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J. Harvey Daily’s CHURCH HISTORY

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PREFACE

Believing that I see the great need of a brief history of the church of Christ so arranged that it can be readily referred to by any who desire to know the most important and the most interesting events, and feeling sure that such a work will tend to confirm the people of God in his promises, I have written this book, and now send it out with the humble hope that my labors in preparing it will not be in vain.

Only an elementary work

While it is to history only a kind of elementary work, yet the reader will find its pages replete with historic facts so arranged as to form a connected outline of the history of the people now called Baptists.

Mosheim’s testimony

Mosheim admits that the true origins of this people is “hidden in the depths of antiquity and is, of consequence, extremely difficult to be ascertained. Their trail is not lost in these dark depths, as Mosheim claims, but may be traced out into the unclouded light of the first century, connecting with the clear footsteps of Jesus and his apostles, thus verifying the promise that the “gates of hell” should not prevail against the church of Christ.

The witnesses of Jesus have contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and have maintained that faith with martyr courage, unfurling the sacred standard of truth in all ages and keeping the ordinances as they were delivered to them. There can be no more interesting or profitable employment than tracing out the history of such a people.

A history of the Primitive Baptist Church

I have given but few points in history relative to the various orders that have risen since the days of the apostles, and have confined my writing principally to the history of the Primitive Baptist Church. It is a self evident fact that any order whose origin is of a recent date, or of any date subsequent to the apostolic day, cannot be the church of Christ. It is absurd to suppose, as some have, that the true church of Christ must be traced through the line of Catholicism. Such a claim is made by those only who have no other line to follow.

Brevity the aim

I have been brief and have not written all that could be said on the different subjects, but those who want to make a thorough study of the different events can find it in other histories. I have meant to put before our people a work that would be useful to those who want to know the history of our people. For this purpose I have endeavored to make the reference as convenient as possible.

May the God of all grace bestow his all important blessings upon these pages that through them many may be confirmed in his promises and his precious name be glorified.

J. Harvey Daily

CHAPTER 1 From the setting up of the church to Constantine the Great.

Section 1

The beginning of the church.

“In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.” God had ever had a people from Abel unto this period, but was now to set up a church, which, being providentially supported by him, should ever exist, continuing in the paths marked out by her Lord and Master.

John the Baptist

John the Baptist came in the wilderness crying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” and the people from all over Judea and the country around came to John to be baptized. John required them to come confessing their sins, which is the custom of his people unto this day.

The name Baptist

On account of this new practice of baptizing his converts (those who believed his report) John was called “The Baptist.” From that day until now this practice has been preserved and those who have been persistent in practicing it have ever borne that name.

Jesus’ baptism

When the time was fulfilled Jesus of Nazareth came and went down into the water with John and was baptized like unto his blessed burial and resurrection. From that on he began to preach his own everlasting gospel and gave examples as patterns for his people. This order of baptism has been handed down through an unbroken chain of baptized believers. The book of inspiration has likewise been kept by the power of God through them.

The Lord’s Supper and Washing Feet

After an instruction of three years the blessed Savior gave to his disciples the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper and kneeling down and washing their feet he laid before them the important lesson of fidelity to their Lord and King, and humility toward one another.

The Commission

After his ascension Jesus appeared to his disciples and blessed them with power to proclaim him as the way, and many from all nations were made to believe, and the seed was scattered throughout the world. Jesus appeared unto his disciples saying, "All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Thus his true ministers, those loyal to Jesus, have ever gone preaching this everlasting gospel, trusting in the blessed promise of his supporting grace.

Section 2

Spreading the gospel and destruction of Jerusalem

The first Christian church founded by the Apostles was that of Jerusalem, the model of all those which were afterwards erected during the first century. Though the people had not entirely forsaken the Jewish worship, yet they assembled often and were instructed by the Apostles and Elders, prayed together, celebrated the holy supper in remembrance of Christ, and at the conclusion of these meetings manifested great love for each other.

Spread the churches

The Apostles went from Jerusalem to many nations preaching the gospel, and in a short time planted a vast number of churches among the Gentiles. Several of these are mentioned in the New Testament, but these are only a small number of the churches formed by the Apostles.

Early persecution

While the Apostles and their disciples were spreading the gospel into all the world, the Jews continually opposed them. The innocence and virtue of the Christians, and spotless purity of their doctrine, did not protect them, but they were persecuted in many ways. They were opposed not only by the Jewish religion, but also by the idolatrous people of all nations. Notwithstanding this opposition they were so wonderfully blessed by the Spirit of God that they had followers in every city and town.

Nero's cruel persecution

Nero, who had become emperor over the Roman Empire, after having the city of Rome set on fire, accused the Christian people with the crime. He persecuted a large

number of Christians in as cruel a manner as possible. He wrapped some in combustible garments and set fire to them at night.

Death of Paul and Peter

St. Paul and St. Peter were among the number on whom this persecution fell. It is generally held that St. Peter was crucified at Rome. Paul, being a Roman, could not be crucified, and so was beheaded about three miles from Rome. John, the Revelator, was banished to the lonely island of Patmos.

