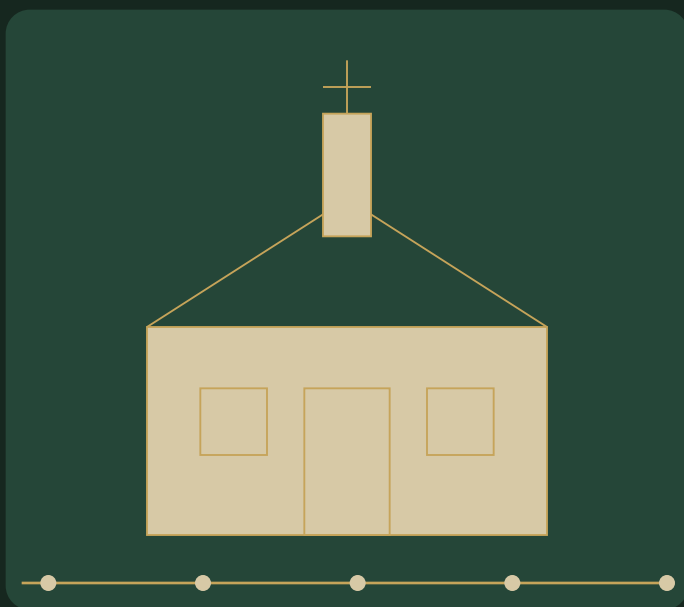


A STUDY OF BAPTIST CHURCH HISTORY

BAPTIST CHURCHES IN ALL AGES

From the New Testament Church
through the Centuries



PAUL GOODWIN & BOB FRAZIER

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Baptist Churches in all Ages

by Paul Goodwin & Bob Frazier

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Chapter 1-Catholicism More Pagan Than Christian

- Catholicism was not born in a day. It came as the result of a growth, a development.
- In order to understand the origin of Catholicism it is necessary to know something of the state of the religious world when Jesus established his church. Two mighty religious systems prevailed, Judaism and Paganism. Judaism was the religion of the Jews and it was strong on salvation by ceremonies. Paganism was the religion of the Gentiles (nations) and was known for its many ceremonies and many gods.
- William Jones in *The History of The Christian Church* (1882 edition) devotes the first chapter of the book to the state of the world in general at the birth of Christ. In discussing the religions of the nations he says:
- The minds of the people inhabiting these various countries, were fettered with superstitions of the most degrading nature. Though the sense of a Supreme Being, from whom all things had their origin, and whose decrees regulate the universe, had not wholly become extinct; yet in every nation a general belief prevailed, that all things were subordinate to an association of powerful spirits, who were called gods, and whom it was incumbent on every one, who

wished for a happy and prosperous course of life, to worship and conciliate.

- He further adds:
- The principal deities of most nations consisted of heroes renowned in antiquity, emperors, kings, founders of cities, and other illustrious persons, whose eminent exploits, and the benefits they had conferred on mankind, were treasured up and embalmed in the breasts of posterity, by whose gratitude they were crowned with divine honours and raised to the ranks of gods.

- **Paganism**

- Paganism is polytheistic (many gods). Every nation did not worship the same gods but each had its own deities differing in names and in nature. Each nation had its multiplicity of gods—the Greeks swelling the number to 30,000!
- Concerning their places of worship Mr. Jones writes:
- Buildings of the most superb and magnificent kind, under the names of temples, fanes, etc., were raised and dedicated by the people of almost every country to their gods, with the expectation that the divinities would condescend to make these sumptuous edifices the places of their own immediate residence. They were not all open to the public, for some of them were confined to the exercises of private devotion; but those of either description were internally ornamented with images of their deities, and furnished with altars and the requisite apparatus for offering sacrifices.
- In a further description of the superstitious worship of the Greeks and Romans Mr. Jones points out:
- Those who served at the altar were required to prepare themselves, by abstaining even from lawful pleasures for one or more preceding days; and all who entered the

temples, on the occasion, dipped their hands into consecrated water.

- **Judaism**

- It is believed that a short discussion of Judaism would be profitable in helping to understand the growth and development of Catholicism because the Catholic Church did take some of Judaism to form her ungodly system.
- The Jews had many blessings above all other nations. In enumerating these many special privileges the Apostle Paul lays the principal stress upon their being favored with a divine revelation, the oracles of God, to guide them to present and everlasting happiness. But with the many incalculable advantages, their religion at the time of Christ was not much superior to the religion of the Gentiles. It is true they recognized only one God, but theirs was a religion primarily of ceremonies with a lacking of moral restraint.
- Mr. Jones in his portrayal of the religious world at the time of Christ gives clear testimony concerning the Jewish religion.
- The nature of the Jewish religion may be collected from the books of the Old Testament; but at the time of Christ's appearance, it had lost much of its original beauty and excellence, and was corrupted by errors of the most flagrant kind, that had crept in from various sources. The public worship of God was indeed still continued in the temple of Jerusalem, with all the rites of the Mosaic institution; and their festivals never failed to draw together an immense concourse of people at the stated seasons; nor did the Romans ever interfere to prevent those observances. In domestic life also, the ordinances of the law were in general punctually attended to; but it is manifest, from the evidence adduced by various learned men, that even in the service of the temple itself, numerous ceremonies and observances, drawn from the religious worship of heathen nations, had been introduced and blended with those of

divine institution; and that in addition to superstitions like these of a public nature, many erroneous principles, probably brought from Babylon and Chaldea, by the ancestors of the people at their return from captivity, or adopted by the inconsiderate multitude, in conformity to the examples of their neighbors the Greeks, the Syrians, and the Egyptians, were cherished and acted on in private.

- It was into a world permeated by Paganism and Judaism that Jesus came and established his church. As a tiny island is surrounded by the waters of an ocean so the first church was surrounded by the mighty forces of these two religious systems.
- The rising tide of Paganism began early to seep into many of the churches. Even during the third century much of the religion of the times was little more than a compound of Paganism and Judaism with a slight seasoning of Christianity.

- **Early Errors**

- Christ never promised infallibility to his churches. The Saviour never promised to his churches their absolute preservation from error. Divine revelation (the Bible) was given to guide them, but congregations as such could turn from truth and go into error. The loss and responsibility would be theirs. Even in the first century there was some defection from the truth as evidenced by the Epistles.
- From the second to the fourth century we find a rapid departure - from the truth. Many of the churches turned from a congregational rule to that of preacher rule. Emperor Constantine of the Roman Empire wanted the powers of Christianity and (in name, at least) he became a Christian. Under his rulership many of the churches were united with the state in. 313 A. D. and a hierarchy was born. Thus a development was started which climaxed in the rule of the first universal pope, Boniface VIII, in 1271. Popery is the result of a long, drawn-out development. There was no

super organization to rule over the churches in the first century.

