)

John Calvin, formerly a student for the priesthood, “accepted Christ” after reading the writings of Martin Luther. This “conversion” led him to a Protestant camp in 1533. After dissimulation there, Calvin eventually came to Geneva. It was at Geneva that Protestants (not Baptists) could flee for refuge from persecution. (30) What made John Calvin famous was his writing formerly titled “Institutes of the Christian Religion”. In this writing was the tulip theory that still exists today. It is:

1. T- Total Depravity of Man
2. U- Unconditional Election
3. L- Limited Atonement
4. I- Irresistible Grace
5. P- Perseverance of the Saints (31)

Calvin was not a friend to the Baptists nor was he tolerant of them. John T. Christian records his attitude toward the “dissident” Baptists.

“The influence of John Calvin had begun to be felt in English affairs. His books had appeared in translations in England. He was responsible in a large measure for the demon of hate and fierce hostility which the Baptists of England had to encounter. He advised that ‘Anabaptists and reactionists should be alike put to death’. He wrote a letter to Lord Protector Somerset, the translation was probably made by Archbishop Crammer, to the effect: ‘These altogether deserve to be well punished by the sword, seeing that they do conspire against God, who had set him in his royal seat’.” (32)

It was through the “ministry” of John Calvin that sprinkling for baptism would be introduced to England. Sprinkling came into general use in England. Christian quotes another source to verify this statement.

“During the persecution of Mary, many persons, most of whom were Scotchmen, fled from England to Geneva, and there greedily imbibed the opinions of that church. In 1556 a book was published in that place containing ‘The Form of Prayer and Ministration of the Sacraments, approved by the famous and godly learned man, John Calvin,’ in which the administrator is enjoined to take water in his hand and lay it upon the child’s forehead. These Scotch exiles, who had renounced the authority of the Pope, implicitly acknowledged the authority of Calvin; and returning to their own country, with Knox at their head, in 1559, established sprinkling in Scotland. From Scotland this practice made its way in the reign of Elizabeth, but was not authorized by the established Church. In the Assembly of Divines, held at Westminster in 1643, it was keenly debated whether immersion or sprinkling should be adopted; 25 voted for sprinkling, and 24 for immersion; and even this small majority was obtained at the earnest request of Dr. Lightfoot, who had acquired great influence in that Assembly. Sprinkling is therefore the general practice of this country. Many Christians, however, especially the Baptists, reject it. The Greek Church universally adheres to immersion.” (33)

Different times John Calvin would try to write to the Baptists and “help them” with the subject of baptism. “Calvin thus speaking of his own times declares that if the opinions of the Baptists prevailed the rivers would not suffice for their dippings.” (34) Calvin, mocking the baptism of the Baptists, wrote, “Truly so much ignorance deservedly requires another baptism, if for ignorance they should be rebaptized again.” (35)

Therefore, we must conclude that John Calvin and the Presbyterians are nothing more than more heretical children of the Catholic organization. Certainly, this is not the church Jesus said He would build. Unfortunately, Calvin’s influence would continue for several years, yea, even to the present time. Even his notes in the Geneva Bible would sail over with the Pilgrims as they came to America in 1620.

Congregationalists

The father of the Congregationalists is known as Robert Browne. He arose during the reign of Queen Elizabeth in England. (While religious toleration continued a short space under her rule, it was not long until the small minority of the Baptists was facing persecution again.) Browne, due to his relations with the Baptists, began to form independent churches. Because of their independence from one another, they became known as Congregational Churches. However, they still erred on the doctrine of baptism and the means of salvation. (36)

Puritans

The Puritans would be another class of Protestants that would persecute the Baptists for their unwavering stand for Biblical authority and doctrine. Following the teachings of John Calvin, they split off the Church of England. (37) Concerning Baptist history, Puritans are better known in the Plymouth (as Pilgrims) and Massachusetts Bay colonies located in New England.

Who were the Puritans in America? Puritans were a group of Protestants in England during the 1500's. The term "Puritan" was first used around 1566. They were an assembly of people that desired to purify the church from within. Independence was their goal, as they desired freedom in their selection of pastors and local church autonomy.

Due to their desire for independence, they conflicted with the Church of England. England wanted to control all church affairs. Persecution plagued some Puritans as they fought for independence.

The Roman Catholic Church began to lose power in England around 1536. King Henry VIII led England in this power struggle. The changes he made still did not satisfy the Puritans. Confusion began to enter into their congregations as they began to divide over what they wanted. There were a few splits of the Puritans. The "Separatists" and the "Brownists" were two of these groups.

Some of the Separatists blended in with the Pilgrims. Once they arrived in America in 1620, they began to influence other settlers. Shortly, around 1660, the Puritan movement lost its momentum. This loss of power did not hinder their existing influence.

Although many do not realize it, Baptists were persecuted on American soil during the time before, during, and after colonial America. Not only did the Baptist face persecution, inquisitions, and martyrdoms in Europe and England, but they also faced it in New England by the Puritans.

Much of the intolerance of the Baptists started in Massachusetts in 1638. A law was passed that made people endorse the Puritan clergy. In addition, in the same year, the Assembly of Massachusetts made into law that the excommunicated were required to be restored to the churches that exiled them. If this restoration were not completed, then the judgment would be imprisonment, banishment, or other forms of punishment. These laws were passed with the Baptists in mind. According to David Benedict, another wicked law that passed in Massachusetts was,

"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...every such person or persons shall be sentenced to banishment.” (38)

Such were the afflictions and punishments on our Baptist ancestors. John Cotton was the major thrust to this new wave of persecution that would soon flow into other states. Soon, maltreatment of the Baptists would be evident and endorsed in every colony in America. The state church began to gain control and American soil was another battlefield for soul liberty.

What was the major accusation used for maltreatment of the Baptists? It was a charge placed upon them for simply preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Preaching the gospel without a state license was a crime that was punishable, in some instances, nigh unto death. Missing the services of the state church, assembling a people in order to preach to them, and speaking against infant baptism were other “crimes” that these “rebellious” Baptists would commit.

In Virginia, Baptist ministers were forbidden to preach unless a bishop from the Anglican Church ordained them. Since the Episcopalian Church was the state church, it was mandatory to attend their services, or rebels would be fined. Despite these unusual laws, the Baptists flourished as God used them in revival. (39) They simply rejoiced in the fact that they were counted worthy to suffer for His name. The more persecution these tyrants brought upon the Baptists, the more they spread. When the Baptist preachers were imprisoned, their congregations would come to the prison to hear them preach.

