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An Outline of Baptist History

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AN OUTLINE OF BAPTIST HISTORY

Prepared by

James T. Jeremiah

for

Baptist History Classes of Cedarville College

No claim of originality is made for the outline. Since a brief history of the Baptists is not available for use in class, the preparation of these notes was a necessity. Quotations have been made from many sources. Much of the material has been taken from:

Burroughs, P. E., The Baptist People
Christian, John T., A History of the Baptists
Vedder, Henry C., A Short History of the Baptists

AN OUTLINE OF BAPTIST HISTORY

- I. The Primitive Church. "The external history of the apostolic church is barely outlined in the New Testament. It may be described as a succession of missionary tours in the course of which every part of the Roman empire was traversed and churches were planted in every province." Vedder, p. 24.

1. The New Testament churches.

- (1) Origin - "A christian church potentially existed from the day when two disciples of John the Baptist followed Jesus and believed on Him as the Messiah, (John 1:35-40) but Pentecost marks its definite beginning." Vedder, p. 10. "A spiritual body, not lacking visibility, because of its spirituality, but a visible body because it is before all things spiritual." Vedder p. 12.
- (2) Ordinances - Baptism and the Lord's Supper were the two commemorative and predictive ordinances of the New Testament churches. They were simply practiced by the early Christians and were not sacraments. Acts 2:42-47 gives the order.
- (3) Organization - At first there was no organization of these churches but it developed as the need became manifest. Philippians 1:1 indicates that the most complete development of the church had "saints, bishops or pastors, and deacons."
- (4) Officers - The only officers of the New Testament churches were deacons and pastors. There was no such thing as an hierarchy in these churches.
- (5) Order - "The worship of the early Christians was simple and spiritual. In the apostolic age the services of public worship consisted of prayer, praise and the preaching of the word, probably with reading of the Old Testament writings, and of the New Testament writings as they appeared and were circulated through copies." Vedder, p. 21.

2. Marks of Degeneracy and Corruption. Before the last of the apostles had passed, there were marks of degeneracy.

- (1) There are 3 tendencies toward degeneration, all coming from a common cause, which was a desire to be saved by works. Salvation by works is a doctrine common to all pre-Christian religions. Warning against trends away from the truth are given by the apostles in 2 Tim. 3 and 2 Pet. 2. Trends toward degeneracy are summed up in three things: (1) The idea of a Holy Catholic Church; (2) The ministry of the priesthood; (3) Sacramental grace.

3. Steps toward degeneracy.

- (1) Baptismal regeneration. The early Christians did not obey His command because it was inconvenient or distasteful. They substituted something else for His command, but the church eventually strayed from what the Lord taught concerning baptism. This is seen in a number of quotations taken from early church history.
 - a. "The teaching of the Twelve apostles," which had its origin about 120 AD has this to say, "now concerning Baptism, thus baptize ye: having first uttered all these things, baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

Holy Spirit in running water. But if thou hast not running water, baptize in other water; and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. But if thou hast neither, pour water upon the head thrice, into the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. But before the baptism let the baptizer and the baptized fast, and whatsoever others can, but the baptized then shalt thou command to fast for two or three days before." Here we see the beginning of teaching pertaining to baptism which we do not find in the New Testament. There are certain things stated in this paragraph which the Bible certainly does not contain.

- b. Justin Martyr who lived about 150 AD identified the sign "baptism" with the thing signified "regeneration." He called baptism "the waterbath of regeneration." Justin says, "They are baptized, they are regenerated." "Regenerate" and "baptize" are the rule in the writings of the Ante-Nicene church fathers.

- c. Consequences of Baptismal Regeneration.

- (a) Clinic baptism. This was practiced as a consequence of the above view of baptism. It was brought about to help those who supposedly were too sick to be baptized. A man by the name of Novatian was the first man of whom we have record of such practice being used. It was reported that he was dying so they brought water and poured over him and had "immersion" simulated as closely as possible. He recovered, however, entered the ministry, his baptism was disputed, and the question was submitted to Cyprian, Bishop of Africa in about 250 AD. He was asked, "of those who obtained God's grace in sickness and weakness, whether they are to be accounted legitimate Christians, for that they are not to be washed but affused with the saving waters." Cyprian's conclusion was that the sprinkling of water (aspersio) prevails equally with the washing of salvation; and that when it is done in the church, when the faith of both the receiver and giver is sound, all things hold and may be consummated and perfected by the Majesty of the Lord, and by the truth of faith." Christian, however, points out on page 38, "For the first 13 centuries immersion was the normal practice of the Christian world." At the Synod of Ravenna in 1311 AD, it was stated "that baptism is to be administered ... by triune aspersion or immersion."

- (b) Infant baptism. It logically followed if those unbaptized were unregenerated that all who died in infancy were unsaved. It was now too late to return to the New Testament pattern. Augustine who lived from 353- 430 was the first and ablest defender of the doctrine of infant baptism. By the time Tertullian (AD 150-220), the practice was general. This we know because he opposed it in 185 AD. The Council of Carthage was the first church council to favor it in 253 AD. After the 6th century, the practice was universal among the degenerate churches. Infant baptism did more than anything else to prepare the way for the papacy.

- (c) The Catechumenate. "The tendency of such an institution was to foster the idea that men might be educated into Christianity, and to decrease the reliance of the church upon the Holy Spirit in the conversion of men." Vedder, p. 35. This agency of instruction for converts which was essentially good,

became one of the greatest instruments for corruption. Men and women are not educated into the kingdom of God but born into it. Once they had experienced the new birth they should of course be instructed in the truth. No one should ever be led to believe that instruction in Bible doctrine is a substitute for a personal experience with Jesus Christ.

- (2) Communion. This was called the Eucharist, from the second century on. The early church fathers give evidence of believing in the doctrine of consubstantiation. The ordinance became surrounded with a cloud of ritual and finally developed into the mass. Here we see the early church attributing a mystical meaning to the Lord's Supper.

It is interesting to note that as men turned from a direct approach to God, they devised forms and ceremonies which might help them to reach God. Burroughs points out two things here which we should always remember: (1) The natural heart protests the supremacy and competency of Jesus; and (2) It shrinks from accepting the competency of a human soul.

- (3) The development of sacerdotalism. In the New Testament we have nothing but the priesthood of believers, but by the end of the 3rd century it was generally accepted that the clergy formed a sacerdotal order. This was a priestly caste separate from the laity. Early in the 2nd century, bishops and presbyters became two offices. They were no longer the same, but the bishops were given a position over the presbyters. Newman points out that "the chairman of the elders gradually became the monarchical bishop." "The church in Rome had from early times wielded a wide influence. It grew in wealth and power so that in due time its bishop was made the pope (papa, father)." Vedder, p. 53.