- Mosheim, Vol. I, page 92, says:
- The churches in those Ancient times, were entirely independent; none of them subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each governed by its own rules and its own laws. For though the churches founded by the apostles had their deference shown them, that they were consulted in different and doubtful cases; yet they had no judicial authority, no sort of supremacy over the others, nor the least right to enact laws for them. Nothing, on the contrary, is more evident than the perfect equality that reigned among the primitive churches.

• **The Catholic Church A Development**

- It is the unanimous testimony of secular historians that the Catholic Church came as a development. In history textbooks the term Church is used to refer to the Catholic Church. Those dissenting were simply labeled heretics. One of the textbooks this writer studied in college is *An Introduction to Medieval Europe* by James Wesfall Thompson and Edgar Nathaniel Johnson. (W. W. Norton and Company Inc. Publishers, New York). On page 46 the writers deal with the organization of the Church:
- To ward off the danger of dissolving into small warring sects, to assist in the battle against classical paganism, to protect itself in the face of official hostility and popular suspicion, to give succor to his followers in their isolation from the body of Roman society, to care for its poor, to instruct its neophytes and to administer its services, Christianity had perforce to perfect an organization. This it did with speed and skill, under the influence to some extent of the Jewish synagogue and pagan religious associations, but mostly under the influence of the political organization of the Roman state. . .

- The magnificent conception of a catholic church bound together in one organization, one faith, one ritual could hardly have been realized by imagination alone, without the aid of time and circumstances.
- History testifies that it took "time and circumstances" to build the Catholic Church, and it is easy to see that it was not built according to the Divine pattern, but according to man's wisdom. It was under the influence of the pagan mystery cults that the wide breach between the laity and the clergy was established. The development of a hierarchy within the ranks of the bishops was accomplished mainly during the fourth and fifth century. So great was this organization that some historians say that the "Church supplanted Christianity."
- Along with the growth and development of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church came other errors. With a people steeped in Paganism it would naturally follow that since the Bible had much to say about baptism that this ordinance would soon be given the magical powers of washing away sins. Following on the heels of this error and growing out of it was infant baptism. It is not hard to understand how or why these errors came because by the early part of the fourth century the bishops were having their councils to determine what is orthodox. These churches under the dominion of bishops became legislative bodies. Tradition took precedence over the Bible. From there on many doctrines would be determined, not by Divine revelation, but by the bishops or by the popular appeal of the people.

• **The Secret of Growth**

- The Catholic Church, highly organized, moved forward to plant churches and propagate her doctrines in many lands. Relentlessly she moved forward from victory to victory. What was the secret of her rapid growth? The answer is simple. She conquered by consuming the religions about her.

- In a college textbook, *An Introduction to Medieval Europe* by Thompson and Johnson, page 33, the writers explain the survival of Paganism.
- Paganism as a distinct and separate religion may perhaps be said to have died, although, driven out of the cities, it found refuge in the countryside, where it lingered long—and whence, indeed, its very name is derived.
- In a very real sense, however, it never died at all. It was only transformed and absorbed into Christianity. It is this transformation, and the absorption of classical culture in its various manifestations into the very substance of Christianity which, perhaps more than anything else, explains why after its toleration Christianity swept on with such relentless force to become the undisputed- heir of the whole complex of Mediterranean civilization.
- Commenting further on the absorbing qualities of the Church these same writers say:
- The competing oriental mystery cults Christianity overcame by becoming itself an oriental mystery cult.
- In like manner Christianity overcame Graeco-Roman polytheism by itself becoming in some degree polytheistic. Its polytheism consisted in devotion to its martyrs and its ascetic heroes as saints . . . Local Christian saints became endowed with the powers of local pagan gods. The aches and pains, the fears and hopes, that had formerly been cured or assuaged or satisfied by pagan gods were now taken care of by their Christian substitutes, whose special days of worship in some cases can be clearly shown to have been the days dedicated to their pagan predecessors. In some instances the Christian saints inherited the very temples of their predecessors.

• **An Example**

- In the year 597 Gregory the Great sent Austin as a missionary to Britain to convert the Saxons to Catholicism.

Austin was instructed not to make any radical changes in the worship of the people. He was to offer them very liberal terms if they would but submit to baptism. *History of Baptists*, Vol. 1, page 1179, by John T. Christian (Baptist Sunday School Committee, Texarkana, Ark.-Texas) has this to say about this mission venture:

- He was not to destroy the heathen temples; only to remove the images of their gods, to wash the walls with holy water, to erect altars and deposit relics in them, and so to convert them into Christian churches; not merely to save the expense of new ones, but that the people might easily be prevailed upon to frequent those places of worship to which they had been accustomed. Gregory directed him further to accommodate the services of the Christian worship, as much as possible, to those of the heathen, that the people might not be startled at the change; and particular, he advised him to allow the Christian converts, on certain festivals, to kill and eat a great number of oxen to the glory of God, as they had formerly done to the glory of the devil.
- Secular history in a startling statement sums up much of which has already been said:
- The most striking feature of medieval Europe was that there was but one religious explanation available, from which no serious deviation was tolerated. That religion we call Christianity, but we must never forget how obstinately classical and barbarian paganism survived, and how many of its elements were incorporated into the new cult. If by Christianity we mean the teachings of Christ and nothing else, we are almost bound to call the new religion paganized Christianity—if it was not, as some have claimed, rather Christianized paganism.
- (*An Introduction to Medieval Europe* by Thompson and Johnson, p. 674)

• Pagan Doctrines and Practices

- It is very evident that many of the doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church are Pagan in their origin.
- Mariolatry was established as a doctrine of the Catholic Church at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Under the influence of Paganism it was felt that another mediator was needed. The Bible says there is but one mediator and he is specifically named. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man, Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 2:5) Not only was Mary added as the chief mediator but there followed a multitude of other mediators in the form of Patron saints.
- Pilgrimages and the veneration of relics was borrowed from Paganism. In the fourth century Saint Helena, mother of Constantine and empress of the Roman Empire, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem where she is supposed to have found fragments of the true cross on which Christ was crucified. By the sixth century the belief in relics and their power to work miracles was widespread. Today relics form a vital part of the Catholic religion. The silence of the Scriptures and the testimony of historians make it evident that the veneration of relics came from Paganism and not from God.
- The Rosary which is so dear to Catholics in their prayers is of very ancient origin. It is almost universal among all the pagan nations. Reference is made to it in Hindu sacred books. The Brahmins of Hindustan have long employed the rosary. It is a common thing among the adherents of the Buddhist faith. It is pagan in its origin and use. The Bible does not in the least way infer the need of a rosary to aid us in our prayer to God.
- The doctrine of Purgatory is pagan in its origin. The Roman poet Virgil (70 B. C. - 19 B. C.) wrote of purgatory showing the pagans believed in it long before the Catholic Church taught it. If purgatory were Christian it could be found in the Bible.