Destruction of Jerusalem

About this time the great city of Jerusalem was destroyed. "A contest had some time existed between the Jews and Syrians about Caesarea, which stood on the confines of both kingdoms, and was claimed by both alike."—Orchard's History.

The decision of Nero in favor of the Syrians enraged the Jews and they butchered some of the Roman and Syrian army. Then the Roman and Syrian army besieged the city of Jerusalem five months. During this time the Jews suffered many horrible things, the city of Jerusalem was overthrown and eleven hundred thousand lives lost and ninety thousand persons led into captivity.

Period of peace

After the destruction of the Jewish capital, the Christian church enjoyed several years of outward peace. During this period, however, many professed the Christian religion and advocated unscriptural doctrines which caused much disturbance and distress in the church.

SECTION 3 Second Century

Renewal of persecution

Christianity went on suffering and spreading during the second century. The emperors as well as the people of the empire were bitter in their feelings against the Christians. The saying was frequently used, "If God does not send rain, lay it to the Christians." At every famine, drought or pestilence they would cry, "To the lions with the Christians."

Ignatius devoured

At this time, when Trajan the Emperor was at Antioch, that city was visited by a dreadful earthquake. Trajan was injured with many others. Many were killed by the walls of the buildings falling in. Ignatius was pastor of the church at Antioch and was condemned and “was accordingly seized, and by the emperor’s order sent from Antioch to Rome, where he was exposed to the fury of wild beasts in the theatre and by them devoured.”

Ignatius, in his letter to Polycarp, another faithful soldier of the cross, says, “Let your baptism continue as a shield, faith as a helmet, love as a spear.”

Justin Martyr

Justin Martyr, a devoted Christian, who suffered death at the hands of the enemy at Rome in the year of 166, said, referring to baptism, “For they are washed in the name of God the Father and the Lord of the Universe, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.”

Irenaeus

Irenaeus became bishop or pastor of Lyons in France in 177, and in his writings said, “He came to save all persons by himself, all I say, who are regenerated by him unto God, infants, and children, and boys and young men, and old men.” In this we have two points, the necessity of regeneration, and the salvation of all for whom Jesus came.

Hagenback, a German Pedit-baptist, says that Irenaeus in treating on baptism “merely expresses the beautiful idea that Jesus was Redeemer in every stage of life, and for every stage of life; but that does not say that he became Redeemer for children by water baptism.”

Form of church government

It is admitted by all historians that the churches of the second century were united only by the tie of faith and charity or love. That every church formed within itself a separate and independent body and that the Christian world was not yet connected by any supreme authority or legislative assembly. They were Baptist churches, because they were composed of baptized members, and were independent of each other in government.

Alexandrian school

Orchard says, "The first and most fatal of all events to the primitive religion was the setting up of a Christian Academy at Alexandria." Christians had been reproached with illiteracy, and this school was set up in 170 to get rid of the scandal. It seemed that the Alexandrian school was a nursery in which nearly all the evils were germinated, the practice of which finally led to Popery. This should be an important lesson to the church of today. In trying to prepare boys for baptism by teaching, the church became filled with men who never had the love of God implanted in their hearts. If this practice corrupted the church in the second century, what will it do in the twentieth?

Baptism by immersion

On until this time there is not a single trace of infant baptism, or baptism in any way but by immersion. Those who were capable of professing faith in Christ were baptized and became church members. Cramp says, "We have searched the Christian writings of the first two centuries and have not yet found infant baptism."

SECTION 4 Third Century

Peace followed by corruption

At the beginning of this century the persecution was light and Christianity became very popular. Many professed religion who proved not to be sincere. They loved the world and fame more than the truth, and they began teaching false doctrines, leading off many of the professors after them. Much corruption crept in which finally divided the church

In Greece at this time the churches united in mutual unions for the management of spiritual affairs. This led to positions of distinction and many of the so called ministers of the gospel used every device to gain the ascendant positions. The ministers who were learned in philosophy were received by the masses and abundance of wealth was conferred on them.

Mr. Orchard says, "While the interests of religion retained their scriptural character, all were upon equality and each society possessed its government within itself; so that no one church originally can claim our attention more than another. The churches during this early period stood perfectly free of Rome and at after periods refused her communion. As churches rose into importance, contentions about offices were frequent, and tumults ensued; but having no secular aid, their rage against each other spent itself in reproaches and often subsided into apathy. The disappointed, the disaffected, the oppressed, the injured, with the pious, had only to retire from the scene of strife, and they were safe."

Decius persecution

In 249 Decius who became Emperor, required all to embrace the pagan or idolatrous worship. One writer says, “The gates of hell were once more opened, and merciless executions were let loose upon the defenseless church and deluged the earth with blood.”

Chandler says, “Many were publicly whipped, drawn by the heels through the streets of cities, racked until every bone of their bodies were disjointed, had their teeth beaten out, their noses, hands and ears cut off, sharp pointed spears run under their nails, were tortured with melted lead thrown on their naked bodies, had their eyes dug out, their limbs cut off, and destroyed by every method malice could devise.”