Such were the persecutions of the Baptists in colonial America. Time and paper would fail to reveal the entire story, but one conclusion may be drawn. God honored his people, through time, and now we have a free America in which anyone can worship God according to their own dictates. If it were not for the Baptists withstanding the test of time, we would not have soul liberty in America. The Catholic Organization and the Protestants would still dictate to everyone what they could and could not do. What a great debt we owe our Baptist forefathers!

Pilgrims

What ties did the Pilgrims have with the Puritans? The Pilgrims landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620. Their desire was religious freedom on the soil of America. However, they had their start in England under the Puritan denomination. Most of the Pilgrims were Separatists because they separated from the Church of England. These Separatists could not gain religious liberty in England, so they fled to Leyden, Holland for a place of refuge. Keep in mind that Pilgrims were not Baptists, as some believe.

While in Holland, the Pilgrims were able to raise money through English merchants to sail to America, seeking religious freedom. William Brewster led a group of these Separatists back to England on the Speedwell in July of 1620. William Bradford titled them “Pilgrims” during their departure from Holland. He said, “They knew they were pilgrims.” Their wanderings and searching for religious freedom branded them “Pilgrims”. Then, in September, they boarded the Mayflower and set sail for America.

On November 21, 1620, they anchored in what is known now as the Princetown harbor. The journey took 65 days and all 102 Pilgrims were still alive. They stayed

aboard the Mayflower and 41 men drew up the Mayflower Compact, which would be their first self-government in America. John Carver became their first Governor. On December 21, 1620, they landed at Plymouth.

It seemed as if the judgment of God was on the first settlements in America known as Roanoke and Jamestown. Even Roanoke is known as the lost colony because, after John White returned, none of the bodies or bones of the citizens were found. Jamestown went through severe hardships with Indians, weather, and drought. Several times the entire colony faced extinction. However, this was not the case with the Plymouth settlement and the Pilgrims. How did the Pilgrims get the smiles of heaven on their settlement?

Roger Babson gave some light on this issue as he conversed with the president of Argentina. He said, "South America was settled by the Spanish, who came to South America in search of gold; but North America was settled by the Pilgrim Fathers, who went there in search of God." (40) This was the key to success that the Pilgrim's possessed. While the Catholics were striving to get rich and regain control in another land, God would not allow their vile ambitions to be fulfilled. The Lord waited until a people desired to please Him, before He would pour out His blessings on them. Certainly, the Pilgrims were summed up in a five-point outline submitted to the Virginia Company, which stated, "...it is not with us as with other men..." (41) They were not as other men were (seeking for wealth, power, and control), and this is why the God of Heaven blessed them.

It is true that the Pilgrims had their battles and hardships, but we can clearly see the providential hand of God guiding them throughout their voyage and settlement. From the first, the ships were not able to sail, and even one had to retire. This delay did not thwart the determination of the Pilgrims, for they committed themselves to God. During the trip across the Atlantic, they saved the ship from disaster by Brewster's screw taken from a printing press aboard the Mayflower. (42) The only one to perish during the journey across the great ocean was a crewmember that boasted about the death of the Pilgrims.

Amazingly, when the Pilgrims did arrive, they were completely off course. Their planned destination was several miles away. Therefore, they drew up the Mayflower Compact to act as a written form of their desired civil government. This kept anarchy from reigning on the new land.

When they started their adventures on land, God watched over them. Four years prior, the Lord wiped out one of the most dangerous Indian tribes, which dwelt in the area where the Pilgrims landed. They were known as the Patuxet Indians.

Their first winter was harsh and nearly took half of the lives that settled there. However, right on time, God sent them Squanto to teach the Pilgrims how to work the land, hunt, and other survival necessities that they needed. Their first harvest ended up in a feast of thanksgiving, which we still celebrate today.

Through the Pilgrims, we can see the hand of God birthing a nation that would provide religious freedom to those that desire it. Many thanks may be given to the men that were not as others! May we never forget John Robinson (pastor of the Separatists congregation in Scrooby and Leyden), Robert Cushman and John Carver (for receiving a patent from the Virginia Company), William Brewster (John Robinson's assistant and teacher which lead the Pilgrims to America and instrumental in the writing of the Mayflower Compact), and William Bradford (the Pilgrim's historian and second governor in Plymouth). Samoset, Massasoit, and Squanto (previously of the Patuxet

Indians) need recognition for their assistance to the Pilgrims. In addition, we need to remember Christopher Jones (the less spiritual), captain of the Mayflower.

Keep in mind, that although the Pilgrims were blessed of God, they were still Protestants. They still held to infant baptism and other Catholic doctrines. One explanation for God's blessings on them is that God was getting a land ready for the Baptists to rest (in spite of the Catholics and Protestants). Because of the tyranny, Baptists could not be the first to settle America. While the Catholic Christopher Columbus was sailing the ocean blue in 1492, Baptists were still being killed for their beliefs. God would slowly provide a land where the Baptists could preach the gospel without the fear of hiding from their pursuers.

Mennonites

Menno Simmons was the founder of the Mennonite organization. Before he was "converted", he was a priest in the Roman sacral society. In 1526, Simmons would begin to question Catholicism and transubstantiation. Then, in 1536, he renounced the Roman Catholic "church" and joined with the Anabaptists. As a result, he is known as the "Father of the Dutch Anabaptists". He would begin to plant churches in that region and write several articles. Through time, they dropped the name Anabaptist and began to call themselves Mennonites. (43)

Simmons should not be praised yet. After his "conversion", he continued as a Roman Catholic priest for five years before joining with the Anabaptists (What about John 16:13- "*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth...*"—Why was not Simmons guided into becoming a Baptist after his "conversion"?). (44) In his later ministry, the Baptists separated with Menno Simmons because of pacifism and their new doctrines teaching works for salvation. Stringer states, "By the Eighteenth Century, the Mennonite churches no longer practiced baptism by immersion of believers only and were no longer considered part of the Baptist movement." (45)

Quakers

George Fox would be the founder and head (Jesus Christ is the Head of the church—Baptist belief) of the Quaker movement. The Quakers were Protestants as they protested against Catholicism and the Baptists. Although Fox had parents that were Baptist, he disputed their Scriptural views of baptism (immersion) and the sole authority of the Word of God. However, he did promote separation of the state from the church and independent churches, which led to several martyrs within the Quaker movement. (46)

Amish

Jacob Ammann would be the head of the Amish Protestants. Ammann was a former Mennonite teacher that branched off from them leading his people into legalism. Their strong belief of separation from the world would soon overbear their doctrine of salvation. (47) This idea leads to a "works" salvation, which they still believe today. They focused their "Christianity" on the outside, and forgot about the heart on the inside.