- Transubstantiation, which did not become a doctrine of the Catholic Church until the 13th century, is pagan. This Romish doctrine means that the bread and wine when blessed by the priest becomes the actual flesh and blood of Christ. The writer has witnessed a midnight mass (Mass is the center of Catholic worship) and the whole service was reeking with Paganism and Judaism. Many may say it is a beautiful service but to others it is a reminder of the pagan sacrifices and of the pagan mystery cults. If the doctrine of transubstantiation were Christian why did not the churches teach it in the first centuries?
- The sign of the cross so frequently made by devout Catholics does not come from Christianity but from the Pagans. Actually the same sign now used by the adherents of Rome was used in the Babylonian Mysteries before Christ was ever crucified!
- The infallibility of the pope which was not declared until 1870 could not be a Christian doctrine. Many historians believe that the idea for the powers of the pope with the College of Cardinals came from the Pagan College of Pontiffs with its Sovereign Pontiff which had no doubt been in Rome from the earliest times and must have been framed on the order of the original Council of Pontiffs at Babylon. The infallibility of the pope really sounds pagan when one observes that at one time there were three popes, Urban VI, Clement VII, and Alexander V!
- The way of salvation as taught by the Catholic Church is pagan. It is a way of salvation by works. There is not another church in the world so dedicated to teaching salvation by good works as the church of Rome. It is pagan. Salvation is by grace through faith. Eph. 2:8, 9 (Catholic translation)
- For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not from yourselves, for it is the gift of God; not as the outcome of works lest anyone may boast.

• More Pagan Than Christian

- Tested by the Scriptures and by history the Catholic Church is proven to be more pagan than Christian. That which could be called Christian in this institution is but a thin veneer over the ancient temple of Paganism and'. Judaism.
- Samuel Morland wrote a history of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont in the year 1658. In his introduction he writes of the antiquity of the Catholic Church.
- The truth is, I deny not but they may challenge some sort of antiquity for their religion, and that a great part of their traditions have been a long-time practiced in the world, whereby they have beguiled many millions of poor souls: which I cannot better express than by that subtilty of the Gibeonites, who when they had designed to betray the men of Israel, and to make them believe that they came from a very far country, they did work wilily, and made as if they had been ambassadors, and they took old sacks upon their asses, and wine-bottles old and rent, and bound up, and old shoes clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them, and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy; and in this posture, they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, 'We be come from a far country, now therefore make ye a league with us.' So say I, these Gibeonitish Catholics have taken the old sacks of Jewish ceremonies, and the old clouted shoes of Paganism, together with the dry and mouldy bread of the Arian Heresy, whereof they have made a medley of religion; and now to the end that they may daily gain more and more proselytes, they pretend with confidence, yea and would fain make us believe, that these traditions are derived from Christ and his Apostles, whereas the contrary is as clear as the noon-day.
- The Pagan Religion marched into the Christian Era, halted momentarily to change her outer garments, and then marched on under the guise of Christianity. It has been

said, "clothes do not make a man" and being dressed like Christianity does not make Catholicism the true Church. Multitudes have come into her fold thinking they have embraced the religion of Christ. What a tragedy! True Christianity is found in the teachings of the Bible and not in the tradition of a church pregnant with Paganism which will eventually give birth to the rule of the Antichrist. Salvation is in the Christ of the Bible.

- "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12).

Chapter 2-Baptists and the Protestant Reformation

The title, itself, circumscribes the outer limits of this article. The spiritual and secular forces that combined to bring about the reformation, as well as its admittedly lasting religious and political influence upon the present shape of Western Civilization, will become of interest to us, only as they are found to bear upon the subject.

This paper concerns itself with the Protestant Reformation only insofar as that historical event has bearing upon the history of the Baptist Churches.

Secular historians, with scarcely a backward glance at the evidence, have almost universally tended to classify all Christian churches as either Catholic or Protestant. For reasons that ought to be obvious this is the method of classification followed by Catholic Church historians. Protestant historians, either in ignorance of the available historical data or with deliberate calculation have followed the same procedure. Not a few Baptists have viewed the reformation as the mother of their denomination; and therefore have found no occasion to object to their being called Protestants. On the other hand, many Baptists hold a sharply contrasting view of church history; contending that their churches are the spiritual descendants, not of the Protestant Reformation, but of that church established by Jesus Christ during the period of His personal ministry on earth, Matthew 16:18.

Thus, we have raised three questions that require an answer: (1) Are Baptists a protestant denomination? (2). If so, then by what historical standard are they so classified? (3). Finally, are Baptists a protestant denomination, or that special, peculiar people described in the New Testament as the churches of Christ? The scope of this article, then, entails the answers to these three questions.

What Is A Protestant?

The repeated failure of those who speak and write upon the subject of Christian history to define with exactitude the terms, Protestant, and Protestant denomination, has resulted in no little confusion. Whenever the terms have not been defined with linguistic precision the question of a Baptist connection with the reformation has been no more than a futile exercise in semantics. If we are to say with historical finality that Baptists either are, or, are not Protestants, then we must arrive at a working definition of the terms, Protestant, and Protestant denomination.

We are eternally indebted to Dr. W. Morgan Patterson, of the church history department at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, for two authoritative historical definitions of the term, Protestant.

Writing in a recent article published in the Arkansas Democrat, Dr. Patterson points out that the term, Protestant, has both a definite historical definition, and a significant theological meaning.

"The term, 'Protestant' has a variety of meanings and applications. Its earliest use was by a group of German nobles who opposed the Catholic majority at the Diet of Speier in 1529. In reaction to certain Catholic threats, the Lutheran minority drafted a statement of 'protest' and thus became 'protesters' or 'protestants.'" Its first use, therefore, was in a civil context.

Secondly, there is a real sense in which the word might be restricted to the Lutherans. It was the sympathizers of Martin Luther who in the 16th century became the first Protestants."

Are Baptists Protestants?