Apostasy

Many who had been so energetic in the Christian religion forsook it and fell down to the gods of the pagans. Nearly all of the aspiring Christians forsook the church, but the true Christian people endured persecution. True followers of the Lamb were never driven from their religion by persecution and never will be. The persecution lasted about two years, and those who had forsaken the church during the trouble now wanted back, and reinstated to their former positions.

Novation

They were generally readmitted, but Novation, a very learned and upright Elder in the church at Rome, opposed the new ways and maintained that the church should be a “company of saints,” and should be separate from the world.

The first division in the church

Cornelius, another Elder in the church at Rome, was in favor of the readmission of their unworthy members, and he was chosen pastor of this church in March, 251, by the majority of the church. Novation and the minority, who believed in strict church discipline, withdrew from the majority and established a separate church of their own and would not receive members from such loose societies except by rebaptizing them. Following this division the Baptists over the Empire followed the act of Novation and separated themselves from the new ideas of church discipline, and thus went by the name of Novationists.

The church in Africa: Tertullian

We now proceed to examine the churches in Africa and their progress through this century. In 202, one Tertullian was a lawyer at Carthage. He became a Christian and joined the church in that city. He afterwards was elected an Elder and became a zealous defender of the Christian religion. In 215 it seems that Christians were very numerous in that city, and many congregations in other parts. By this time the new doctrines, originated in the Alexandrian school in the previous century, had taken hold among the churches in this region, which Tertullian thought had caused the churches to grow too fast, consequently they had become filled with members who knew nothing about Christianity, only as they had been taught it by science of education. Tertullian thought to remedy this evil by a strict adherence to discipline, and contended for receiving members by baptism in all cases, unless they could produce satisfactory evidence that they had been baptized by churches in communion with that of Carthage.

Question about infant baptism

“About this time the idea was first originated (which is but too common in the nineteenth century) that to believe certain points taught in the scriptures was all that was necessary to prepare a person for baptism, and the belief that baptism possessed a saving influence. This practice led to the practice of catechizing children, so as to prepare them for baptism.. This was done for the purpose of fulfilling the injunctions of John and the Savior, that faith is a prerequisite to baptism. These notions having become common in many churches, and especially in the East, gave rise to the question propounded to Tertullian by Quintilla, a rich lady who lived in Phrygia, whether infants might be baptized on the condition they ask to be baptized and produce sponsors; which Tertullian goes on to answer very exquisitely, and shows his opposition to minor baptism, and the blending of regeneration with it.” Owens’ History.

Council of bishops

About the year of 260 sixty-six bishops came together to consider the subject of baptizing infants, and agreed that “the grace of God should be withheld from no son of man, that a child might be kissed with a kiss of Christian charity as a brother so soon as born, that Elisha prayed to God, and stretched himself on the infant, that the eighth day was observed in the Jewish circumcision, a type going before, which type ceased when the substance came. If sinners can have baptism, how much sooner infants, who being newly born, have no sin, save being descending from Adam. This therefore, dear brethren, was our opinion in this assembly, that it is not for us to hinder any person from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful and kind and affectionate to all, which rule, as it holds for all, so we think it more especially to be observed in reference to infants and persons newly baptized.”

Tertullian in his writings said, “That men’s minds were hardened against baptism, because the person (to be baptized) was brought down into the water without pomp, without any new ornament or sumptuous preparation, and dipped at the pronouncing of a few words.”

Severus’ persecution

We now come to treat of Christianity in France during the third century. Orchard says, “The city of Lyons was again visited with the vengeance of the Emperor. Severus in 202, treated the Christians of this city with the greatest cruelty. Such was the excess of his barbarity that the rivers were colored with human blood, and the public places of the city were filled with the dead bodies of professors. It is recorded of this church that, since its formation, it has been watered with the blood of twenty thousand martyrs. The severities led Christians to reside on the borders of kingdoms, and in recesses of mountains, and it is probable the Pyrenees and Alps afforded some of those persecuted people an asylum from local irritation. It is more than probable that Piedmont afforded shelter to some of these Lyonese, since it is recorded that Christians in the valleys, during the second century, did profess and practice the baptizing of believers, which accords with the views of Ireneus and others recorded during the early ages.”

Galetes first child baptized

During the first three centuries, Christian congregations all over the East subsisted in separate independent bodies, unsupported by government and consequently without any secular power over one another. All this time they were Baptist churches; and though all the Fathers of the first four ages down to Jerome were of Greece, Syria, and Africa, and though they gave great numbers of histories of the baptism of adults, yet there is not one record of the baptism of a child till the year 370, when Galetes, the dying son of the Emperor Valens was baptized by order of a monarch who swore he would not be contradicted.”

Summary

John the Baptist, by the authority given him from on high, instituted the mode of baptism which Christ confirmed and which has been preserved unto this day.

Jesus lived and taught the true way for three years after which time he blessed his disciples with sufficient spiritual power to mark out the way and to spread the glorious truth throughout the world. Much opposition was met by the Christians, but the opposition kept them more closely to the truth. In these perilous times, Peter and Paul were killed by the Romans and many of the saints suffered martyrdom.