Nonetheless, unless a sinner repents and turns to Christ as their Saviour, no amount of separation will save them.

These are the more renowned Protestant groups. As we saw, they were only offspring of the Roman Catholic organization.

Now we will turn our attention, after noticing what was not Baptist, to the true church. Again, Jesus said, *“I will build my church”*. Church is singular. Therefore, there must be a perpetual line of this church. The Baptists are the ones that fall under the category of following apostolic doctrine. Hence, they are the church Jesus said He would build. A suggested outline of their presence throughout the centuries is as follows.

First Century

Christians

Paulicians (Seventh Century)

Second Century

Montanists

Third Century

Novatians

Fourth Century

Donatists

Paterines

Anabaptists

Sixth Century

Cathari (Waldenses—Seventh Century)

Seventh Century

Waldenses (Seventh Century through Ninth Century, Twelfth Century)

Albigenses (Seventh Century through Ninth Century)

Paulicians (Seventh Century through Ninth Century)

Tenth Century

Henricians (Tenth Century through Eleventh Century, Thirteenth Century)

Twelfth Century

Petrobrussians

Thirteenth Century

Arnoldists

Fourteenth Century

Lollards

Sixteenth Century

Anabaptists

Baptists

Seventeenth through Twenty-First Centuries

Baptists

From this panoramic view of the succession of the Baptist church throughout the centuries, we will now turn our attention to them. It should be noted that Baptist

congregations were labeled after their leader's name. Although some were not titled "Baptist", they were in their doctrine and practice. However, we do find the use of Anabaptist and Baptist in the fourth century. Even better than that, we see its use in the Gospels. W.A. Jarrel offers several other views of this point in his book, Baptist Church Perpetuity.

"Geo. B. Taylor, D.D., a late writer, says: 'Baptist principles and Baptist practices have existed in all ages from the Reformation back to apostolic times. I humbly claim that we originated not at the Reformation, nor in the dark ages, nor in any century after the Apostles, but our marching orders are the commission, and that the first Baptist church was the church at Jerusalem.'

Pengilly: 'Our principles are as old as Christianity. We acknowledge no founder but Christ.'

Dr. Peck: 'Baptists in every age from the Apostles remained true to the kingdom which Christ came to establish.'

Dr. Howell: 'I assert that from the days of John the Baptist to the present time the true Baptist church has ever been a missionary body.'

Mr. Orchard: 'I have demonstrated so far as human testimony is allowed to prove any fact that the Baptist church, as the Church of Christ, has existed from the day of Pentecost to this privileged period.'

John A. Broadus, D.D., LL.D.: 'And it would seem to be entirely possible and very probable that the patient research of generations to come may gather material for a much nearer approach to a continuous history of Baptists than is now practicable.'

Many years ago Dr. Benedict, a Baptist historian, wrote: 'The more I study the subject the stronger are my convictions that if all the facts in the case could be disclosed a very good Succession could be made out.'

Dr. Joseph Belcher: 'It will be seen that Baptists claim the high antiquity of the Christian church. They can trace a succession of those who believe the same doctrine and administer the same ordinances directly up to the apostolic age.'

The late William Williams, D.D., when Professor of Church History in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, refuting a statement that he taught that Baptists originated with the Reformation, wrote September 5, 1876: 'I now hasten to reply that it is not the teaching of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, through its Professor of History, that the origin of Baptists is to be traced to the Church of Rome in the sixteenth century...The Baptist churches, in my opinion, are of divine origin, and originated in the first century under the preaching and founding of the Apostles of our Lord.'

The lamented Charles H. Spurgeon wrote: 'We care very little for the historical argument, but if there be anything in it all, the plea ought not to be filched by the clients of Rome, but should be left to that community which all along has held by one Lord, one faith and one baptism...It would not be impossible to show that the first Christians who dwelt in the

land were of the same faith and order as the church now called Baptist...The time will arrive when history will be rewritten.'

Geo. C. Lorimer, D.D.: 'There are reasons for believing that the Baptists are the oldest body of Christians who dissent from the assumption of the Romish church. Historically they are not Protestants, for while they sympathize with the protest offered by the reformers at the Diet of Spire, 1529, in which this now famous name originated, their existence antedates it by many centuries.'

Dr. Buckland: 'Have Baptists a history? Prejudice and passion have always answered, no...From the time when Christ walked the earth down to the present there has not been a period in which they have not suffered persecution. From the age of John the Baptists to the massacre in Jamaica, bigoted religionists have not ceased first to slaughter and then to slander them...We cannot accept a place in the catalogue of sects or broken schismatical fragments of God's church.'" (48)

Therefore, we conclude that the Baptist church has existed in every century. Now we will look at this succession.

Christians

The first "name calling", apart from John the Baptist, is the instance that occurred at Antioch. This would set the stage for the Baptist "getting" their name from other sects. The Baptists at Antioch were titled "Christians" as seen in Acts 11:26.

"And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."

They were labeled this title because of their lifestyle that was like Christ. Instead of being identified as Baptist, now they were branded as Christians.

Montanists

Montanists appeared in Phrygia (the greater part of Asia Minor) in the middle of the second century. Montanus would be the leader of this group of Baptists in 156 A.D. They spread throughout Asia Minor, North Africa, and, for some time, Rome. Their succession would continue for centuries before being appointed another name. (49)

Montanists rejected baptismal regeneration and believed in purity within the church, even to the point of church discipline. Separate from the soon to arise Catholics, they believed in a visible church. They were democratic in their government and completely relied on the Holy Spirit to lead their congregation. (50)

One of their most well known preachers was Tertullian. During the third century, he preached in North Africa. Tertullian practiced (and preached) baptism by immersion (unknown by some he rejected baptismal regeneration), independent churches, sole

authority of the Bible, and separation of the state from the church. (51) He witnessed several persecutions of Christians during the Roman “Bloody Theatre” and would later write about those.