I digress to inquire, may Baptists be fairly said to be historical Protestants? Certainly not within the commonly accepted historical definition of that term. Dr. Patterson has told us that the term is applied historically to those German Princes who supported the rebellion of Martin Luther against the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, beginning with Luther's nailing of his ninety-five "theses" to the door of Wittenberg castle, and ending with his formation of the Lutheran church, about the year 1530. Some of the German rulers supported his "protest" and were called "protestants." If Baptists are "protestants" within the historical, meaning of the word, then they may be as fairly called Lutheran. The obviously sharp contrast between the results of such reasoning and the truth as it is viewed by both Baptists and Lutherans, in the year 1964, is nearly too ludicrous to contemplate.

In one, and only one, sense of the word Baptists may be categorized as "protestants." Again, the words are those of Dr. Patterson:

"There is another sense in which the historian uses the term 'Protestant.' As he studies the development of Christianity in Europe and in this hemisphere, he discerns two major traditions: Catholic and Protestant. This is a convenient way to distinguish in general terms the two significant segments of Christianity. Within this division it is obvious where Baptists belong."

The position is now taken that, if the term "Protestant" and "Protestant denomination" are to be so defined, then Baptists are the original protestants. For centuries prior to the Protestant Reformation they "protested" the religious excesses and abuses of Rome.

Baptist Protestants Before Protestant Reformation

1. The Novatain Churches

Certain facts are so self evident as to be counted as axioms of truth. Any half-serious student of history will know that Rome, the political capital of the empire, gradually became the important center of the Christian religion.

Almost nothing is known of the origin of the church at Rome, save that it was surely a New Testament church in origin, doctrine, and practice. This too, is taken to be self evident, or else Paul would not, and could not have written the Roman letter to this church. This ought to be sufficient comment upon her New Testament origin.

It can be said, with near certainty, that the division of Christianity into two parties, Catholic and "protesters" began at Rome in the year 251 A. D.

In that year the church at Rome divided itself into factions in support of two candidates for the office of pastor of the church. The faction of Cornelius prevailed and he was declared elected; whereupon, the supporters of Novatain withdrew from the church at Rome. (*A History of The Baptists, John T. Christian, Broadman Press, 1922, page 44*)

Novatain's protest was directed, only in a secondary sense, against doctrinal deviation; primarily, it was a protest against loose disciplinary practice, and the growing moral corruption of the church at Rome. (*A Concise History of Baptists, G. H. Orchard, Ashland Avenue Baptist Church, Lexington, Kentucky, republication, 1956, pages 53-57*)

Novatain's protest was broad in its sweep, and far reaching in its lasting consequences. Concerning the Novatain rupture, the historian John T. Christian says:

"Novatain carried many churches and ministers with him in his protest. The vast extent of the Novatain movement may be learned from the authors who wrote against him, and the several parts of the Roman Empire where they flourished." (Christian, John, *A History of Baptists*, Vol. I, p. 44, Broadman, Press.)

It seems abundantly clear that the Novatain churches were "protestant" only in so far as that term implies a "protest" against the Church at Rome. It will now be demonstrated that they were not "protestant" churches in the historical meaning of the term.

The Novatain churches cannot be called protestant churches, in the historical meaning of the word, for the following self-evident reasons:

(1). The Novatain movement, as a distinct line of protest commenced in the year 251 A. D.; the Protestant Reformation began with Martin Luther in the year 1517.

(2). The Novatain churches did not date their beginnings as a separate denomination at the Protestant Reformation; but, rather derived their separate, distinct denominational name from a member of the church at Rome. The church at Rome was organized during the life time of the Apostle Paul, long before the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century.

(3). In relation to their doctrine, the Novatain churches were far more Baptist than Protestant. This is satisfactorily proven when reference is made to their instruction of candidates for baptism.

Concerning such instruction, pastor Orchard states:

"To remove all human appendages. the Novatians said to candidates, 'If you be a virtuous believer, and will accede to our confederacy against sin, you may be admitted among us by baptism, or if any catholic has baptized you before by rebaptism.'" (Orchard, Ibid. p.55)

From Orchard's statement it is inferred that the Novatians offered baptism to believers only. Beyond controversy this is a Baptist characteristic. It is plainly inferred also, that they rebaptized those candidates who came to them from apostate Roman churches. Does not this characteristic brand them as more Baptist than historical Protestant?

(4). In relation to their practice, the Novatain churches were far more Baptist than historical Protestant. Cryspin, the French historian tells us that they held the following practice, among other things, in common with the Donatists, another protesting group:

"They both agreed in asserting the power, rights and privileges of particular churches, against anti~Christian encroachments of

presbyters, bishops, and synods." (Quoted in Baptist Succession, D. B. Bay, The E3ng's Press, Rosemead California, 1949.) p. 198.

This is distinctly a Baptist trait, even today. It is not commonly known to be a Protestant characteristic. If Cryspin's statement does not prove the Novatians to have been distinctly Baptist in practice, then is anything provable?

There is impressive historical authority for the proposition that the Novatian churches continued until the reformation.

"These churches continued to flourish in many parts of Christendom for six centuries. Dr. Robinson traces a continuation of them up to the Reformation and the rise of the Anabaptist movement. 'Great numbers followed his (Novatian's) example' says he, 'and all over the Empire Puritan churches were constituted and flourished through two hundred succeeding years. Afterwards, when penal laws obliged them to lurk in corners, and worship God in private, they were distinguished by a variety of names, and a succession of them continued till the Reformation.'" (Christian, Ibid. p.44-45)

The thoughtful reader is invited to ponder long over the plain inferences that can be drawn from this quotation of historical authority. It speaks of a movement begun in protest against the Roman church. It speaks of a movement of protest that endured until the very days of the Protestant Reformation of Martin Luther. The Novatian churches were Baptist protestants before the Protestant Reformation.

Baptist Protestants Before Protestant reformation

2. The Paulician Churches

The history of the Paulician churches furnishes further proof that the Baptist "protest" and Baptist doctrine and practice antedates the reformation by centuries.

Apparently, these churches were dubbed "Paulicians" by their enemies because of their tenacious adherence to the writings of the

Apostle Paul. (*A History of the Baptists*, John T. Christian, Broadman Press, 1922, p. 50)

The historian Orchard says that these churches came into notice in the east about the year 653. (*A Concise History of The Baptists*, *Ibid.* p. 127) If the year of their prominence were the date of their birth, then it would testify to the existence of protestants in the area of Armenia almost nine hundred years before the beginnings of Luther's protest in Europe.

But it can be stated with near historical certainty that the Paulicians originated long before the seventh century. They claimed apostolic origin for themselves. Christian quotes from the "Key of Truth," an old book written by a Paulician author.