After the destruction of the Jewish nation, Christianity became popular and then became corrupt by false teachings which finally resulted in a division. Many persecutions were endured, however, for three hundred years and the truth soldiers of the cross were willing to die for their faith. Until near the end of the third century the church continued as a unit in faith and practice, continuing as independent bodies in church government. By this time false doctrines arose, such as baptismal regeneration, denying that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost were one, and for this reason, baptizing in the name of each one separately, getting all to join the church they could, whether changed in heart or not. Novation and many of like faith denounced all of this and thus became known as Novations.

It is said by historians that the Novations forsook the path (would to God all would forsake the path of error) and taught that baptism was not in order to regeneration or salvation, but a mere confession of faith.

CHAPTER 2 From Constantine the Great to The end of the Thirteenth Century

SECTION 1 The Fourth Century

In the beginning of the fourth century the church had outward peace, but the pagan priests persuaded the Emperor, Diocletian, in 303, to pass an edict to pull down the church houses and burn their books and writings, and to persuade them to forsake their religion. They banished them from the country, kept them in caves and in many ways, for two years, punished all who would persist in the Christian religion.

In 306, however, Constantine the Great was made Emperor, who was decidedly in favor of Christianity. For a short time he gave religious freedom, but soon undertook to unite church and state, and then to control religion.

12,000 added to the church

“He gave Bishop Sylvester his mansion for a baptistery, and conferred freedom on those slaves who would receive baptism. He offered a reward to others, on their embracing Christianity, so that 12,000 men, besides women and minors, were baptized in one year. In 319 he relieved the clergy of taxes, and in 320 issued an edict against the Donatists. He abolished heathen superstition, and erected splendid churches, richly adorned with paintings and images, bearing striking resemblance to heathen temples. Places were erected for baptizing, some over running water, while others were supplied by pipes. In the middle of the building was the bath, which was

very large. Distinct apartments were provided for men and women, as are found in some meeting houses at this day.” Orchard’s History.

A council called

There arose a dispute among the ambitious churches over the divinity of Christ, and Constantine, in attempting to settle the dispute, called a council which decided the dispute and also established a creed. The Bishops and Elders of this council were sent home in great honors, and the Emperor tried to get all who professed Christianity to accept their decision. This council decided on the time for the celebration of Easter, and Sunday was the day set apart for rest under the Christian religion.

Sunday a day of rest

“In remembrance of Christ’s resurrection the ancient church, like the Apostolic church, observed the first day of the week (or Sunday) as a day of sacred joy and thanksgiving, of public worship of God, and of collections for the poor; but neither the ancient nor the Apostolic church ever called that day the sabbath. In the year 321 Constantine appointed the first day of the week, which he called ‘the venerable day of the sun,’ in reference both to the Roman sun-god, Apollo, and to Christ, the Son of Righteousness, as in some respects a day of rest. He forbade the sitting of courts, and military exercises, and all secular labor in towns on that day; but allowed agricultural labor in the country.

The soldier’s prayer

As the fourth century is the source whence were derived the principal Greek and Roman Catholic liturgies or forms of prayer, so Constantine enjoined the following form of prayer for all his Pagan and Christian soldiers. On Sunday in the open field, at a given signal, they were required, with military exactness, to raise their eyes and hands toward Heaven and say these words: “Thee above all we acknowledge as God; Thee we reverence as King; to Thee we call as our helper; to Thee we owe our victories; by Thee we have obtained the mastery of our enemies; to Thee we give thanks for benefits already received; from Thee we hope for benefits to come. We all fall at Thy feet, and fervently beg that Thou wouldest preserve to us our Emperor Constantine and his divinely beloved sons in long life, healthful and victorious.” The co-called prayer, as may be seen, could be addressed to one god as well as another.” Hassell’s History.

The Donatists opposed by Catholics

As the Catholic church grew corrupt, the body that withdrew from them the last of the third century, continued strict in doctrine and discipline, and thus met the opposition of the nation. This strict church was known as Novations, Donatists, Montanists, and many other names, because they refused to receive the Catholics without baptism. We have found the Novations in the third century, and in 303, the able man, Donatus of Carthage, bitterly opposed the loose discipline and false doctrines of the church. The example of Donatus and his party was followed all over North Africa. In Constantine's first edict in 312 professing to give universal religious freedom, he especially excepted the Donatists. From 316 to 321 they were treated as rebels resisting the authority of the Emperor and many of them suffered death and banishment. Donatus said, "What has the Emperor to do with the church?" Crispin, a French historian, says the Donatists and Novations were together in the following things; First, for purity of members, by asserting that none ought to be admitted into the church but such as are visibly true believers, and real saints; second, for purity of church discipline; third, for independence of each church; fourth, they baptized again those whose first baptism they had reason to doubt. They were consequently called rebaptizers and anabaptists.