- (4) Growth of Asceticism. It is easy to trace this teaching to the doctrine of salvation by works. Manicheanism, founded by Mani or Manichaeus (216-276 AD) made a combination of Christianity and Zoroastrianism which was a dualistic philosophy, set out to state that there were two opposing and eternal principles, "Man's soul linked him with the kingdom of light, and his body brought him into bondage to the kingdom of darkness. They looked upon sex as evil and emphasized the superiority of unmarried state." Augustine was a disciple of Manicheanism for 12 years. We can easily see how this philosophy fit into the plan of salvation by works, for if the body were evil something must be done against it in order to make atonement before God. Sin in the body was only overcome by fasting. This system did three things: (1) It opened the way for celibacy of the clergy; (2) It laid a foundation for the exaltation of Mary; and (3) It gave aid to the doctrines of penance and later to the confessional.

Vedder has summarized this period by saying, "The rapidity with which the doctrine, ritual and polity of the early church degenerated, was directly proportional to its growth in wealth and worldly prosperity. . . . So long as the church was feeble, persecuted and poor. . . . it was comparatively pure in both doctrine and life." p. 39. (See Prov. 30:8)

There were certain influences which led to the degeneracy of the early church:

- (1) The instincts of the natural heart;
- (2) the perverted teachings of Judaism;
- (3) the prevailing Greek philosophies.

4. The Church in the Wilderness. Christ promised ultimate but not necessarily continuous triumph (Matt. 16:18) to His church. We shall note now that His churches went through times of great persecution and trials.

Vedder, p. 45, says, "If every church of Christ were today to become apostate, it would be possible and right for any true believer to organize tomorrow another church on the apostolic model of faith and practice and that church would have the only apostolic succession worth having, a succession of faith in the Lord Christ and obedience to Him."

- (1) Certain facts can be established, however, to show the antiquity of Baptist principles. Every church through the 1st century organized as Baptist churches are now. Bodies of Christians 4 centuries before the Reformation were stigmatized by the Roman authorities as heretics. These people, according to their enemies, professed nearly and sometimes identically what Baptists believe today.

- (2) Certain sects which some suppose to be in the line of the Baptists.

- a. Montanists began their existence in 150 AD. These people protested the corrupt teachings of the degenerate church. They taught the gift of prophecy and speaking in tongues were perpetual gifts. They believed in faith healing. They were pre-millennial. They gave greater authority to the words of their prophets than they did the Bible. They were no different than the Roman Catholics for both had abandoned congregationalism and accepted episcopacy as church government. They almost took a gnostic view of the flesh. They claimed special revelations. It is interesting to note that Tertullian advocated this teaching. Those who had "lapsed" from the true faith, according to the Montanists, must be rebaptized. Infant baptism was not yet a dogma and it was rejected by the Montanists.
- b. Novatians (250 AD). Their origin seems to be traced to the Decian persecution, when many Christians denied the faith. After the persecution, the church asked, "How can we deal with these traditores?" The laxer party in Rome favored admitting them without delay or ceremony. Novatian (not the one mentioned previously in these notes) opposed this. He withdrew and became the bishop of the protesting party. He formed a strong church in North Africa. The Novatians believed in rebaptizing those who came from other churches. However, they held to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. They held to the view of independence of churches and recognized the equality of pastors. Novatian opposed the election of Cornelius as the pastor of the church at Rome in 250 AD.
- c. Donatists began around 311 AD. They began their existence for about the same reason as the Novatians but under the Diocletian instead of the Decian persecution. These people insisted on a pure church membership. They rejected unworthy ministers. They protested civil interference in matters of religion, but they too believed in baptismal regeneration. They believed the human nature of Christ had to be cleansed by baptism. Vedder says they practiced infant baptism. They were intolerant and bigoted according to Newman. Christian says that the Donatists rejected infant baptism and were congregational in their form of government.

(3) Certain sects which have more common agreement with Baptists.

- a. Paulicians. A man by the name of Constantine received a copy of the New Testament from a Christian returning from captivity by the Saracens. He became interested in the Pauline epistles and sought to restore Christianity to the primitive Pauline form. These people were called Paulicians according to some writers because of their adherence to Paul's writings. Others say that the name came from Paul of Samosata, the deposed bishop of Antioch in 269 AD who became one of their leaders. These people took refuge in the Mohammedan countries where they were tolerated. Gibbon, in the Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. 5, p. 398, says they, "protested against the tyranny of Rome and embraced the Bible as the rule of faith and purified their creed from all the versions of Gnostic theology." In 690 Constantine was stoned to death and his successor was burned to death.
- b. Albigenses. Some writers say that these people were found in the valleys of France from the earliest ages of Christianity. They never left any of their writings because of extreme persecution. "What is certain is, that above all they formed an anti-sacerdotal party in permanent opposition to the Roman Church and raised a continued protest against the corruption of the clergy of their time." (Encyclopedia Britanica, Vol. 1, p. 528) These people rejected infant baptism and were condemned for it at the Council of Toulouse in AD 1119. Hindered by the inquisition and abandoned by the nobles of the district, they eventually became more and more scattered, hiding in the forests and mountains and only meeting occasionally.

Many of these sects had doctrines which resemble the teachings held by Baptists today. Many of their teachings, however, were absolutely contrary to what Baptists have held and do hold. "It is impossible to show that any one person, or any one sect for a period of more than a thousand years, consistently and continuously held the entire body of truth that Baptists believe the Scriptures teach, or even its vital parts. It is possible that with further research such proof may be brought to light. One cannot affirm that there was not a continuity in the outward and visible life of the churches founded by the apostles down to the time of the Reformation."

During the period of time when these sects were flourishing, Christianity was bitterly persecuted by the Roman Empire. There were ten distinct persecutions, and Christianity had a definite grapple with heathenism. Uncounted thousands of people died in this period.

In 323 AD, Constantine made Christianity the state religion. He adopted the title Pontifex Maximus and took over the title of headmaster of heathen religions. Now, he becomes the head of Christianity.

The Church which had been persecuted becomes the persecutor. Augustine said "many must often be brought back to their Lord like wicked servants, by the rod of temporal suffering before they attain the highest grade of spiritual development... the Lord Himself orders that guests be first invited then compelled to His great suffering." Burroughs, p. 24. The inquisition originated by the Pope and put into the hands of the Dominicans, became "the most cruel and inhuman tribunal known to history." The death penalty

was almost invariably inflicted. The importance in bringing back the heretics is seen when we note that the Roman Church believed that schism in the body was a mortal sin.