"Let us then submit humbly to the holy church universal, and follow their works who acted with one mind and one faith and taught us. For still do we receive in the only proper season the holy and precious mystery of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the Heavenly Father: to-wit, in the season of repentance and faith. AS WE LEARNED FROM THE LORD OF THE UNIVERSAL AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH, so do we proceed: and we establish in perfect faith those who (till then) have not holy baptism. (Margin, That is to say, the Latins, Greeks, and Armenians, who are not baptized); nay, nor have tasted of the body or drunk of the holy blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. THEREFORE ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF THE LORD, WE MUST FIRST BRING THEM INTO THE FAITH, INDUCE THEM TO REPENT, AND GIVE IT." (*A History of the Baptists*, *Ibid.* p. 49)

If it be observed that the Paulician claim to apostolic origin does not mean that they, in fact, had such origin; then let it also be observed that to deny is not to disprove their own assertion that they stood in direct succession to the New Testament church.

The renowned historian, Gibbon, sustains the Paulician claim to New Testament succession. "Through Antioch and Palmyra the faith must have spread into Mesopotamia and Persia; and in those regions became the basis of the faith as it spread into the Taurus mountains as far as Aarat. 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 back-water from the main for centuries." (*Bury's edition of Gibbon's History, Vol. VI, p. 543.*)

If a protestant is to be characterized by protest against the fleshly excesses of the Catholic movement then the Paulicians can easily qualify as "protestants." "They had no orders in the clergy as distinguished from laymen by their modes of living, their dress, or other things; they had no councils or similar institutions. Their teachers were of equal rank. They strove diligently for the simplicity of the apostolic life. THEY OPPOSED ALL IMAGE WORSHIP WHICH WAS PRACTICED BY THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. THE MIRACULOUS RELICS WERE A HEAP OF BONES AND ASHES, DESTITUTE OF LIFE AND OF VIRTUE." (*A History of the Baptists, John T. Christian, Ibid. p. 55*)

It has been shown that the Paulicians were apostolic in origin, and protestant in character. It is now submitted that they were clearly Baptist in doctrine and practice.

(1). They recognized no human authority over their churches. "These people were called Acephali, or headless." (*Orchard, Ibid. p. 130*) This could scarcely be said to be true of a Protestant denomination upon the face of the earth. It is a Baptist characteristic. Baptists call Jesus Christ the head of their churches.

(2). "They made constant use of the Old and New Testaments." (*A History of the Baptists, Ibid. p55*). Baptists, today, regard the Bible, and the Bible alone, as their sole rule of faith and practice.

(3). They were decidedly Baptist in the order of their keeping of the New Testament commandments. "They held that men must repent and believe, and then at a mature age ask for baptism, which alone admitted them into the church." (*A History of the Baptists, Ibid. p. 55*) Can it be fairly said of any Protestant denomination that they observe this order of the commandments? No, this is a Baptist characteristic.

(4) They were far more Baptistic than protestant in their administration of the ordinance of baptism. The following quote from historical authority speaks for itself.

‘It is evident,’ observes Mosheim, ‘they rejected the baptism of infants.’ They baptized and rebaptized by immersion. They would have been taken for downright Anabaptists." (Allix, *The Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont*, Oxford, 1821)

Let the fair-minded reader render the verdict. Were the Paulician congregations Baptist or Protestant in doctrine and practice?

We know something of the numerical strength of the Paulician movement from the number of their martyred dead. Orchard puts the number at one hundred thousand. (*Orchard*, p. 137).

But wave upon wave of popish persecution did not inundate these ancient witnesses. "From the blood and ashes of the first Paulician victims, a succession of teachers and congregations repeatedly arose." (*A Concise History of Baptists*, *Ibid*. p. 135).

"‘From Italy,’ says Mosheim, ‘the Paulicians sent colonies into almost all the other provinces of Europe, and formed gradually a considerable number of religious assemblies, who adhered to their doctrine, and who realized every opposition and indignity from the popes. It is undoubtedly certain, from the most authentic records, that a considerable number of them were, about the middle of the eleventh century, settled in Lombardy, Insurbia, but principally at Milan; and that many of them led a wandering life in France, Germany, and other countries, where they captivated the esteem and admiration of the multitude by their sanctity. In France, they were denominated Bulgarians, from the kingdom of their emigration, also Publicans, instead of Paulicians, and boni homines (good men); but were chiefly known by the term Albigenes, from the town of Alby, in the Upper Languedoc.’" (*Orchard*, p. 138)

Thus, we have traced the Paulician churches from their apostolic origin in the regions of Turkey and Bulgaria in the east to their settlement in Europe around the year 1017, five hundred years

before the Protestant Reformation. Thus it is established that at least one community of Baptist sentiments flourished long before the days of Martin Luther.

It cannot fairly be said that the Paulician movement died. By other names it lived for five hundred more years before the reformation, as -Ana-Baptists they survived the reformation, and the sentiments of the Paulicians are alive and treasured in the Baptist churches of today.

Baptist Protestants Before Protestant Reformation

3. The Waldenses

A study of the pre-reformation period that did not take into account the history of the Waldensian churches would be a superficial treatment of church history.

Their remote antiquity is established at the mouth of many witnesses, Catholic, Protestant and Baptist alike.

The editors of *Life Magazine* say: "The Waldensians, the oldest Protestant denomination, were persecuted for several centuries before allying themselves with the Reformation in 1532." (*The World's Great Religions, By the Editors of "Life," Vol. III, p. 258*).

Theodore Beza, the sixteenth century reformer, voiced the same sentiment, when he said:

"As for the Waldenses, I may be permitted to call them the very seed of the primitive and purer Christian church, since they are those that have been upheld, as is abundantly manifest, by the wonderful providence of God, so that neither these endless storms and tempests by which the whole Christian world has been shaken for so many succeeding ages and the Western part so miserably oppressed by the Bishop of Rome, falsely so called; nor those horrible persecutions which have been expressly raised against them, were able so far to prevail as to make them bend, or yield a voluntary subjection to the Roman Tyranny and idolatry." (The Churches of the Valley Of Piemont, Sir Samuel Morland, Baptist Sunday School Committee Edition, page 6).

Dr. A. W. Mitchell, a Presbyterian historian; writing in the year 1853, gave a remarkable testimony concerning the antiquity and the evangelical purity of the Waldensian churches.