Novations in Rome

The Novations, or the church in Italy, had been very successful and were planted all over the Roman empire. Although strict in discipline and sound in doctrine, yet they had great influence, and historians say they were instrumental in getting their religious freedom in 313. In the restraint in 331, however, they were in distress and suffered much. Their books were sought for, and they were forbidden to assemble for worship, and many of their church buildings were destroyed, because they would not adhere to the Catholic church.

In 375 the Emperor Valens embraced the Arian Creed. He closed the Novation churches, banished their ministers, and probably would have carried his measures to greater extremes had not his zeal been moderated by a pious man named Marcion.

The church in liberty

"In 383 Theodosius assembled a synod with a view to establishing unity among churches. On the Novationists stating their views of discipline, the Emperor, says Socrates, 'wondered at their consent and harmony touching the faith.' He passed a law, securing to them liberty, civil and religious, all their property, with all churches of the same faith and practice. While these pure churches were in peace and concord, it is stated that discord prevailed in the national churches.

“At the conclusion of this fourth century, the Novationists had three, if not four churches, in Constantinople; they had also churches in Nice, Nocomedia, and Cotivens, in Phrygia, all of them large and extensive bodies, besides which they were numerous in the Western Empire.”—Orchard’s History.

SECTION 2 Fifth Century

In 412 Cyril was pastor of the Catholic church in Alexandria, and one of his first acts was to shut up the churches of the Novatianists, and in Rome, Innocent followed his example. Before this the Christians were persecuted by the Pagans and Emperors, but in 413 the clergy of the Catholic church assumed this authority.

Novations and Donatists opposed by Catholics

After the Catholic church had been supported by the Emperor, they felt that they must unite the entire church on one doctrine and practice, but the Novations and Donatists would not agree with them on infant baptism, and rebaptized all who wanted to come to them from the other churches. The spirit of persecution was raised against all those who rebaptized Catholics. A council met and ordered all the rebaptizers, and those rebaptized by them, to be put to death, and Emperor Theodosius and Honorius passed a law supporting this order.

Under this law many of the Novations in Italy were put to death and the Donatians in Africa were deprived of many of their privileges, but the officers would not enforce the law in Africa.

Novations retreat from Italy

These combined modes of oppression led the faithful followers of Christ to abandon the cities in Italy, and seek retreats and more private settlements in the country, being robbed of their churches. In 455 a council met at Arles and at Lyons, in which the views of the Novatianists on predestination were controverted and by which name they were stigmatized.

Christians in Pyrenees Mountains

By the severe opposition met by the Christians, they were compelled to seek a secreted place of worship, and many went to the Pyrenees Mountains, where they were not bothered with the Catholic party.

I will now quote a little description of the mountains given by Orchard. “The south of France is separated from the north of Spain by the Pyrenees Mountains, which extend

from the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic; that is about two hundred miles, and in breadth, in several places, more than a hundred. The surface is, as may be supposed, most wonderfully diversified. Hills rise upon hills, mountains over mountains, some bare of verdure, others covered with forests of huge cork trees, oak, beech, chestnut and evergreens. * * * * Numerous flocks of sheep and goats enliven the hills, while the herdsmen and manufacturers of wool inhabit the valleys. To these mountains, in all periods, the sons of freedom fled. Persons holding sentiments in accordance with the true Waldenses were very numerous in Spain; they were thousands and tens of thousands.

Albigenses

“At an early period,” Dr. Allix says, “the churches of the north of Spain were always united with those of the south of France.” The religious views of these people are now known by the term Albigenses, from their residing at or near Albi, a city about forty-two miles northeast of Toulouse.

Baptists in Africa

The Donatists, or Baptists, in Africa, enjoyed religious freedom at this period. Africa was ruled by a people called Barbarians, and “their conduct was more mild toward the followers of the Lamb than the Catholics had ever been.” But in 534 the Emperor regained Africa and deprived the Christians of their freedom, and not long after this history loses trace of this people in this country, but some seem to think they went to the mountains, as did the Novations.

SECTION 3 Sixth Century

Baptists called Anabaptists

The Baptists in France and Spain, from their conduct were called Anabaptists. They baptized Pagans and Jews and reimmersed all Catholics, and Robinson says that they baptized none without a personal profession of faith.

In 524 in a Catholic council held at Lerida, it was decided that those who had been baptized by the Baptists in the name of the Trinity should be admitted into the Catholic church without rebaptizing them.

Waldenses

The Baptist people that inhabited the Pyrenees Mountains were afterward called *Waldenses*, by which name we trace them for many years. They were given this name from a valley which they inhabited, known as Piedmont.

From the Latin word *vallis*, the low Dutch *valleye*, the Provincial *vaux vaudois*, the ecclesiastical *Valdeness*, *Waldenses* and *Waldenese*. The words imply valleys, inhabitants of valleys, and no more. It happened that the inhabitants of the valleys of the Pyrenees did not profess the Catholic faith; it fell out also that the inhabitants of the valleys about the Alps did not embrace it.