According to Vedder, p. 55, during the first four centuries of church history, the following dogmas had been developed within the Catholic church: The doctrine of the mass; the doctrine of penance; confession and priestly absolution; purgatory; invocation of saints; and the use of images in worship.

II. The Persecuted Church.

1. The Church Reappears. "There were Protestants before there was a Protestant revolt, Reformers before the Reformation. The corruption of the primitive church and the development of the Roman Catholic church was a logical process that extended over a period of centuries." The church departed from the faith, then the papacy extended its power over all Europe. The resulting tyranny provoked revolts toward a purer faith. From the beginning of the 12th century reactions became more numerous. Each revolt had an independent origin within the church. These protests were led by various individuals.
 - (1) Peter of Bruys, who founded the Petrobrusians. Peter was a pupil of Abelard and was found preaching in southern France, soon after the 12th century. After 20 years of ministry he was burned as a heretic in about 1126. He was persecuted by Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Clugmy who wrote a book against this heresy making the following charges:
 - a. Peter the Venerable said these people rejected tradition and appealed to the scripture as the sole authority in religion. They would have "none of the fathers."
 - b. They held the church to be a spiritual body where only believers who had been baptized could be members. They denied that children could be saved by baptism.
 - c. They denied sacramental grace. "They deny not only the truth of the body and blood of the Lord, daily and constantly offered in the church through the sacrament, but declare that it is nothing at all and ought not to be offered to God."
 - d. They denied the doctrine of purgatory and of prayers for the dead. They may have had some extremes, i. e. the view that churches ought not to be built. But in the main the beliefs attributed to them are such as are firmly held today by Baptists the world over. Vedder, p. 62.
 - (2) Henry of Lausanne (1116-1150), the founder of the Henricians. At one time Henry was a companion of Peter of Bruys. He too was a monk of Clugmy who became a preacher of righteousness. "He is described as a man of great dignity of person, fiery eye, thundering voice, impetuous speech, mighty in the Scriptures." He labored in southern France and was hated by Bernard of Clairvaux.

In 1148, Henry was condemned by the Council of Rheims, not to be martyred, but to be imprisoned for life. He died in solitary confinement.

Henry held to the supreme authority of Scripture and rejected the authoritative claims of tradition and the church.

After his death his followers did not retain the name Henricians and perhaps they disappeared or were absorbed by other groups.

- (3) Arnaldo of Bresica. He too was a student of Abelard. "The most serious revolts of the 12th century against the church are directly traceable to his (Abelard's) lecture room."

Here we should note a few things about Abelard, who lived from 1079-1142. He was a French scholastic, a philosopher and theologian. When 38 he privately married Heloise who returned to the house of her uncle, denying the marriage to protect Abelard's position in the church. Abelard wrote on the Trinity and was pronounced heretical and condemned in 1411 by Pope Innocent III.

Political corruptions of the church made an impression on Arnaldo of Brescia. He said the bishop had no right to interfere with the government and the church should not own any secular domain. Arnaldo was martyred, his body burned and the ashes thrown into the Tiber.

"The chief significance of Arnaldo, as regards Baptist history, is that he was the first to proclaim with insistence and eloquence the doctrine of soul-liberty and the separation between church and state." He denied infant baptism and the mass.

- (4) Peter Waldo. Peter was a rich merchant of Lyons. He became troubled about the salvation of his soul, and consulted a learned theologian. He was told by this theologian that there were many "ways" of salvation. He was finally told to sell his possessions, whereupon he divided his property with his wife who did not share his views. He provided for his two daughters and gave the rest to the poor.

He spent time studying the scriptures and began to talk to others about Christ. He went from town to town witnessing for the Lord. The Archbishop of Lyons forbade Waldo's preaching. Alexander received the preacher but told him he was not to preach anymore. Up to this time he was a faithful church member, now he decides to preach in spite of the warning.

Shortly after he was warned and determined to continue his preaching, all of southern France was filled with lay preachers. Peter's followers were known as the Poor men of Lyons, the Valdesians or the Waldenses. Waldo died in the year 1217. He and his adherents were condemned by the Council of Verone in 1183.

The Petrobrusians prepared the way for the Waldenses though each were brought into existence independently.

The Roman writers before 1350 attribute the following "errors" to the Waldenses.

- a. They held doctrines of Christ and the Apostles without decrees of the church as sufficient instruction for salvation.
- b. Church singing in Latin was not understood and they were charged with saying that Latin singing was "internal clamour."

- c. They alone claimed to be the church of Christ.
 - d. Man truly baptized when brought into their heresy. Children do not become holy through baptism, they claimed.
 - e. They did not believe the bread and wine to be really the body and blood of Christ.
2. The Anabaptists of Switzerland. The anabaptists of Switzerland have an obscure origin. "There were before the Reformation, people in Zurich who, filled with errors, gave birth to the Anabaptists. Grebel was taught by them; he did not discover his own doctrines but was taught by others." p. 75

Some maintain that the Anabaptists originated with the Reformation but they have some problems to solve:

- a. The new sect spread rapidly and covered a wide territory.
 - b. They were numerous, wide spread and indefatigable.
 - c. The leaders were not inferior in learning and eloquence to any of the Reformation.
 - d. Their teachings were scriptural, consistent and moderate.
 - e. They appear fully formed from the first - complete in polity, sound in doctrine, strict in discipline.
- (1) Ulrich Zwingli. Dr. W. J. McGlothlin states, "Luther's principle reform was the retention in the church of everything which the scriptures did not forbid: Zwingli's was the rejection of all the Scriptures did not warrant. On this basis, Zwingli took his stand in opposition to his Catholic opponents. However, he was in bondage to the idea of a state church and believed a Reformation should have back of it the power of the civil magistrate, instead of being a spiritual movement simply."

Another leader in the Swiss Anabaptist movement was Conrad Grebel. The son of one of the members of the Zurich Council, he was socially a man of more importance than Zwingli, whose father was a peasant farmer. In eloquence he appeared to have been little the inferior of his leader and he is described by Zwingli himself as "most studious, most candid, most learned." He was educated in the University of Vienna and Paris. Before his conversion his life was wild and dissipated. Sometime, however, before 1522, he was converted and from this time on his life was one of perfect rectitude and piety. His views regarding the church were derived from the careful study of the original scriptures, especially of the Greek New Testament.

- (2) Break between Zwingli and his associates, 1525 AD. There were other men among the Swiss anabaptists who were noted for their ability. For example, George Blaurock who was a former monk and was noted for his eloquence and zeal and known during that period as a second Paul. Felix Manz, a native of Zurich, had a good education. He was a Hebrew scholar and for a time was an adherent of Zwingli until he gave up his early principle of supremacy of the scriptures.