Novatians

In 250 A.D., the Lord saved Novatian, a Pagan philosopher, at Rome. After his conversion, he became one of the most distinguished theologians (at Rome). Soon, he would lead a group of Baptists on in the fundamentals of the faith. Their assembly began to spread rapidly, extending throughout the Roman Empire to Armenia, Numedia, Spain, Constantinople, Alexandria, Carthage, and Phrygeia (where they would fuse together with the Montanists). (52)

Novatians held strict discipline within their assembly and believed in a spiritual church. They rejected baptismal regeneration and believed in baptism by immersion. Salvation did not consist of church membership, according to them, but was in the Lord Jesus Christ. Although Novatian has been slanderously reported, he (and the people he led) was Baptist in his government and procedures, demanding purity in the church. Finally, Novatian would end up a martyr. (53)

Donatists

Donatists arose in 311 A.D. in the Barbary States of North Africa. Later, their nucleus would form in Mauritania, Numidia, and Carthage. Their outreach would cover from the Atlantic to Egypt and would border the Atlas Mountains, Mediterranean, and the desert. The Bishop of Carthage became so outraged at the development of the Donatists that he brought thousands to “court martyrdom”. Donatus was their leader and spoke out against the impurity of the bishops in his days. (54)

This group of believers formerly titled “Donatists” believed in church purity and spirituality. Like others, they held to strict church discipline. Concerning their baptism, they rejected the new wave of infant baptism and practiced complete immersion for their method of baptism. (55)

Paterines

In Baptist history, the Paterines were called Cathari, meaning pure ones. Roman Catholics titled them Paterines as a means of reproach toward them. They derived from Bulgaria. Their center would be in south France existing from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. Mainly, the Paterines (Cathari) consisted of the Paulicians. (56)

Paterines were law-abiding citizens that would not believe in infant baptism, despite the persecution. They followed only the Bible as their authority (believing both the Old and New Testaments) and confirmed that it was the Spirit’s power in conversion. Their morality was interesting in that they would not attend saloons and theatres. Church discipline was practiced amongst their congregations. They would continue, known as Paterines, until the time of the Reformation. (57)

Waldenses

One of the most distinguished groups of Baptists was the Waldenses. It is said that the Waldenses joined the Catharists (Paulicians and Albigenses). They arrived before the Reformation and lasted after the Reformation. (58) David Burcham Ray explains how they arose.

“The name Waldenses was originally applied to the inhabitants of the valleys of the Alps, but, in after times, it was applied to that class of Christians, everywhere, who embraced the same views with the inhabitants of the valleys. This name has sometimes been applied, by the Roman Catholics, with such latitude as to embrace all the sects which opposed the doctrines of Rome. Therefore, in the perusal of the pages of history, we find the term Waldenses applied to parties of almost every denominational cast. And a failure to observe the proper distinctions in the use of this name has led some historians to very incorrect conclusions as regards the doctrine of the Waldenses.

It is claimed by some, that the Waldenses derived their name from one Peter Waldo, a merchant of Lyons, who lived in the twelfth century. But this position is now almost universally abandoned. It is a historic fact, fully made out, that the name Waldenses was applied to the inhabitants of the valleys, as a religious community, long before the time of Peter Waldus. Mr. Jones, the historian, says: ‘It is also proved from their books, that they existed as Waldenses before the time of Peter Waldo, who preached about the year 1160.’ And upon the same point Mr. Waddington remarks: ‘That we may not fall into error of Mosheim, who ascribes the origin of that sect to an individual named Waldus’.” (59)

This would explain the discrepancy of the doctrines of Waldenses that Mosheim described in his writings. Actually, Waldenses in France and other parts of Europe did not differ in their doctrines, but Catholic historians misappropriated “Waldenses” to the wrong group. The erroneous labeling of non-Baptist congregations with “Waldenses” lead to the misunderstandings in Waldensian history.

Nonetheless, ancient Waldenses were a spiritual people that only believed in regenerated church members. They rejected baptismal regeneration and practiced baptism by immersion. Their confessions of faith were that of the Baptists and believed that salvation was by grace through faith. In addition, we see that the Lollards were actually Waldenses. (60)

Albigenses

Albigenses were a company of Baptists that dwelt in southern France. They were one of the most persecuted bands of Baptists that there was. Armitage describes their influx on the pages of Baptist history.

“They arose in Southern France early in the eleventh century and were first known as Publicani; but at last took their name from the city of Albi, the center of the Albigeois district. They were first called Albigenses by Stephen Borbone, 1225. It is difficult to get at their exact tenets and practices, but they were generally numbered with the Cathari, and had many things in common with other sects so known. They rejected the Romish Church, and esteemed the New Testament above all its traditions and ceremonies. They did not take oaths, nor believe in baptismal regeneration; but they were ascetic and pure in their lives; they also exalted celibacy. They increased so rapidly that they drove the Catholic priests from their churches, of which they took possession, forming schools and congregations of their own.” (61)

The blessings of God on the Albigenses would soon be met with the threatening of Satan and his church, Roman Catholicism. The tyrant hand would move again on those who believed Baptist doctrine.

“Innocent III offered the prelates and nobles all the blessings of the Church for the use of their sword and the possessions of the heretics as an additional reward. Their own prince, Count Raymond VI, was compelled to slaughter his subjects, and the pope summoned the King of Northern France with all his nobles to the same bloody work. Half a million of men were gathered, four Archbishops joined the invaders with twelve Bishops and countless nobles. Towns were sacked, seven castles surrendered to the pope, and five hundred villages, cities and fortresses fell.

Barons, knights, counts and soldiery flocked like eagles to the prey from all directions. Their superstition was fed by the promise of two years’ remission of penance, and all the indulgences granted to the invaders of the Holy Sepulcher; and their cupidity was fired by the tender of the goods and lands of the heretics, as well as the right to reduce them to Mohammedan slavery. They followed the lead of Arnaud, the legate of the Holy See, bearing the cross and pilgrims’ staves, from the adjacent countries, French, German, Flemish, Norman. They first attacked Beziers, which was strongly fortified and garrisoned; but it was taken by storm and thirty thousand were slain. Seven thousand had taken refuge in the Church of St. Magdalene, and the monk Peter tells us with the most ferocious coldness that they ‘killed women and children, old men, young men, priests, all without distinction.’ There were many Catholics in the town, and the ‘Holy Legate’ was asked how these should be spared, when he commanded: ‘Kill them all, God will know his own!’ Lest a heretic should escape they piled all in an indiscriminate heap, and the Chronicle of St. Denis gives the whole number as sixty thousand.” (62)

Such were the persecutions and afflictions of the Albigenses. Because of their pure lives and fundamentals of the faith, some 60,000 faced a martyr's death. Great were the Albigenses!