The name Waldenses

It happened, moreover, in the ninth century, that one Valdo, a friend and counsellor of Berengarius, and a man of eminence, who had many followers, did not approve of the papal discipline and doctrine; and it came to pass that about one hundred and thirty years after that a rich merchant of Lyons, who was called Valdus, or Waldo, openly disavowed the Roman Catholic religion, supported many to teach the doctrine believed in the valleys, and became the instrument of the conversion of great numbers; all these people were called *Waldenses*. This view is supported by the authority of their own historians, Pierre Gilles, Perrin, Leger, Sir. S. Moreland, and Dr. Allix.

Waldenses same as Novations

“Paul Perrin asserts that the Waldenses were, time out of mind, in Italy and Dalmatia, and were the offspring of the Novatianists, who were persecuted and driven from Rome A.D. 413, and who for purity in communion were called Puritans. The name of *Paterines* was given to the Waldenses, who for the most part held the same opinions, and therefore have been taken from the same class of people, who continued till the Reformation under the name of *Paterines* or *Waldenses*.

There was no difference in religious views between the Albigenses and Waldenses. All these people inhabited the south of France and were called in general Albigenses, and in doctrine and manners were not distinct from the Waldenses.

Bossuet, bishop of Meaux, says as to the Vaudois, there were a species of Donatists. They formed their churches of only good men. They all without distinction, if they were reputed good people, preached and administered the ordinances. The Waldenses were in religious sentiment substantially the same as the Paulicians, Paterines, Puritans and Albigenses,”—Owens History.

It is evident that the Christians were numerous throughout the entire Empire, but because of the opposition of the Catholic party, and other religions of the world, we have no accurate record of their proceedings during this century, other than that they were persecuted because they rejected the Catholic baptism, and refused to baptize infants into their fellowship. It is thought that during this period they went to other nations and formed colonies and thus planted their churches in all the Eastern hemisphere. The pure gospel was yet maintained throughout the providence of God and many were made to die for the Truth.

SECTION 4 Seventh Century

It is asserted by historians that but few of the clergy of the Catholic church could compose a discourse in the seventh century. The corruption of the church increased and many things were practiced that were both unscriptural and immoral. They still had a hatred for the Christians, because of their strict discipline and doctrine. Baptism by immersion, however, was still universally practiced, even by the Catholics, as all historians agree, and many fine places were built for this purpose.

The doctrine of the Waldenses

At this time the Waldenses believed in the doctrine of the Trinity, and baptized believers, refused to baptize infants, and were reproached with the term re-baptizers, or anabaptists. Paul Perrin asserts that the Waldenses were the offspring of the Novatianists, who for purity in communion were called Puritans.

Paulicians

In Greece the Baptist people were known by the name of Paulicians, because they contended for the writings of Paul and John, and tried to conform their lives to that of Paul's.

Greeks against the Paulicians

The Greeks were engaged, during this century, in the most bitter and virulent controversy with the Paulicians of Armenia, and the adjacent countries, whom they considered as a branch of the Manichean sect. This dispute was carried to the greatest height under the reigns of Constans, Constantine Pogonatus, and Justinian II, and the Greeks were not only armed with arguments, but were also aided by the force of military legions, and the terror of penal laws. A certain person, whose name was Constantine, revived under the reign of Constans the drooping faction of the Paulicians, now ready to expire, and propagated with great success its "pestilential doctrines." But this is not the place to enlarge upon the tenets and history of this sect,

whose origin is attributed to Paul and John, two brothers who revived and modified the doctrines of Manes.

Constantine

Let us next give an account of Constantine and his success as an able minister of this people in the year 660. A stranger, who was a deacon, who had been taken a prisoner, but was on his return to his home, passed through Mananalis, and was entertained by Constantine.

Constantine's New Testament

From this passing stranger Constantine (Mosheim's History) received the precious gift of the New Testament in its original language, which, even at this early period, was so concealed from the vulgar that Peter Siculus, to whom we owe most of our information on the history of the Paulicians, tells us, the first scruples of a Catholic, when he was advised to read the Bible was, "It is not lawful for us profane persons to read those sacred writings, but for the priests only."

Ignorance of the Catholics

Indeed, the gross ignorance which pervaded Europe at that time rendered the generality of the people incapable of reading that or any other book; but even those of the laity, who could read, were dissuaded by their religious guides from meddling with the Bible. Constantine, however, made the best use of the deacon's present—he studied his New Testament, with unwearied assiduity, and more particularly the writings of the Apostle Paul, from which he at length endeavored to deduce a system of doctrine and worship. "He investigated the creed of primitive Christianity," says Gibbon, "and whatever might be the success, a Protestant reader will applaud the spirit of the inquiry." The knowledge of which Constantine himself was, under divine blessing, enabled to attain, he gladly communicated to others around him, and a Christian church was collected. In a little time several individuals arose among them qualified for the work of the ministry, and several other churches were collected, throughout Armenia and Cappadocia,"— Jones History.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

In these churches of the Paulicians, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper they held to be peculiar to the communion of the faithful; *I.e.*, to be restricted to believers.

The Paulicians, or Bogomilians, baptized or re-baptized adults by immersion, as the Manichaens and all other denominations did in the East, upon which mode there was no dispute in the Grecian church.