The opposition to infant baptism became so strong that the Zurich Council appointed a public disputation on Jan. 17, 1525 AD. Grebel, Manz, Hatzer and Blaurock represented the radical Anabaptist party. The Council decided in Zwingli's favor and issued an order in consequence. This order stated that parents should have their children baptized at once on pain of being banished.

At another Council meeting held Nov. 6, 1525, the Zwinglians brought forth the argument which Pedo-Baptists later used freely. The argument was that the Abrahamic covenant continued in the new dispensation from the Old Testament and that baptism replaced circumcision. The Anabaptists, however, argued that there is no command in the New Testament to baptize infants.

Vedder says, "Zwingli reproached the Anabaptists for being separatists; to which they made the unanswerable reply that, if they were such, they had as good a right to separate from him as he did to separate from the pope." p. 83

On Nov. 30, the Council made a statement to the effect that the Anabaptists, having expressed their views without any hindrance, had been overcome by the Zwinglian movement. They stated that the Anabaptists had been annihilated and infant baptism had been established. However, they were not so sure of their ground although their statement sounded strong, for they added this grim warning: "Whoever shall act contrary to the order shall, as often as he disobeys, be punished by a fine of a silver mark and if any shall prove disobedient we shall deal with him further and punish him according to his desert without further forgiveness."

What happened when the Anabaptists refused to obey the commands of the Council? Grebel, Manz, Blaurock and others were thrown into prison because they would not retract. They were loaded with chains and kept several months. Felix Manz was released for a time. On March 7, 1526, it was decreed by the Zurich Council "that whosoever rebaptized should be drowned, and this action was confirmed by a second decree of Nov. 19." Manz was found guilty of Anabaptism. The sentence was carried out. On the way to the place of execution, Bullinger, a hostile historian writes, "His mother and brother came to him and exhorted him to be steadfast; and he persevered in his folly, even to the end; when he was bound upon the hurdle and was about to be thrown into the stream by the executor he sang with a loud voice, 'into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit' and herewith was drawn into the water and was drowned."

Before these persecutions, Zwingli stands condemned by the bar of history. Though not a persecutor, he stood by approving, by silence, all that was done.

- (3) The Teachings of the Swiss Anabaptists. As in the case of many of the preceding groups, the testimony of their opponents is one of the main sources of learning the teachings of the Swiss Anabaptists. Fragments of their writings, however, do remain. Their Confession of Faith issued in 1527 is the first document of its kind known to be in existence.

A study of their confession of faith will reveal the fact that the Swiss Anabaptists believed in the baptism of believers only, communion for only the baptized, a pure church discipline required, and they forbade Christians to be magistrates or take an oath, saying the latter was sinful. These last two positions are held today by many of the Friends.

"The only fault charged against them by their contemporaries, that is supported by evidence, is that they had the courage and honesty to interpret the Scriptures as Baptists today interpret them." p. 91, Vedder.

3. The German Baptists. "The name Anabaptist stands in the literature of the Lutheran Reformation as a synonym for the extremest errors of doctrine, and the wildest excesses of conduct." Vedder, p. 92.

The German Baptists were different from the Anabaptists of Switzerland where they denoted a single party, the same in faith and practice. In Germany, however, there were men of divergent views and acts.

- (1) Three principle parties of Anabaptists in Germany. First Period, 1525-1530. Balthaser, Hubmaier and John Denck were the leaders. Second Period, 1530-1535. Melchior Hofmann and Joseph of Leyden were the leaders. Third Period, 1535- . Menno Simons was the leader.
- (2) The outstanding German Anabaptist. Balthasar Hubmaier, (1481-1528). Hubmaier had an excellent education, receiving this Th.D degree from the University of Ingolstadt. He became the professor of Theology at this University. In 1516 he became pastor at the cathedral at Ratisbon, where he became a great success as a preacher. In 1523, he visited Zwingli when Zwingli was favorable to the Anabaptists. He found that loyalty to the Scriptures compelled him to reject infant baptism. On Easter, in 1525, William Reublin, an Anabaptist preacher from Switzerland baptized Hubmaier and 110 others on profession of faith. Shortly thereafter, Hubmaier baptized 300 more. In 1524, the Emperor demanded the surrender of Hubmaier, but the townspeople refused to permit his surrender. Hubmaier thought that the people might be punished for defending him, so he withdrew. In 1525, when he fled from the Austrian army, he sought refuge in Zurich, but now Zwingli, at one time his friend, is his enemy. Toward the end of 1527, he was seized by the order of the Emperor, and conveyed to Vienna. He was kept in prison for three months while some of the Roman theologians tried to get him to recant. On March 10, 1528, he was taken through the streets of the city in a wagon and red hot pincers were thrust in his flesh on the way to the scaffold. His head fell under the headmans axe and his body was burned. Cairns says, "His wife was drowned in the Danube by the Roman Catholic authorities."

As an Anabaptist, Hubmaier insisted on the following teachings: (1) The separation of the church and state; (2) The authority of the Bible; (3) The baptism of believers.

- (3) The Fanatical Anabaptists of Northern Germany. Melchior Hofmann was one of the leaders of these fanatical Anabaptists. He was a mystic who lacked the knowledge of the Scriptures in the original tongue and held rather strange views. "There was a great difference between Anabaptists and Anabaptists. There were those amongst them who held strange doctrines, but this cannot be held against the whole sect. If we should attribute to every sect whatever senseless doctrines two or three fanatical followers have taught, there is no one in the world to whom we could not ascribe the most abominable errors." Vedder, p. 117.

Hofmann published a book in 1526 which was an interpretation of Daniel 12. He said Christs' kingdom would come in 1533. Strausburg was to be the New Jerusalem. He was arrested on the year the "kingdom" was suppose to come and spent 10 years in prison, dying at the close of 1543.

4. Menno Simons and his followers. A stigma had been placed against the Anabaptist movement because of the disorders at Munster. Vedder points out that they professed to have daily revelations. They claimed to be the kingdom of David. John of Leyden who was King David had a harem. These and other disorders put the Anabaptist cause in ill repute. The stigma, however, only checked the movement. It could not be stopped.