Paulicians

Paulicians were a collection of Baptists located in the Taurus mountain range. Their lineage traces back to the apostle Paul and his teachings. Through the planted ministries of the apostles, the "Paulicians" would settle down in Armenia during the first century. Later, "Their enemies accused them of Manichaeism, which accusation they indignantly repelled." (63) John T. Christian further describes their history.

"The Paulician churches were of apostolic origin, and were planted in Armenia in the first century. ' Through Antioch and Palmyra the faith must have spread into Mesopotamia and Persia; and in those regions become the basis of the faith as it is spread in the Taurus mountains as far as Ararat. This was the primitive form of Christianity. The churches in the Taurus range of mountains formed a huge recess or circular dam into which flowed the early Paulician faith to be caught and maintained for centuries, as it were, a backwater from the main for centuries'. The earliest center of Christianity in Armenia was at Taron, which was the constant home and base of operations of the Paulicians." (64)

The Paulicians believed in all parts of the Bible, marriage, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. However, they did reject infant baptism and baptismal regeneration. Their church government was that of the Baptists.

Henricians

Henry was the leader of the Henricians in the twelfth century. He resided at Clugny, where he preached purity of doctrine, against the clergy, in opposition to the worshipping of saints, opposed infant baptism, and against works as a means of salvation. As a result, revival broke out and God would use him across Europe. Henry was imprisoned, released, and then imprisoned again. This time it was for life. (65) Cathcart describes his character.

"He was endowed with extraordinary powers of persuasion, and with a glowing earnestness that swept away the greatest obstacles that mere human power could banish, and he had the grace of God in his heart. He denounced prayers for the dead, the invocation of saints, the vices of the clergy, the superstitions of the church, and the licentiousness of the age, and he set an example of the sternest morality." (66)

Petrobrussians

Petrobrussians were titled after their leader, Peter de Bruys (an excellent evangelist and revealer of Roman Catholicism). They were located in southern France. Their practice and doctrine were similar to the Waldenses. In 1126, he was burnt at the stake at St. Gilles for his stand. He (and his followers) rejected infant baptism, oaths, prayers to the saints (and the dead), and veneration of images. Peter de Bruys had a strong testimony for being a herald of the gospel. (67) Cathcart describes Peter and his followers.

“Peter and his followers were decided Baptists, and like ourselves they gave a fresh baptism to all their converts. They reckoned that they were not believers when first immersed in the Catholic Church, and that as Scripture baptism required faith in its candidates, which they did not possess, they regarded them as wholly unbaptized; and for the same reason they repudiated the idea that they rebaptized them, confidently asserting that because of the lack of faith they had never been baptized.” (68)

Such were the strong beliefs that brought them persecution and, eventually, the burning of their leader. One thing is certain about the Baptists, when an earthly leader perishes under tyranny, they are certain that their heavenly leader remains intact.

Petrobrussians also believed in the Trinity, the entirety of the Bible, were persuaded that Baptism and the Lord’s Supper were only symbols, and regeneration was only by the Holy Spirit. They were immersionists that denied baptismal regeneration and infant baptism. (69)

Arnoldists

Europe began to experience a “revival of learning”. Although it was a Catholic view, people were encouraged to “think” for themselves. Abelard, a teacher for Catholicism, encouraged his students to formulate their own thoughts. However, it proved to be a mistake for him. Two of his students, Peter of Bruys and Arnold of Bresica, took a Bible and “formulated their own thoughts”. (70)

After his conversion, Arnold of Bresica adopted Baptist distinctives and started a campaign for religious freedom (separation of the state from the church). Subsequent to his exile from one country to another, Arnold ended up in Rome. His teaching, while in Rome, was so powerful that it led the people to overthrow the Pope. This allowed for freedom in that area for independent churches. His followers became known as Arnoldists and Lombards. They were titled Lombards in Italy because some settled down in Lombardy, a region of Italy. (71)

John T. Christian offers more on the history of Arnold. In this, we see his persecution and death.

“Arnold of Brescia was born in the beginning of the twelfth century and died about A.D. 1148. He was a student of Abelard, in Paris, and returned with lofty notions of reformation in Italy. From one country to another he was driven by persecution. He finally returned to Rome and led

a patriotic attempt for the freedom of the country against the pope. He was taken prisoner, hanged, his body burned, and the ashes thrown into the Tiber.” (72)

Concerning their beliefs, Arnoldists opposed union of state and church. They rejected infant baptism, transubstantiation, and “riotous conduct”. Arnoldists were considered Baptists. (73)

Lollards

The noted leader of the Lollards was Walter Lollard. In 1315, Lollard became known as a great preacher and herald of the faith. God would begin to use him mightily as He used him to bring revival to the Albigenses. He also influenced the Waldenses, bringing their doctrines into England. Their doctrine, Bible and Baptist doctrine, spread throughout England. (74) Christian states:

“Walter Lollard, a Dutchman, of remarkable eloquence, came, according to Fuller, into England, in the reign of Edward III, ‘from among the Waldenses, among whom he was a great bard or pastor.’ His followers rapidly increased so that Abelard declared ‘our age is imperiled by heretics, that there seems to be no footing left for the true faith.’ Knighton, the English chronicler, says: ‘More than one-half of the people of England, in a few years, became Lollards’.” (75)

Lollard performed believer’s baptism, thus denying infant baptism. Fox, stating one of their articles of faith, said that, “faith ought to precede baptism”. The Lollards merged with the Anabaptists, seeing that they were identical. (76)

Anabaptists and Baptists

During the Reformation, the term “Anabaptist” would now apply to all groups of the Baptist faith. Germany, Holland, and Switzerland would be the first regions to use “Anabaptist”, and sometimes “Baptist”. Independent churches were formed in these areas, and both Protestants and Catholics recognized it as so. (77)

“The name ‘Anabaptist’ was a derogatory name given by the enemies of the movement. Literally, Anabaptist or Anabaptism meant ‘one who rebaptized’ or ‘re-baptism.’ Since those of the sacral society movement insisted on infant baptism, converts to Anabaptist churches from the RCC or Protestantism would need to be baptized ‘again’ in believer’s immersion for entrance into Christ’s *My Church* movement. Hence, the Anabaptists were the ‘again-baptizers,’ the ‘re-baptizers’ or the ‘ana-baptizers.’ In time the ‘Ana’ dropped off and the movement became known as ‘Baptists,’ signifying the importance of the doctrine of baptism commanded in the Great Commission.” (78)

The Anabaptists would see great preachers and strong leaders begin to emerge from their ranks. The following is a brief list of some of these leaders. It is not thorough, but might produce an appetite for further study. Most of the leaders never had their names recorded on the pages of history, but great is their reward in heaven!