“It is evident,” says Mosheim, “they rejected the baptism of infants. They were not charged with an error concerning baptism.” “They, with the Manichaens, were anabaptists, or rejectors of infant baptism,” says Dr. allix, “and were consequently often reproached with that term.”

Scriptural in doctrine and practice

“They were simply scriptural in the uses of the sacrament,” says Milner. They were orthodox in the doctrine of the Trinity; they know of no other Mediator than the Lord Jesus Christ.”—Orchard’s History.

SECTION 5 Eighth Century

Persecution of Paulicians

At the beginning of the eighth century the Paulicians were put to death and these people who desired to adhere to the Bible were persecuted in every nation. It is evident, though, that the gates of hell could not prevail against the church in any part of the world. The humble yet bold people would attract the attention of the enemy often in every nation, but were kept in obscurity only when the enemy saw fit to persecute.

Peace in Pyrenees

In the Pyrenees Mountains they were not molested, and they had large churches, but were not molested by the kings because of their behavior.

Disturbed by Moors

In 714 the Moors entered Spain and conquered that kingdom. It is said that the Moors were rather in favor of liberty, and even religious freedom could be procured for a small sum; yet these Baptists disdained to purchase a native right and so fled to the mountain home. These people also took France in 721, but in 732 Charles Martel succeeded in recovering his kingdom. To what extent the Baptist churches realized injury from these barbarians we do not learn, but they settled in the French province near the foot of the Pyrenees—Gibbon’s History, 6, 22.

So these persecuted people would go from one place to another.

How wonderful are the dealings of God in controlling the universe, although he suffered nations to be governed by wicked men, and while one nation was influenced by anti-Christ, God gave the Christians protection in another, so that their increase was gradual but sure.

Doctrine and practice in 750

We are informed by Bonizo, bishop of Sutrium, that the Paterines arose, or became more conspicuous during Stephen II's pontificate, 750.

The public religion of the Paterines consisted of nothing but social prayer, reading and expounding the gospels, baptism once, and the Lord's supper as often as convenient. Italy was full of such Christians, which bore various names, from various causes. They said a Christian church should consist of only good people; a church had no power to frame any constitutions, *I. e.*, make laws; it was not right to take oaths; it was not lawful to kill mankind, nor should he be delivered up to the officers of justice to be converted; faith alone could save a man; the benefits of society belonged to all its members; the church ought not to persecute; the law of Moses was no rule for Christians. The Catholics of those times baptized by immersion; the Paterines, therefore, in all their branches made no complaint of the action of baptism, but when they were examined they objected vehemently against the baptism of infants, and condemned it as an error.—Orchard's History.

SECTION 6 Ninth Century

The Dark Ages

We are now entering into the period in history known as the dark ages, through which it is difficult to give the true succession of this unbroken chain of true and faithful soldiers of the cross, but we have abundant evidence that they continued in a steadfast way to contend for the same precious truth we have been tracing by the authority of all acknowledged historians.

Protected by Claude

We see that the Catholic church at Rome during this time continued to grow corrupt, and their elders desired to rule the world, thus putting all opposition down, if necessary by death. In 817, however, the Emperor of France, being desirous to check the power of the Roman Church, promoted Claude to the See of Turin.

This man was a great reformer, which afforded great protection for the Waldenses and others of like faith. He was born in Spain, and grew to be a bold defender of the right.

Mr. Robinson said, “He bore a noble testimony against the prevailing errors of his time, and was undoubtedly a most reputable character.”

The doctrine of Claude

Let it be observed, then, that throughout the whole of his writings, he maintains that “Jesus Christ is the alone head of the church.” This, the reader will perceive, struck immediately at the root of the first principles of popery—the vicarious office of the bishop of Rome. He utterly discards the doctrine of human worthiness in the article of justification in such a manner as overthrows all the subtle distinctions of Papists on the subject. He pronounces anathemas against traditions in matters of religion, and thus drew the attention of men to the word of God and that alone, as the ground of a Christian’s faith, without the deeds of the law—the doctrine which Luther, seven hundred years afterwards, so ably contended for, and which so excessively provoked the advocates of the church of Rome. He contended that the church was subject to error, and denied that prayers for the dead can be of any good to those that have demanded them; while he lashed, in the severest manner, the superstition and idolatry which everywhere abounded under the countenance and authority of the See of Rome.

The results of his teachings

“By his preaching and valuable writings, he disseminated the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, and although the seed were as a grain of mustard seed cast into the earth, the glorious effects ultimately produced by it justify the truth of our Lord’s parable, that when it is grown up, it produceth a tree, whose branches are so ramified and extended that the birds of the air come and lodge therein. His doctrine grew exceedingly. The valleys of Piedmont were in time filled with his disciples, and while midnight darkness sat enthroned over almost every portion of the globe, the Waldenses, which is only another name for the inhabitants of these valleys, preserved the gospel among them in its native purity, and rejoiced in its glorious light.”—Jones’ History.

God’s providence

This man being in sentiment with the Baptist people, we can see the purpose of God plainly manifested in sending such a man to preside over the Catholic interests at Piedmont, in the mountain retreat of the Pyrenees.