(1) Menno Simons. Simons was born in Freesland in 1492. He was educated for the priesthood and ordained in 1515. He began to doubt the doctrine of transubstantiation but tried to lay the doubt to the temptation of the devil and thus put it aside. However, he soon began to study the scriptures. Upon his personal study of the scriptures, he began to preach with new evangelical power. Simons heard of the martyrdom of Sicke Snyder, a poor tailor who was condemned on Mar. 30, 1531. The condemnation stated that he was to be "executed by the sword; his body shall be laid on the wheel, and his head set on a stake, because he has been rebaptized and perseveres in that baptism." This martyrdom led Simons to action. Until 1536 he continued to be a priest, and then after this experience he resigned. As he began his independent ministry the Anabaptists were divided and greatly discouraged. Menno turned the scale in favor of purity and peace. He was responsible for founding churches across the whole of Northern Europe from France to Russia. His position enforced strict standards of morals, repressed all tendencies toward fanaticism, gradually molded his followers into the mild, peaceful and moral people that the Mennonites have ever since been. Menno Simons was an illuminous writer, and established a printing press which secured wide circulations of his writings in the Dutch language. He died in 1559.

(2) Menno Simons Followers: These people grasped the fundamental idea of the spiritual constitution of the church, though they did not reach the full truth as Baptists understand it. They baptized only those who gave evidence of regeneration but they looked upon affusion as sufficient, and thus did not require immersion.

Their growth was due to the change of the name from the Anabaptists to the term Mennonites. To say "Anabaptist" then was almost the same thing as saying "mad dog".

The Netherlands favored a much greater measure of religious liberty. The Mennonites were "mild, peaceable and law abiding" and they gained toleration other Baptist bodies failed to enjoy. With the independence of the Netherlands came religious freedom.

The Mennonites were formally recognized in 1672 and this is the reason why the Mennonites alone of all Anabaptist parties of the Reformation, survive to the present day.

Though most Mennonites practiced affusion, there were some exceptions. The congregation of Rynsburg adopted immersion in 1619, a fact that had important relations to the Baptists of England.

The "button controversy" is of interest here. The traditional method of fastening the gowns of women and coats of men had been by hooks and eyes. When buttons were invented the use of them was considered to be the badge of the

carnal mind. The two parties, "high" who favored discipline far beyond the Scriptures and the, "low" favored a more rational means of Christian liberty. The "high" people, of course, refused the use of buttons, and the "low" people accepted this and rejected the necessity of wearing hooks and eyes.

Menno Simons followers appeared in England in the 16th century. They fled there to escape persecution but found the same thing in England.

Henry VIII of England gave testimony of their beliefs. He charged them with heresy. He said they taught that "infants ought not to be baptized, it is not lawful for a Christian man to bear office or rule in the commonwealth, every manner of death with the time and hour thereof is so certainly prescribed, appointed and determined to every man by God that neither any prince by his sword can alter it or any man by his willfulness prevent or change it."

In 1589, Dr. Some charged the Anabaptists with holding the following deadly errors: "That the ministers of the Gospel ought to be maintained by the voluntary contributions of the people, that the civil power has no right to make an imposed ecclesiastical law, that the people ought to have the right of choosing their own ministers, that the high commiccion court was an anti-Christian usurpation, and that those who are qualified to preach ought not to be hindered by the civil power."

- (3) Similarity to the Present Day Baptists and Anabaptists. The Mennonites believed in the competency of the soul for God; they attested that the church should have a spiritual and regenerated membership; they believed in complete separation of church and state; and most of them baptized by immersion all whom they received.

III. The Evangelizing Church.

1. The English Baptists. With the first decade of the 17th century we are on solid ground in Baptist history. From 1641 at the latest, Baptist doctrines and practices have been the same in all essential features that they are today.

- (1) First English Baptist church composed of Englishmen. This church was organized in Holland. Rev. John Smyth, born sometime between 1550 and 1555 after graduation from Cambridge, distinguished himself as an opponent to the separatists, but he soon adopted their views, and became pastor of an independent church. To escape persecution, Smyth fled to Holland where he became acquainted with the theology of Arminius, and it is reasonable to believe that he learned the Mennonite theory of the nature of the church. There he rejected infant baptism and accepted the position that the church was for the regenerate only.

Smyth and Thomas Helways with 36 others, founded in 1608 the first Baptist church composed of Englishman, that is known to have existed. Smyth was a "Se-Baptist" which means he baptised himself. "He held that the real apostolic succession is a succession not of outward ordinances and visible organizations but of true faith and practice." Soon after, this group issued a Confession of Faith which was Arminian in theology. Later Smyth left the Anabaptist views and joined the Mennonites. Smyth died in 1612. Before this his church had disappeared in Holland. The important thing to remember about this group is that this was the first church ever organized composed of Englishmen.

- a. The First Baptist Church composed of Englishmen on English soil. Persecution became less severe in England so Thomas Helways and others returned to London in about 1611. These people were Arminian in theology. They were General Baptists because they held to general atonement for all men. By 1626 there were 11 churches in England and by 1644 the number had increased to 47.
 - b. Particular Baptists. William Kiffin tells of the origin of the church which was constituted on the 12th of September, 1633. There was a congregation of Protestant dissenters of Independent Persuasion in England who believed that baptism was not to be administered to infants. They gathered together and formed a congregation on the above mentioned date. By 1644 there were 7 Particular Baptist Churches in England. Their confession of faith, according to Vedder, p.142, describes baptism as "an ordinance of the New Testament given by Christ, to be dispensed upon persons professing faith or that are made disciples who upon profession of faith ought to be baptized and afterwards to partake of the Lord's Supper." Vedder points out here that, "Indeed, in the whole history of Baptists not a confession can be produced that advocates the invitation or admission to the Lord's Table of the unbaptized."
- (2) The Struggle for Liberty. During the early years of the reign of Charles I, the Baptists fared hard. From the meeting of the Long Parliament which was the 5th Parliament summoned by Charles I when all tyrannical and illegal acts of the past 11 years were reversed. It secured itself by stating it could not be dismissed except by its own consent. They had peace and increased rapidly in number. The Parliament met November 3, 1640. A large number of Baptists served in Parliament and were highly favored by Cromwell. Westminster preachers rebuked Parliament in sermons and pamphlets from suffering Baptists to increase. General toleration by the Presbyterians was not advocated. Richard Baxter said, "I abhor unlimited liberty and toleration of all, and think myself easily able to prove the wickedness of it."

(3) Leaders among English Baptists.

- a. William Kiffin. Kiffin was born in London in 1616. In 1625, he was deprived of both of his parents by the plague. He united with a Congregational Church but in 1638 he joined the Baptist church. From 1639-1701 he was pastor of the Devonshire Square Baptist Church in London. Kiffin was a merchant and did a great deal of trading with Holland. He was considered to be one of the wealthiest men in London. Because of his position he was hated by the Stuarts. Lord Arlington told Kiffin he was on every list of disaffected persons whose freedom was regarded as dangerous to the Government. He was arrested for alleged conspiracy against the King but the charges were found false and he was released. For over one-half century he was the first man in the Baptist denomination. It is interesting to note that the credit of Kiffins stood higher than the financial promises of kings. King Charles, as far as heartlessness would permit, was his friend.