1. Conrad Grebel (1498-1526) His end would be imprisonment and death from the plague.
2. Felix Manz (1498-1527) His end would be a sentence to death for preaching believer's immersion. Manz's death sentence was drowning in the Limmat River. His last words were, "into thy hands, Lord, I commend my spirit."
3. Michael Sattler (1490-1527) His end would be a sentence of the "third baptism" (death by drowning). Instead, they burnt him at the stake.
4. Balthasar Hubmaier (1480-1528) His end would be torture on the "rack", imprisonment, and death at the stake. (79)

Many were the afflictions and tortures of the Baptists throughout the ages. However, they withstood the test of time and maintained the purest form of doctrine. Certainly, there was a trail of blood left behind that we can trace! John T. Christian describes some of these events. A decree passed in Switzerland on March 6, 1526 stated, "...he who immerses shall be immersed..." (80) Also,

"...the leaders of the Catabaptists shall be cast into the Tower, in which they formerly lay, and allured by bread and water diet until either they give up the ghost or surrender. It is also added that he who after this is dipped shall be submerged permanently..." (81)

Because Baptists immersed in water, they were drowned in water (known as the "third baptism"). Gastins, referring to a decree by the Senate of Zurich, said, "They like immersion, so let us immerse them." (82) Yet another instance of torture is as follows.

"The edict of March 7 was ratified November 19, 1526. The Baptists were to be delivered to the executioner, who should bind their hands, place them in a boat and throw them into the water to die. Great numbers of Baptists thus perished. So much was this true that it became a matter of international correspondence." (83)

Lastly, we will look at the aforementioned Felix Manz. Observe his sentence of death on January 5, 1527.

"As he came down from the Wellinberg to Fish Market and was led through the shambles to the boat, he praised God that he was about to die for the truth; for Anabaptism was right and founded upon the Word of God, and Christ had foretold that his followers should suffer for the truth's sake. And the like discourse he urged much discussing with the preacher who attended him. On the way his mother and brother came to him and exhorted him to be steadfast, and he persevered in his folly to the end.

When he was bound upon the hurdle and was about to be thrown into the steam by the executioner, he sang in a loud voice, *In manus tuas, Domine, eommodo spiritummeum*, ‘In thy hands, Lord, I commend my spirit,’ and herewith was drawn into the water by the executioner and drowned.” (84)

It was this form of death that many died. It is recorded that, “At Vienna many Anabaptists were so tied together in chains, that one drew the other after him into the river, wherein they were all suffocated.” (85)

These are the untold stories of the trials that many of our Baptist forefathers faced. Why is no one telling what happened? Do we have to study Protestant history and accept that the Baptists were “put on the shelf”? Did God only use the Protestants in revival? It is the desire of the author that these truths will be known and that people will realize Baptists have always existed from the times of Christ to the present! God did use them in revival and churches were planted everywhere they went!

Baptist History in America

When we hear about the “great” revivals that happened in America, we only hear of Protestants. What about the Baptists in revival? In this last section, we will notice the unheard stories of the Baptists that God used in the First and Second Great Awakening. In addition, we will see how the Baptists were used to shape our nation into the land of the free and the home of the brave. First, let us notice the commencement of the First Great Awakening and Protestants that were used to pave the way for the Baptists to flourish.

Now, with the rise of religious toleration in Pennsylvania and Rhode Island, America was taking on a new way of thinking. Many began to see the corruption of the Lutherans and Presbyterians in New York and New Jersey, and the vileness of the Episcopalians in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. America was becoming ready for revival to sweep across its fruited plains. After witnessing the cruel whippings and imprisonments of “dissident” Baptists, America began to see what God would do with their unwavering stand for doctrinal purity. The eighteenth century and the First Great Awakening would be the turning point of which direction the freshly settled land was headed. This great move of God would be the motivating force that would lead to the Declaration of Independence, the Revolutionary War, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. The Awakening would affect the very documents that would stabilize America in the area of religious freedom and soul liberty. Apparently, God would begin to mold this great land into the shape that He desired it to be.

The Great Awakening began with the ministry of Jonathan Edwards in 1734. It was in North Hampton, Massachusetts where the move of God began. This was a time when people got their minds taken from worldly things to the heavenly and eternal. Mighty was the progression of God that even sinners became aware of their need of the Lord and would cry out to God for mercy. Edwards preached that powerful message, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”, on July 8, 1741 that influenced many sinners in Connecticut to repent. Even today, this message is in print and being distributed throughout our land.

Following Edwards was the rejected Anglican, George Whitfield. After the Anglicans kicked him out of their “churches”, Whitfield took to the streets to herald the gospel. Even his first open-air meeting drew in 20,000 people. This would be the mark of future revival meetings as he traveled across the colonies preaching, “Ye Must Be Born Again!” Mighty was the influence of the preaching of Whitfield that it even got the attention of the political leaders such as Benjamin Franklin. Many began to admire and respect Whitfield as he thundered the truth of the gospel of Christ.

One of the most amazing elements about the meetings that Whitfield would hold is that his converts would begin to attend Baptist churches. Surprisingly, Whitfield exclaimed, “All my chickens have turned into ducks.” Unknowingly to him, God was using George Whitfield to weaken the power of the state churches and pave the way for religious freedom for the Baptists. (86)

John Clarke

Dr. John Clarke, M.D., was used of God to plant the first Baptist church in America. Many give the credit to Roger Williams, but this would be wrong.

Clarke landed in Boston, Massachusetts in 1637. There, he met with believers that were waiting for him. Shortly after his arrival, a company traveled with Clarke to New Hampshire for the winter of 1637. Finding it too cold there, they desired to travel south. In the spring of 1638, they came into Portsmouth, Rhode Island (This would be the “Birthplace of American Democracy”).

On Aquidneck Island, Clarke and his company founded the first Baptist church in America (This would be one year before Roger Williams—1638). While Clarke was there, he desired to have religious freedom to worship God. Therefore, he obtained the Portsmouth Compact, authored by John Clarke. It reads,

“We whose names are underwritten, do here solemnly, in the presence of Jehovah, incorporate ourselves into a body politic, and as He shall help, will submit our persons, lives and estates, unto our lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and to all those perfect and most absolute laws of his, given us in His holy word of truth, to be guided and judged thereby.