In the preface of his book, "The Waldenses," Dr. Mitchell writes:

"The Waldensian Church is the 'Burning Bush' of Christendom. The history of that people presents to us little else than a series of ferocious persecutions, endured with the most heroic constancy. Planted in the valleys of Piedmont, almost within the shadow of the Papal throne, their scriptural faith and order have been a perpetual and most significant protest against the corruptions of that colossal Hierarchy. Everything pertaining to them has contributed to give point and pungency to this testimony. In age, they antedate the usurpations of the Roman See. Their uncontradicted traditions run back nearly to the Christian era, and warrant the presumption that their church was founded either by the apostles or their immediate successors. They have authentic documents dating many hundred years before the Reformation, from which it appears, that they never acknowledged the supremacy of the Popes—that they rejected from the beginning the monstrous dogmas and superstitious mummeries which Rome has baptized with the sacred name of Christianity—that they have steadfastly adhered to the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice—and that their doctrine and polity have, from the first, been precisely what they are now. Such a Church must needs have been persecuted. It was a standing memento of the great apostasy—a living testimony against its abominations, which Rome could not be expected to tolerate." (The Waldenses, A. W. Mitchell, M. D., Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1853)

The remote antiquity of the Waldensian churches, having been attested by standard authorities, is now taken for granted.

The scope and nature of the Waldensian protest is readily apparent upon examination of their treatise on the subject of Antichrist. The text of this document was corn-piled in the year 1120 A. D. The treatise may be examined in its entirety in the book, *"The Churches of the Valley of Piemont,"* Sir Samuel Morland, page 132-144.

The Waldenses speak for themselves concerning the works of Antichrist:

(1), (He) "perverts the worship properly due to God alone, by giving it to Antichrist himself, and to his works, to the poor creature, reasonable or unreasonable, sensible or senseless; to the reasonable as to man, male or female saints deceased, and unto images, carcasses, or relics, especially the sacrament of the Eucharist, which he adoreth as God, and as Jesus Christ, together with the things blessed and consecrated by him, and prohibits the worshipping of God alone."

(2). "The second work of the Antichrist is, that he robs and bereaves Christ of His merits, together with all the sufficiency of Grace, of Justification, of Regeneration, Remission of Sin, Sanctification, Confirmation, and Spiritual Nourishment, and imputes and attributes the same to his own authority, to a form of words, to his own Works; unto Saints and their Intercession, and unto the Fire of the Purgatory; and separates the people from Christ, and leads them away to the things aforesaid, that they may not seek those of Christ, nor by Christ; but only in the works of their own hands, and not by a lively Faith in God, nor in Jesus Christ, nor in the Holy Spirit, but by the will and pleasure and by the works of Antichrist, according as he preacheth, that all salvation consists in his works."

(3). "The third work of Antichrist consists in this, that he attributes the Regeneration of the Holy Spirit unto the dead outward work, baptizing Children in that Faith, and teaching, that thereby Baptism and Regeneration must be had, and therein he confers and bestows Orders and other Sacraments, and groundeth therein all his Christianity, which is against the Holy Spirit."

(4). "The fourth work of Antichrist is, that he hath constituted and put all Religion and holiness of the people in going to mass, and hath patched together all manner of Ceremonies, some Jewish, some heathenish, and some Christian: and leading the congregations thereunto, and the people to hear the same, doth thereby deprive them of the spiritual and sacramental manducation, and seduceth them from the true Religion, and from the

Commandments of God, and withdraws them from the works of compassion, by his offerings, and by such a mass hath he lodged the people in vain hopes."

(5). "The fifth work of the Antichrist is, that he doth all his works so that he may be seen, that he may glut himself with his insatiable avarice, that he may set all things to sale, and do nothing without (money)."

(6). The sixth work of the Antichrist is, that he allows of manifest Sins, without any Ecclesiastical Censure, and doth not excommunicate the Impenitent."

(7). "The seventh work of Antichrist is, that he doth not govern nor maintain his unity by the Holy Spirit, but by Secular Power, and maketh use thereof to effect spiritual matters."

(8). "The eighth work of the Antichrist is, that he hates, and persecutes, and fears after, despoils, and destroys the Members of Christ."

Thus, did the Waldenses, in the year 1120 A. D., lift their pen in protest against a corrupt Roman Catholic Church. They labeled that body "Antichrist." More than this, one could scarcely protest.

The 1120 broadside issued by the Waldenses against Antichrist was issued contemporaneously with a confession of faith, dated the same year, which indicates that they were not only "protestant," but Baptist as well.

Dr. Mitchell listed the Waldensian Confession of Faith of 1120 A. D., article by article, as follows:

Article I

"We believe and firmly hold all that which is contained in the twelve articles of the symbol, which is called the Apostles Creed, accounting for heresy whatsoever is disagreeing, and not consonant to the said twelve articles."

Article II

"We do believe that there is one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

Article III

"We acknowledge for the holy canonical Scriptures, the books of the Holy Bible, viz.:—" (Note, here follows the sixty-six books of the Holy Bible according to the Authorized Version of 1611).

Article IV

"The books aforesaid teach this, that there is one God, Almighty, all-wise, and all-good, who has made all things by his goodness; for he formed Adam in his own image and likeness, but that by the envy of the devil, and the disobedience of the said Adam, sin has entered into the world, and that we are sinners in Adam and by Adam."

Article V

"That Christ was promised to our fathers who received the law, that so knowing by the law their sin, unrighteousness and insufficiency, they might desire the coming of Christ, to satisfy for their sins, and accomplish the law by himself."

Article VI

"That Christ was born in the time appointed by God the Father. That is to say, in the time when all iniquity abounded, and not for the cause of good works, for all were sinners; but that he might show us grace and mercy as being faithful."

Article VII

"That Christ is our life, truth, peace and righteousness, also our pastor, advocate, sacrifice, and priest, who died for the salvation of all those that believe, and is risen for our justification."

Article VIII

"In like manner, we firmly hold, that there is no other mediator and advocate with God the Father, save only Jesus Christ. And as for

the Virgin Mary, that she was holy, humble, and full of grace; and in like manner do we believe concerning all the other saints, viz: that being in heaven, they wait for the resurrection of their bodies at the day of judgment."

Article IX

"We believe that after this life, there are only two places, the one for the saved, and the other for the damned, the which two places we call paradise and hell, absolutely denying that purgatory invented by anti-Christ, and forged contrary to the truth."

Article X

"We have always accounted as an unspeakable abomination before God, all those inventions of men, namely, the feasts and the vigils of saints, the water which they call holy. As likewise to abstain from flesh upon certain days, and the like; but especially their masses."

Article XI

"We esteem for an abomination and as antichristian, all those human inventions which are a trouble or prejudice to the liberty of the spirit."