There were 10 Baptist men and two women arrested as dissenters. They were sentenced to three months imprisonment. At the end of that time, they were brought before a court and commanded to conform to the Episcopal church, or leave the country immediately. They refused to do either. They were sentenced to death according to law. Kiffin interceded and saved their lives.

Kiffin gave large sums of money to the poor and contributed to feeble churches, and persecuted ministers. Once he was asked by the king to loan 40,000 pounds to which he replied with great tact and dignity, that he could not possibly make so great a loan, but would gladly give the king 10,000 pounds. He afterward confided in a friend that in so doing he had saved 30,000 pounds.

The only treatise he ever published was a paper in favor of "close communion." One of Kiffin's sons was poisoned by a Catholic priest in Venice because he had been too free in denouncing his religion.

Kiffin died Nov. 29, 1701 when the sword of William III had terrified the last Stuart.

b. Hansend Knolleys (1599-1691)

Knolleys was born in Chalkwell, Lancaster in 1599. He graduated from the University of Cambridge. In June 1629, he was ordained a bishop of Peterborough. For more than 40 years he preached three or four sermons a week. He was a highly gifted man. At 35, he became disturbed about his connections with the church of England. Two years later he was arrested for preaching the Gospel and was put in prison. His jailor permitted his escape because of Knolleys' kindness to him.

He started on a trip to New England by way of London. He waited so long in the trip that his money gave out. He was nearly 12 weeks in passage and the provisions became nearly unfit for use. He arrived in Boston and was denounced as an Anti-Nomian. He became pastor of a church in Dover, New Hampshire. There was a bitter controversy between two sections of his church over baptizing children and receiving members.

In 1641 he removed to Long Island because Dover was annexed to Massachusetts and persecution became a threat.

He was summoned to England by his aged father and commenced to preach in the churches. His congregation commonly reached to as many as a thousand. For this success he was summoned by the authorities and told to preach no more. In 1645, he was formally ordained as pastor of a Baptist church in London. He was in prison frequently for breaking the laws against worship of dissenters. In his 84th year he was in jail six months.

Knolleys was a strong Calvinist, a decided Baptist, and was found a friend of every true Christian. He was a man of great learning in the ancient languages. During his lifetime he wrote 11 works. One was a grammar of Latin, Greek and Hebrew languages. He died in London, Sept. 19, 1691 at the age of 93.

c. John Bunyan (1628-1688)

Bunyan was born in Ulstow England in 1628. He was a profane and dissolute youth. On one occasion a man took his place as a sentinel on duty and was shot. This brought conviction to him. At 25 years of age had an experience of Grace which completely transformed his life. In 1655 he was immersed by Rev. John Gifford. Two years later he became a Baptist and entered the

ministry. He was in prison for preaching the Gospel from 1660-1672, and remained in prison during that time, writing the Pilgrim's Progress. Next to the Bible this has been the guide and solace of troubled souls. It has had 50 editions and has been translated into every language of Europe.

After Bunyan's release from prison, 3000 people gathered to hear him preach. He delivered a message to them before breakfast. Dr. John Owen said he would relinquish all of his learning for the tinkers preaching abilities.

On a journey of mercy, exposure brought sickness to Bunyan and he died August 12, 1688. His church now, we are told, is of the Congregational denomination.

d. John Gill.

Gill was born November 23, 1697. His father was a Baptist with membership in a Union Church composed of Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists. He eventually withdrew with others and founded a Particular Baptist church.

John early showed ability in acquiring knowledge. Before he was 11 years of age he was a pupil in grammar school. By this time he had read the principle Latin classics and made such progress in Greek that he became an object of wonder and admiration to several ministers.

He was deprived of an education because his parents took him out of a school which insisted he attend prayers of the Angelican church. He then studied the more industriously.

At 12 years of age he heard a sermon by his fathers pastor on "Adam, where art thou?" and he was converted and saved. On the first day of Nov., 1716, he was baptized and received into the fellowship of the church at Kettering. He was called to be pastor of a church at Horsleydown Southwark, London. He was ordained March 22, 1720. His church was filled. The conversions under his ministry were numerous. For over 51 years he was a power in London. He became a religious authority over America and Great Britain. He was a Hebrew scholar who compared favorably with Dr. John Lightfoot.

His "Body of Divinity" published in 1769 sweeps away Arminian teaching, declares the doctrine of eternal and personal election, teaches particular redemption, teaches resistless grace in redemption and declares the final doom of sin and Satan.

Dr. Gill's commentary is the most valuable exposition of the Old and New Testament ever published. It was republished in Philadelphia by a Presbyterian elder in 1811. Gill was one of the first contributors to Rhode Island College, now Brown University. He died October 14, 1771.

- e. Other men who should be considered as outstanding English Baptists are Andrew Fuller, William Carey, Robert Hall and Charles Spurgeon.

(4) Contributions of English Baptists.

- a. They early developed (1650) and utilized the associations. "In America it was for 150 years before the coming of the state convention, the chief dependence of the Baptist people for fellowship and mutual edification." Burroughs, p. 47.
- b. Singing of hymns were early developed in England.
- c. Development of a sane Biblical theology came from England. Andrew Fuller advocated a milder Calvinism than either Gill or the General Baptists. He declared the atonement was general and inclusive in its particular effects. Our obligation, said he, was to offer Christ's salvation to all men alike. His views, somewhat modified, have been generally adopted by the Baptists in England and America.
- d. The English Baptists inaugurated the modern foreign mission movement under the direction of Carey and Fuller.

2. The American Baptists.

(1) Baptists in the American Colonies.

a. New England.

Roger Williams. Williams was born in 1607 and received a degree from Cambridge in 1627. He came to Boston in 1631 to escape persecution by Archbishop Laud. Williams was banished from the colony because of his views on the separation of the church and state. The following resolution was passed concerning him. "Whereas Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the Church of Salem, hath broached and developed new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates." Vedder, p. 289. He saw the inconsistency of the New England theocracy, where church and state so interblended, that there was a danger of both being lost. In 1638, Williams founded the Rhode Island colony which guaranteed religious liberty. Roger Williams was baptized by Ezekial Holliman in 1639. Williams then baptized Holliman and 10 others but later withdrew because he doubted the validity of his baptism.