Signed by:

William Coddington, John Clarke, William Hutchinson, John Coggs, William Aspinwall, Thomas Savage, William Dyre, William Freeborne, Philip Sherman, John Walker, Richard Carter, William Baulstone, Edward Hutchinson, Edward Hutchinson Junior, Samuel Wilbore, John Sanford, John Porter, Henry Bull.” (87)

This would be the first document relating to soul liberty and religious freedom in America.

Then, Clarke and a company traveled south and established another church. In 1651, John Clarke, Obadiah Holmes, and John Crandall traveled from the church in Newport, Rhode Island to visit a member in Massachusetts. While Clarke was preaching, authorities broke in and arrested all three.

In 1651, John Clarke traveled back to England petitioning the king for 12 years for a new charter for Rhode Island. Massachusetts was trying to absorb the colony of Rhode Island because of the Baptist and their freedom to preach. Amazingly, in 1663 Clarke was able to obtain the charter that shocked hearers in America. This was a “lively experiment” that the king would allow Clarke to perform.

Obadiah Holmes and John Crandall

Obadiah Holmes was born in England around 1606 and born again about 1650 in Rehoboth, Massachusetts. There, becoming a Baptist, united with the church in Newport, Rhode Island. As aforementioned, he made a trip with John Clarke and John Crandall in 1651 to Lynn, Massachusetts to see William Witter. While having a service on the Sabbath in Witter’s home, two constables barged in presenting a warrant for their arrest. (87) It read,

“By virtue hereof, you are required to go to the house of William Witter, and to search from house to house for certain erroneous persons, being strangers, and them to apprehend, and in safe custody to keep, and tomorrow morning at eight o’ clock to bring before me. Robert Bridges.” (89)

These three “erroneous persons” were arrested, taken to the “ale-house”, and then forced to attend the meeting at the established “church”. As a sign of protest, they left their hats on while entering the church. They were instructed to take their hats off in “church”. They responded that they do take their hats off when in church.

As a result, they were sent to prison in Boston, Massachusetts. Then, they were brought before the court for trial. Clarke was fined twenty pounds, Obadiah Holmes was fined thirty pounds, and John Crandall was fined five pounds. If they were not able to pay, they would be publicly whipped. Clarke’s fine was paid and Crandall was released to appear before court later. Obadiah Holmes remained in prison until September, and then taken outside for public whipping. Homes stated after his whipping,

“As the strokes fell upon me I had such a spiritual manifestation of God’s presence as the like thereof I never had nor felt, nor can with fleshly tongue express; and the outward pain was so removed from me that indeed I am not able to declare it to you; it was so easy to me that I could well bear it, yea, and in a manner felt it not, although it was grievous, as the spectators said, the man striking with all his strength (yea, spitting in his hand three times, as many affirmed) with a three-corded whip, giving me therewith thirty strokes.” (90)

Concerning Obadiah Holmes, Gov. Joseph Jenks recorded,

“Mr. Holmes was whipped thirty stripes, and in such an unmerciful manner that in many days, if not some weeks, he could take no rest, but as

he lay upon his knees and elbows, not being able to suffer any part of his body to touch the bed whereon he lay.” (91)

Baptist historian Isaac Backus records the astonishing testimony of Obadiah Holmes after his unjust and severe whipping.

“When he had loosed me from the post, having joyfulness in my heart, and cheerfulness in my countenance, as the spectators observed, I told the magistrates, You have struck me as with roses; and said moreover, Although the Lord hath made it easy to me, yet I pray God it may not be laid to your charge.” (92)

Roger Williams

America has been found, colonies were settled, and homes were built. The Pilgrims have settled down in Plymouth and the Puritans settled down in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, about forty miles away. Things seemed well except for the moral decline amongst the colonies. Men began to do that which was right in their own eyes. Governor John Winthrop, “Reverend” John Cotton, and the Massachusetts Bay Colony even began to become intolerant of the religious practices of those around them. The state church mentality began to be set up again, only now in America.

One of the first public displays of opposition to the Massachusetts Bay Colony way of life came from Roger Williams. After rejecting their offer of becoming pastor of the First Church in Boston, Williams went down the road to fulfill his ministry. It was in Salem that he accepted the co-pastor position. After a short stay there, he labored for two years amongst the Pilgrims in Plymouth. Then, he accepted the position of pastor back in Salem after the death of the senior pastor. (93)

It was not a long stay at Salem until he faced opposition again from the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Eventually, this resistance led to banishment from the area. Because of his friendly encounters with the Indians during his stay with the Pilgrims, Williams was able to lead his followers through the cold wilderness with the assistance of his friends, the Indians. Their journey ended in a place they called Providence. They claimed that it was the providence of God that led them there. It was there that they bought the land from the Indians and started a government that offered religious liberty for all. (94)

Although this was a new concept for the New England Puritans, it was not a new thought for God. It should be noted that during this time Williams was still a Protestant, and not a Baptist. Where did he get this idea? This idea of soul liberty came from Samuel Howe, a Baptist pastor in London, England that influenced Williams while he was there. Remember, Protestants did not teach him soul liberty, but it was a Baptist preacher. Therefore, it was the ideas of the Baptist that began to shape this great nation into the land of the free and the home of the brave. Even men such as Thomas Jefferson and George Washington gave recognition to the Baptist for their democratic way of thinking, which influenced the nation.

The down side to the history of Roger Williams is that he did not remain a Baptist. After becoming confused about his baptism, he left the Baptist church he was pastoring and became a “Seeker”.

Valentine Wightman

Valentine Wightman was the husband of Susanna Holmes and the first Baptist preacher in Connecticut. He was a direct descendant of Edward Wightman, a Baptist that was burned at the stake in Lichfield, England (1612). Wightman was ordained into the ministry at Rhode Island. In 1705, God would use him to plant a church in Groton, Connecticut. Later, he assisted in the first Baptist church plant in New York. Cathcart reveals Wightman's mannerism. (95)

“Wightman's writings show that he was a student of the Scriptures and of the patristic writings, with a well-balanced mind, of calm but decided spirit, of sound judgment, clear convictions, warm heart, plain and transparent speech, a wise man in laying foundations.” (96)

Wightman died in 1747 and experienced revival as a Baptist preacher in the First Great Awakening. He pastored 42 years and was succeeded by his son, Timothy Wightman. Timothy pastored his father's church for 41 years and was succeeded by his son, John Gano Wightman. He would proceed to pastor for 42 years. Therefore, in this one family, 125 years of family preaching progressed in one church. What a legacy and testimony to leave behind!