Article XII

"We do believe that the sacraments are signs of the holy thing, or visible forms of the invisible grace, accounting it good that the faithful sometimes use the said signs or visible forms, if it may be done. However, we believe and hold, that the above said faithful may be saved without receiving the signs aforesaid, in case they have no place nor any means to use them."

Article XIII

"We acknowledge no other sacrament but Baptism and the Lord's Supper."

Article XIV

"We ought to honour the secular powers by submission, ready obedience, and paying of tributes."

—Source, (The Waldenses, Presbyterian Board of Publication, A. W. Mitchell, pp. 376-378.)

The position is taken, without qualification or equivocation, that this is a Baptist confession of faith dated more than four hundred years before the Reformation. Only a Baptist church could or would endorse all fourteen articles; there is not a Protestant body, (using the term in its historical sense), on the top side of the earth that would dare do so.

Protestant and Catholic historians alike have declined to do battle upon the question of the apostolic origins of the Waldenses. The extent of their protest against Rome has been duly noted. As the brightest, most shining example of protesting Baptists, living centuries prior to the Protestant Reformation, they are truly "the burning bush" of Christendom.

The Baptists and the Reformers

Baptist churches and Baptist sentiments flourished continuously for fourteen hundred years from the personal ministry of Jesus Christ to the Protestant Reformation. This proposition has been more than sustained by appeals to the histories of the Novatain, Paulician, and Waldensian churches. In each case an apostolic, or near apostolic origin was first alleged, and then demonstrated. If it were required the number of witnesses could be multiplied. An historical affinity could be shown between the Novatainists, Paulicians, Waldensians, Montanists, Albigenses, Bogimils, Petrobrusians, Henricians, Arnoldists, and many others. It is scarcely necessary. It is abundantly evident that while Baptists have always been protestants where Rome was concerned, they have never been reformers, as the legitimate successors of ,Jesus and the apostles their religion has never required reformation.

It is candidly conceded that no succession can be made out for the name, "Baptist." If Catholic and Protestant historians will concede that Baptist doctrine and Baptist practice, (under any name

whatever), has endured since the time of Jesus and the apostles, then Baptists will concede that there is no proof of succession for the name "Baptist" itself.

There were Baptists, (by sentiment if not by name), at the time of the Protestant Reformation. History reveals that they did not react toward it with any degree of uniform opinion.

Not a few of the ancient witnesses lent their support to the reformation, merged their identity with it, and became protestants.

The historian, John T. Christian says:

"Every institution has its vicissitudes and after progress comes decline. On the eve of the Reformation everything was on the decline—faith, light, life. It was so of the Waldenses. Persecution had wasted their numbers and had broken their spirit and the few scattered leaders were dazed by the rising glories of the Reformation. THE LARGER PORTION HAS GONE WITH THE ANABAPTIST MOVEMENT. Sick and tired of heart in 1530 the remnant of the Waldenses opened negotiations with the Reformers, but a union was not effected till 1532. Since then the Waldenses have been Pedobaptists."

—Vol. I, Broadman Press, 1922, Ed. P. 82

As Dr. Christian suggests the dawn of Reformation day brought the pre-reformation Baptist protestants to a parting of the way. Many went with the Reformation party. Many more did not. These became the Anabaptist movement, soon to drop the pre-fix "Ana" and become simply "Baptist."

The Ana-Baptist attitude toward the reformers and the Reformation is a matter of historical record. See "A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America and Other Parts of the World," by David Benedict, 1848 ed, page 79 and following.

Concerning the Ana-Baptists and the Protestant Reformation, Benedict says:

"We have now come to a very important epoch In the ecclesiastical affairs of the Christian world, concerning which very different judgments have been formed by the two great parties, which from that period have been known by the name of Catholics and Protestants."

As Luther was the most prominent actor in this great movement, his name at first was applied to all who dissented from the church of Rome, and at the present time the Lutheran church embraces a very large portion of the protestants of Europe. The Catholics also apply his name to dissenters generally without distinction, especially in the missionary fields in the east.

Calvin came on the stage a short time after Luther; under him and his coadjutors a distinct party arose, which at first bore his name; but in process of time his followers became distinguished by the name of the Reformed church or churches; they prevailed mostly in Switzerland, but spread into France and other parts of Europe.

I shall not attempt to give anything like an abridged account of the rise and progress of the Reformation; all I have in view is to show how it was considered by the Baptists of that age, and ever since, and what effect it had on them and their principles. What little I shall attempt to say on these points may be summed up under the following heads:

(1). They were highly elated with the bold stand which was made by Luther and his associates against the overgrown power of the Roman pontiffs, which for ages has been exercised so cruelly against them.

The multitudes who lay concealed in almost all parts of Europe, hailed with joy the dawn of that day which should relieve them from the persecuting power of the despotic heads of the Roman church. But soon they found themselves mistaken in their expectations, became entirely dissatisfied with some of the principles on which the reformation was conducted, and so far as their voice could be heard they entered their decided protest against the protestants, and believed then, as they have ever since, that the Reformation needed reforming.

(2). They protested against the union of church and state, and the employment of secular force to revolute the affairs of religion, or control its operations, as they soon found that the reformers were the decided advocates for a national form of Christianity—were as assiduous in securing the favor and protection of earthly princes, as were the leaders of that church whose communion they had adjured, and whose power they had set at defiance.

(3). They soon found that the reformers were cautious and temporizing on some important points; that they showed a disposition to retain some of the worst parts of the old repudiated church, and that the infant system was to be maintained, whereas an unconditional abandonment and abjuration of every thing pertaining to that system was with them a sine qua non, an absolute contradiction, without which all the trimmings and modifications of the reformers were in their opinion futile and useless.

It was of no consequence to them whether the church was made up of members which came in under the twenty two ceremonies of the church at Rome or of the single one of the protestants. They peremptorily challenged the right of all persons whatever to membership, only on a credible profession of their Christian faith.

(4). On the mode of baptizing, the old Baptists soon fell out with the reformers, whether Lutherans or Calvinists. Although in their public creeds and confessions they generally provided for dipping, except in cases of sickness or weakness, yet in practice they all went against the dippers; disputes ensued; public debates were held, and books on both sides were published; but as the opponents had the power in their hands, if they could not overcome them with arguments, they could with the sword.

(5). The Baptists took the old ground of taking the Bible for their rule of faith, and claiming the right of private judgment uncontrolled by the dogmas of the church or the schools, and unmoved by the statutes of the state. The reformers began on this principle, but did not carry it through.