Providence Church, 1639. This church, founded by Roger Williams, was split into two factions. The Arminian Six Principle Baptists led by Wickendon, Brown and Dexter and the Calvinistic group led by Olney which rejected the laying on of hands before baptism. This church disbanded about 1720. President James Manning of Rhode Island College persuaded the majority of the congregation to adopt a Calvinistic confession. The Arminians left. This is regarded as the oldest Baptist church in America.

Newport Church. The Newport church in Rhode Island was organized in 1638. Thus, claim is made that it is the oldest church, but the records go back to about 1648. It was founded by Dr. John Clarke, an immigrant from England.

Massachusetts Baptists. This church was organized in Boston in 1665. It was not the first church in Massachusetts, for a Welch church, pastored by John Myles emigrated bodily about 1662. It settled eventually in Swansea in 1667. This church has had uninterrupted existence to this day and has been strongly Calvinistic.

Treatment of Baptists in New England. Particularly between 1642 and 1649, the New England Baptists were hailed before the Salem court for refusal to baptize their infants. Thomas Painter of Kingham was whipped in 1644. Henry Dunster, the first president of Harvard, was compelled to resign his office in 1654, after 12 years of service, because he accepted Baptist views and refused to remain silent about baptism. His employers refused to let him stay in the house he had built as the president's home even though he only asked for permission to remain there for six months. In 1657 he faced two court trials because he would not baptize a daughter born on December 27, 1656. He died February 27, 1659, five years after his removal.

Obadiah Holmes was whipped and imprisoned in Boston for having preached against infant baptism to some Baptists in Lynn, Massachusetts in 1651.

Thomas Gould, a friend of Dunster refused in 1655 to present an infant for baptism and was admonished by Charlestown elders. He persisted in his position and a Baptist Church was organized in his house on May 28, 1665. Shortly after its organization the members were summoned before the court and ordered to "desist from such their meeting and irreligious practices as they would Answer the contrary at their peril." Vedder, p. 299. Because they were not the desisting kind, nearly all of them were, at one time or another, and several more than once, imprisoned or fined, or both. Gould was the severest sufferer. His health was broken and he died in October, 1675.

The state church in Massachusetts persecuted the Baptists because of a view-point held from the days of Constantine who united the church and the state. It was believed that religion could not stand without the support of the state and it was also taught that the states could not be built without the support of religion.

Baptist people in New England patiently bore their persecution though they steadfastly opposed a State church. It is reported that many of them would close their eyes and turn their backs or otherwise show disapproval when infants were baptized. Because the New England Baptists could not accept membership in the state church they were denied, consequently, the privilege of citizenship. They were not permitted to vote nor could they have a voice of any kind in the government, while at the same time they were taxed to support the government. The leaders of the American revolution could stoutly affirm that "taxation without representation is tyranny" but they did not believe this applied to the Baptists.

In 1691 a new charter was given by William & Mary which consolidated Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay into Massachusetts. The charter issued stated that there would be "liberty of conscience to all Christians, except Papists."

b. Middle States.

New York. The first Baptist minister to labor in New York City, so far as is known was Rev. William Wickenden of Providence who came in 1656. He was

fined and imprisoned for preaching and since he was too poor to pay fines, he was released and finally banished from the colony.

William Rhodes, a Baptist minister from Rhode Island, began to preach and baptize converts at Oyster Bay, Long Island, about 1700. By 1724 a church had been organized. Robert Feeke was ordained pastor of the church.

In 1711, Rev. Valentine Wightman began to preach in New York City. Nicholas Evers, a wealthy brewer, in whose house the meetings were held was baptized in 1714. Evers became pastor and at the same time continued his business. Persecutions, discouragements and internal dissensions weakened the church, so, soon after 1730 the church became extinct.

Pennsylvania.

Philadelphia was one of the most important and influential of the early Baptist centers. The first church was founded in Philadelphia in 1689. The members of this church were connected with the Lower Dublin church until 1746. Lower Dublin, in 1688, had 12 members at the beginning. Its first pastor was Elias Keach, son of the English Benjamin Keach.

New Jersey.

Religious liberty drew Baptists as early as 1660 to New Jersey. The first church was organized in 1688. It was composed mainly of those who had fled from persecution in New York and other colonies. All the New Jersey churches - Piscatawy (1689), Cohansey (1690), Cape May (1712), Hopewell (1715) - were in fellowship with the Philadelphia group.

Origin of the Philadelphia Association. Almost from their origin, the Philadelphia churches began to hold "general meetings." These meetings were, first of all, annual gatherings, then they were semi-annual, meeting in May and September. The meetings were devotional and evangelistic. In 1707 the meeting became an organized body with five churches. The adoption of a Calvinistic confession of faith in 1742 was a turning point in the history of American Baptists. "Pretty much everything good in our history, from 1700 to 1850, may be traced to its initiative in active cooperation."

c. The South.

In 1714 Baptists from England settled in the Southeastern part of Virginia. Baptists were persecuted severely in this state because the Episcopal church was the State church but they thrived from the first, in spite of it. In spite of exceptional liberty in Maryland, but two churches had been founded prior to 1772. Even today Maryland is the weakest Baptist state. Traces of Baptists were found in North Carolina as early as 1695 but the oldest church can be dated only to 1727.

d. Influence of Baptists of this period.

This period supported the American Revolution. "Their preachers became Chaplains and their men joined the armies and their women supported the sacred cause with heroic sacrifices. Unfailing loyalty became known even to the British soldiers and in consequence their meeting houses were usually destroyed or confiscated when the enemy entered conquered territory." Burroughs, p. 63.

Baptists helped to secure freedom in the constitution. "When the fate of the new constitution hung in the balance its destiny seemed to depend on Massachusetts and Virginia. In both of these states, the Baptist people held the balance of power." "In the Massachusetts convention, James Manning, the President of Rhode Island College, afterwards Brown University, through the weight of his great influence in favor of the constitution, carried with him several Baptist preachers, who were members of the convention, and the approval of the constitution was carried by a majority of 19 states." Burroughs, p. 65. J. S. Barbour has the following statement to make concerning Baptist influence in the constitution. "The credit of adopting the constitution of the United States properly belongs to a Baptist clergyman formerly of Virginia, by the name of Leland, and he reached his conclusion in this way. He said if Madison had not been in the convention, the constitution would not have been ratified by that state, and as the approval of nine states was required to give effect to this instrument and as Virginia was the 9th state, if it had been rejected by her, the constitution would have failed and that it was by Elder Leland's influence that Madison was elected to the convention." Burroughs, p. 65.

- (2) The Period of Expansion. During this time, there were three strongly marked characteristics. (1) a great increase in missionary fervor; (2) gradual inception of vast missionary enterprises, and (3) an unexampled rapidity of growth in both numbers and spiritual power.