Wait Palmer

The first pastor of the first Baptist church in North Stonington, Connecticut was Wait Palmer (also a convert under the ministry of Valentine Wightman). Palmer was ordained into the ministry in 1743. He pastored there for 22 years while preaching in other places. One of his most noted baptisms was that of Simeon Brown and Shubal Stearns. The Separate Baptist movement would have its early stages with Palmer and Stearns. Palmer also had a godly succession in his family. (97)

Shubal Stearns

One of the greatest revivals that swept across America was under the ministry of Shubal Stearns. He was born at Boston, Massachusetts in 1726. Then, he was born again in 1745 under the ministry of George Whitfield. In 1751, after studying the Scriptures concerning baptism, he was baptized by immersion by Wait Palmer in Tolland, Connecticut. After his baptism, Stearns proclaimed to everyone that he was a Baptist. In the same year (1751), Stearns was ordained into the ministry by Wait Palmer and Joshua Morse. (98)

By 1754, Stearns was under a deep burden to fulfill a work of God. Through time, God led him and sixteen other souls in all, to North Carolina to plant Sandy Creek Separate Baptist Church. The church began in 1755.

Stearns was a powerful preacher that could move hearts and melt his audience. Tidance Lane described his preaching:

“Upon my arrival, I saw a venerable old man sitting under a peach-tree, with a book in his hand and the people gathering about him. He fixed his eyes upon me immediately, which made me feel in such a manner as I never had felt before. I turned to quit the place, but could not proceed far. I walked about, sometimes catching his eyes as I walked. My uneasiness increased and became intolerable. I went up to him, thinking that a salutation and shaking of hands would relieve me; but it happened otherwise. I began to think that he had an evil eye and ought to be shunned; but shunning him I could no more effect than a bird can shun the rattlesnake when it fixes its eyes upon it. When he began to preach my perturbations increased, so that nature could no longer support them and I sank to the ground.” (99)

Mighty was the move of God at Sandy Creek that by 1757 there were 606 members. By 1758, there would be over 900 members. Shortly, they would begin to plant churches outside their colony of North Carolina. They felt like the way to multiply was to divide. Divide they did. Preachers began to be sent out into North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Virginia. In fact, when Shubal Stearns was already in heaven at the turn of the century, there were over 1,000 Baptist churches planted from the ministry at Sandy Creek. By 1825, there were over 2,000 Baptist churches. Even one of the markers at Sandy Creek states,

“On this site in November-December 1755 Rev. Shubal Stearns, his wife, and those who came with him, seven other families, sixteen souls in all, built their first meeting house where they administered the Lord’s Supper. It is a mother church, nay a grandmother and a great grandmother. All the Separate Baptists sprang hence: not only eastward towards the sea, but westward towards the great river Mississippi, but northward to Virginia and southward to South Carolina and Georgia. The Word went forth from this Sion. And great was the company of them who published it in so much that her converts were as drops of morning dew.”

Even the services of Sandy Creek were full of fire and life. They “rattled the rafters” as they sang. In this church they testified, shouted, and ran as the Holy Ghost moved them.

John Weatherford

John Weatherford is known for his imprisonment at Chesterfield, Virginia. Being an old-fashioned preacher, he refused to receive a license from the state “church” in Virginia. J.B. Taylor gives the account.

“He preached at the door of the prison as long as allowed the privilege; when refused that, he preached through the grates of the window. But such determined opposition did he meet, that an effort was made by his enemies to put a stop to that also. For this purpose they built an outer wall, or fence, above the grate; but Weatherford devised means to overcome the obstacle. A handkerchief, by the congregation, was to be raised on a pole, above the wall, as a signal that the people were ready to hear. His voice being very strong, he could throw it beyond these impediments, and convey the words of life and salvation to the listening crowd.” (100)

Some give the account that while he was preaching that he would stick his arms through the bars of the window. The guards would stand outside and cut his arms with knives. While the blood flowed (and Weatherford preached), sinners were saved and men were called to preach.

James Ireland

Another imprisoned preacher (because of his faith) in Virginia was James Ireland. The location would be Culpepper, Virginia. He described his imprisonment as “my palace in Culpepper”. Armitage describes this event.

“On the very spot where the prison stood, where powder was cast under the floor to blow him up, and brimstone was burnt to suffocate him and poison was administered to kill him; on that spot where he preached through the iron grates to the people, there the Baptist meeting-house now stands; and the Church which occupies it numbers more than 200 members. These diabolical schemes were all frustrated and, after much suffering, he barely escaped with his life; yet he says: ‘My prison was a place in which I enjoyed much of the divine presence; a day seldom passed without some token of the divine goodness toward me’.” (101)

John Leland

God would use John Leland (a Baptist preacher himself) to help the Baptists with soul liberty and religious freedom in America. The historic place is Orange, Virginia and the document is the Bill of Rights. It was in Orange County where James Madison and John Leland would meet and discuss religious freedom in America.

Madison, realizing that he was going to lose the election to John Leland, met with Leland about the upcoming election. Religious freedom was discussed and Leland promised Madison that he would support him (and rally others to his support) if he would assure some religious liberty. James Madison fulfilled his pledge and now America has the Bill of Rights.

In conclusion, time and paper would fail to tell the complete story of Jesus’ church and the Baptists as seen in John 21:25. *“And there are also many other things which*

Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.” God did bless the Baptist throughout time. Tremendous testimonies like John Waller, Samuel Harriss, Elijah Craig, Lewis Craig, John Mulkey, Luther Rice, Daniel Marshall, Abraham Marshall, Silas Mercer, Richard Furman, Robert Semple, Lewis Lunsford, Jeremiah Moore, Isaac Eaton, Morgan Edwards, Jenkin Jones, David Jones, John Gano (George Washington’s personal chaplain and Washington was baptized by Gano), Abel Morgan, and Elijah Baker would bring hot tears to our eyes as we studied their lives!

One thing is certain, Baptists are not Protestants. They were never a part of the Roman Catholic organization! We can see an unbroken line of Jesus’ “church” through the history of the Baptists. Although the names differed because of their persecutors, they remain on the pages of history. Up to the rapture, Jesus’ “church” will remain on the earth with a testimony as Jesus continues to build it!

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