(6). On the practice of re-baptizing the reformers were down upon the Baptists with tremendous power, and herein they followed the steps of the old Catholic persecutors.

(7). On the principles of religious freedom and toleration the two parties were as opposite as the poles, and not much less so were they as to the spiritual nature of the kingdom of Christ."

David Benedict has delineated seven broad areas of disagreement between the Ana-Baptists and the Protestant Reformation party. If modern day Baptists are to be numbered, without question, with the Protestant denominations, then surely more rapport than has been found, must be shown between their Ana-Baptist forefathers and the original founders of historic Protestantism.

The questions once raised are now answered. Baptists, as a separate denomination, find their genesis far, back of the Protestant Reformation, on the pages of the New Testament. Therefore, Baptists cannot be fairly called "protestants" in the historical sense of that term. In so far as the term "protestant" implies a protest against the excesses of the Roman Catholic Church, Baptists are, as it has been observed, "the first to qualify."

Chapter 3-Baptist Churches in All Ages

The history of the Lord 's church goes back to the first century. *Jesus established his church during his personal ministry here on earth.* In the New Testament there is abundant proof of the truthfulness of this statement. Some people, however, would deny Jesus the honor of establishing his own church and say it began on the day of Pentecost. The writer submits the following statements showing our Lord established his church during his personal ministry and not on the day of Pentecost.

1. The church had a commission to preach before Pentecost (Matthew 28:19, 20).
2. The church baptized people before Pentecost (John 4:1, 2).
3. The church had the Lord's Supper before Pentecost (Luke 22:15-20).

4. The church held an election before Pentecost (Acts 1:15-26).
5. There was a church roll before Pentecost (Acts 1:15).
6. The words of Jesus, "Tell it unto the church," were spoken before Pentecost (Matthew 18:17). How could one tell anything to a church that did not exist!
7. There were about 3000 additions to the church on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41). A church must be established before it can have additions.
8. Our Lord left his house (Mark 13 :34). By inspiration the Apostle Paul identifies "the house of God" as "The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15).
9. The first spiritual gift set in the church was the gift of the apostles (1 Cor. 12:28). The church had to be in existence before the apostles could be set in it.

The Scriptures are clear in their testimony that Jesus established his church personally and left it in the world when He went back to the Father.

The Promise

Jesus promised his church, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). The church Jesus built is promised a *continuous* history down through the ages. This promise is true no matter what men may say.

The New Testament A Church History Book

The New Testament is the first and most dependable church history book in all the world. The origin and early history of the church is found in its sacred pages. A wholehearted acceptance of the Bible is the first step in understanding the beginning and history of the true church. Willful ignorance of God's written revelation will lead men to refer to the Catholic Church as "the church" and the true followers of the Lamb as "heretics."

In All Ages

Long before this writer had read a church history book written by men, he believed the church Jesus established would stand through the ages. The message of the New Testament convinced him of this truth. The words of Ephesians 3:21 stamped themselves indelibly upon his heart and mind, "Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end." how can we believe the Lord's church will fail when He has told us it will not?

Churches like that first church in Jerusalem have continued to exist from that time to this present day. God's promise has not failed. There has not been a single day since the beginning of the original church that there has not been churches like it in the world.

THE TESTIMONY OF OTHERS

Baptist History begins with the first church and continues down through the centuries. This is not an empty statement horn of Baptist imagination. Historians of various denominations admit Baptists have existed down through the ages since Christ. The following men bear witness to the antiquity of this non-Protestant, non-Catholic group.

Sir Isaac Newton said it was "his conviction that the Baptists were the only group that had not symbolized with Rome" (Whiston, *Memoirs of*, written by himself, 201).

Mosheim, the learned Lutheran historian, places people with Baptist sentiments before the Reformation. He wrote: "Before the rise of Luther and Calvin there lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe persons who adhered tenaciously to the principles of the Dutch Baptists" (Moshem, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, III, 200).

Alexander Campbell in his debate with Macalla, a Presbyterian, declared: "From the apostolic age, to the present time, the sentiments of Baptists, and the practice of baptism have had a continued chain of advocates, and public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced" (Macalla and Campbell *Debate on Baptism*, 378, 379, Buffalo, 1824).

Father Gretcher, Catholic, after recounting the teachings of the Waldenses, said: "This is a true picture of the heretics of our age, particularly of the Anabaptists" (D'Anvers, Baptism, 253).

Caesar Baronius, Catholic, known as the "Father of Ecclesiastical History," said: "The Waldenses were Ana-baptists" (D'Anvers, Baptism, 253).

John Clark Ridpath was a professor of history in DePauw University and a Methodist. He declared, "I should not readily admit that there was a Baptist church as far back as A. D. 100, though without doubt there were Baptists then, as all Christians were then Baptists" (Jarrel. Baptist Church Perpetuity, 59).

Cardinal Hosius, a member of the Council of Trent, A. D. 1560, testified that the Anabaptists had suffered persecution for 1200 years. In a statement familiar to church historians he says: "If the truth of religion were judged by the readiness and boldness of which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinion and persuasion of no sect can be truer and surer than that of the Anabaptists since there have been none for these twelve hundred years past, that have been more generally punished or that have more cheerfully and steadfastly undergone, and even offered themselves to the most cruel punishment than these people" (Hosius, Letters Apud Opera, 112-113. Baptist Magazine CVIII, 278. May, 1826).

In the year 1819 *Dr. Ypeii*, Professor of Theology in Gronigen, and the *Rev. J. J. Dermout*, Chaplain to the King of the Netherlands. both scholarly members of the Reformed Church, investigated the claims of Dutch Baptists to apostolic origin. Their unsolicited testimony is clear and convincing: "We have seen that the Baptists who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites. were the original Waldenses, and who have lone in the history of the church received the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the apostles, and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrines of the Gospel through the ages" (Ypeij en Dermout, Geschiedenis der Nederlandsrhe Hervormde Kerk. Breda, 1819).

Baptist Heritage

Baptists have a glorious past. They are not different simply because they are obstinate. They have a heritage bought with martyr's blood to preserve and truth from heaven to proclaim. Inspired by the noble examples of heroes along the church's crimson trail and confident of the future as we follow our unfailing Captain, let us go forth with the glorious light of the gospel until its shining rays have penetrated the darkest regions of the earth.

A HERITAGE THROUGH THE AGES

Baptist Churches in All Ages traces the authors' understanding of Baptist identity from the New Testament church through centuries of opposition, reform, and witness.

Its three studies examine the development of Roman Catholicism, the relationship of Baptists to the Protestant Reformation, and the testimony offered for Baptist churches across the ages.

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