As eddies in these great currents we find several controversies caused by sectional and doctrinal differences that at times threatened the very existence of the denomination.

As civil liberty came, men saw the shame and tyranny of religious persecution. Virginia led the way and other states followed.

Lyman Beecher thought that "the bottom had dropped out of things" when his state no longer compelled his unwilling Baptist neighbors to contribute to his support.

When persecution was removed the Baptist churches grew rapidly. When colonization extended over the Alleghanies, the missionary zeal kept step with it. There were churches in Tennessee as early as 1765. By 1790 there were 18 churches and 889 members. By 1782 Baptist churches were founded in Kentucky and by 1790, 42 churches were there with 3095 members.

Baptists were among the first to enter Ohio as settlers and religious workers. A church was organized at Columbia in 1790. This town is located near Cincinnati. The Miami Association was organized in 1797. In Illinois, the Baptists came from Virginia and settled in 1786. The first church formed in 1796 at New Design, St. Clair County, Illinois.

(3) The Days of Controversy.

- a. The Alexander Campbell Controversy. Campbell was born in Ireland, the son of a Presbyterian minister. His father came to this country and sought affiliation with the Presbyterian Synod of Pittsburgh. He arrived in this land about 1807. Campbell was educated in the University of Glasgow. He was a greatly gifted man and a natural born debater. He was a great figure at this time since

educated men and leaders were scarce. Campbell began to feel that creeds were devices. He advocated that the only creed was the Bible. He was ordained January 1, 1812. When his first child was born, he faced the problem of baptism, whereupon his father, his wife and he himself were baptized by a Baptist minister near Washington, Pennsylvania.

The Brush Run church of which Campbells' were members withdrew from the Presbyterian Synod and became Baptists in 1813. They applied for membership in a Baptist association in Pennsylvania and in spite of Campbells' independence and stubbornness, the church was received.

The followers of Alexander Campbell, called the Church of Christ, had the following distinctive teachings:

1. Baptism is a saving ordinance without which none can be assured of salvation.
 2. Prayer for sinners is not needed and has no efficacy.
 3. Faith is a mere mental assent to certain great historical facts.
- b. The Hardshell Secession. The Hardshells are the anti-mission or anti-effort people. The movement began with a triennial convention in 1814, when "The General Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions" was formed. The object of this convention was to direct "the energies of the whole denomination in one sacred effort for sending the good tidings of salvation to the heathen and to nations destitute of pure gospel light." As the name suggests, it met once in every three years.

The opposition to this movement called "Primitive" or "Old School" Baptists, opposed any missionary effort. The conditions were favorable to this movement. (1) There was a lack of trained and efficient leaders. (2) The organization of the Triennial Convention had not gone far enough to guide and support the general missionary program. (3) Alexander Campbell opposed calls and claims for gifts of money in the churches. He opposed the payment of salaries to pastors. His influence helped the Harshells in their opposition in giving money for missions and missionaries. (4) Ignorance, prejudice and covetousness constituted a sufficient basis and cause for the opposition which was so widely encountered. By 1840 the separation of the Harshells from the Regular Baptists was complete.

- c. The Slavery Question. When the Triennial Convention met in 1844, the following, carefully worded, resolution was adopted: "Resolved, that in co-operating together as members in this convention in the work of foreign missions, we disclaim all sanctions either expressed or implied, whether of slavery or anti-slavery; but as individuals we are free to express and to promote elsewhere our views on these subjects in a Christian manner and spirit."

The Southern body of Baptists asked the Executive Board of the Convention what it would do about appointment of missionaries who held slaves, and its reply was the following: "If any one who should offer himself for a missionary, having slaves should insist on retaining them as his property, we could not appoint him. One

thing is certain, we can never be a party to an arrangement which would imply approbation of slavery."

In the light of this statement the Southern Baptists withdrew. They met in Augusta, Georgia in May, 1845 and established a separate convention.

The Northern Baptist convention, however, was not organized until 1907, Burroughs states, "The people of the two conventions constitute one denomination."

"The Methodists came to grief over the case of a slave-owning bishop in Georgia whose second wife added several household slaves to his estate. In 1857, the Presbyterians, North and South, parted company. The secession of the Southern churches, in fact, foreshadowed the secession of the Southern states. First, the churches split, then the political parties split, and then the Union split." (The American Pageant, p. 330.)

- d. Anti-Masonry Controversy. This controversy took place particularly in the middle states between 1826-1840. William Morgan, once a mason, published a book exposing the secrets of the order. He suddenly disappeared in 1840 and was believed to have been dealt with by the masons. As a result great opposition arose against the masons. In a great number of Baptist churches the majority opposed secret societies and in many cases the minority was disciplined. A few flourishing churches were crippled or even went out of existence. The growth of all was retarded. The question has been asked whether a church has a right to discipline a person on a matter which is personal. The answer is, of course, that a local church has a right in the light of what the Bible teaches to set their own standards and expect the members to abide by these standards. The controversy between the masons and the anti-masons is still going on, though not to such a degree as it did in the early days.
- e. The Bible Society Controversy. The American Bible Society was founded in 1816. In August of 1835 the American Baptists presented to the American Bible Society an application for money to aid in the printing of a Bengali version of the Scriptures, prepared by William Yates, a Baptist missionary in Calcutta. After months of discussion, \$5000. was appropriated to the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions. In a resolution dated March 25, 1836 only such versions should be encouraged "as conform in the principles of the translation of the common English version at least so far as that all the religious denominations represented in this Society can consistently use and circulate said versions in their several schools and communities." The Baptist Foreign Missionary Board declined the funds. In Philadelphia, in 1837, the Baptists organized the American and Foreign Bible Society.
- f. Millerism. In 1833 William Miller, a member of the Baptist Church in Low Hampton, New York, a man with a limited education but an eloquent speaker, announced the end of the world to come to pass in 1843. He later changed it to October 22, 1844. The Financial Panic of 1839 encouraged Miller's teaching. When the manifestation did not come, many of his followers forsook him. On January 29, 1845, a Council voted to sever relations with Miller and his Baptist church at Low Hampton, New York, due, of course, to his false teaching.

- (4) The Period of Evangelism and Education. Baptists have always believed that they should "catch fish" (Mark 1:17) and "feed sheep" (John 21:16). They have insisted upon individualism, or the competency of the soul to receive or reject salvation, and a regenerated church membership which involves the competency of Jesus to save. Therefore they are dependent upon evangelism for existence and growth. Burroughs has well said that, "Whenever the Baptist people cease to win new converts, they begin to perish from the face of the earth." At the close of the Revolution there were 100,000 Baptists. Now there are nine million of them.