The effects of his teaching were felt during the next two centuries and the church enjoyed to some degree a freedom of speech.

The efforts of Claude to restore the Catholic Church to apostolic practice and doctrine affected the entire Roman province. The dispute that consequently affected the Catholics gave opportunity to the Baptists of Italy and other places to spread their doctrine through the world.

The people were known by the term Paterines, a name, says Mezeray, from the glory they took in suffering patiently for the truth.

SECTION 7 Tenth Century

Baptists in every province

In the tenth century the Paulicians, being persecuted, emigrated from Bulgaria and spread themselves abroad through every province of Europe. While the Catholic Church was in a deep sleep, the Baptist people, known by many names, were contending for the same doctrine and practice.

Worthy of the name

When we consider their object in diffusing truths and holding up the lamp for guidance of others, their self-denials and trials, we cannot withhold from them the praise due to their names. The boon such a people proved to the nations sitting in darkness and death will be made evident in the day of decision. They rest from their labors, and their work will follow them. Many of the Bulgarian Baptists lived single, and adopted an itinerant life, purposely to serve the cause of their Redeemer. It was in the country of the Albigeois, in the southern provinces of France, remarks Gibbon, where the Paulicians mostly took root. These people were known by different names in various provinces.

Views of Baptists

The French Paulicians or Albigenses were plainly of the same order in church affairs as the Bulgarians. They have no bishops; the candidates were prepared for baptism by instruction and stated feasts. They viewed baptism as adding no benefit to children. They received members into their churches after baptism by prayer with imposition of hands and the kiss of charity.

They did not allow of the Catholic baptism of infants, but baptized those again who went over from that church to their community.

Summary of doctrine of the French Baptists

Let us give a summary of their doctrine, as given by Mosheim:

Their particular tenets may be reduced to the following heads; First, they rejected baptism of infants, as a ceremony that was in no respect essential to salvation. Second, they rejected, for the same reason, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Third, they denied that the churches were endowed with a greater degree of sanctity than private houses, or that they were more adapted to the worship of God than any other place. Fourth, they affirmed that the altar was to be considered in no other light than as heaps of stones, and were therefore unworthy of any marks of veneration or regard. Fifth, they disapproved the use of incense and consecrated oil in services of a religious nature. Sixth, they looked upon the use of bells in the churches as an intolerable superstition. Seventh, they denied that the establishment of bishops, presbyters, deacons, and other ecclesiastical dignitaries was of divine institution, and went so far as to maintain that the appointment of stated ministers in the church was entirely unnecessary. Eighth, they affirmed that the institution of funeral rites was an effect of sacerdotal avarice, and that it was a matter of indifference whether the dead were buried in the churches or in the fields.

Penance and masses denounced

Ninth, they looked upon the voluntary punishment called penance, so generally practiced in this century, as unprofitable and absurd. Tenth, they denied that the sins of departed saints could be in any measure atoned for by the celebration of masses, the distribution of alms to the poor, or a vicarious penance; and they, consequently treated the doctrine of purgatory as a ridiculous fable. Eleventh, they considered (Catholic ceremonial) marriage as a pernicious institution, and absurdly condemned, without distinction, all connubial bonds. Twelfth, they looked upon a certain sort of veneration and worship as due to the apostles and martyrs, from which, however, they excluded such as were only confessors, in which class they comprehended the saints who had not suffered death for the cause of Christ, and whose bodies, in their esteem, had nothing more sacred than any other human carcass.

Instrumental music considered superstitious and unlawful

Thirteenth, they declared the use of instrumental music in the churches and other religious assemblies, superstitious and unlawful. Fourteenth, they denied that the cross on which Christ suffered was in any respect more sacred than any other kind of wood, and in consequence refused to pay to it the smallest degree of religious worship. Fifteenth, they not only refused all acts of adoration to the images of Christ, and of the saints, but were also for having them removed out of the churches. Sixteenth, they were shocked at the subordination and distinction that were established among the

clergy, and at the different degrees of authority conferred upon the different members of the sacred body.

Thus the truth in opposition to error was spread all over the inhabited world at that time.

Darkest page of church history

It is admitted, however, by all historians, that this is the darkest page of church history, but we can find the records of the true followers of the Lamb, both by the various names, and by their untiring efforts to restore truth. “Many efforts were made,” says Mosheim, “by Protestants, the witnesses of the truth by whom are meant such pious and judicious Christians as adhered to the pure religion of the gospel, and remained uncorrupted amidst superstitions. It was principally in Italy and France that this heroic piety was exhibited.”—Orchard’s History

SECTION 8 Eleventh Century

We enter upon the history of this century with more light upon the true teachings and practices of the church, as though the hand of bitter persecution was raised against them. The death of their brethren, and the prospect of themselves being martyred, could not affright them from the love of the truth, the work of righteousness, the exercise of faith, and the patience of hope. The persecution and accusations raised against them but gave sure marks of their continuing in the faith.

Council at Orleans

One of the first religious assemblies which the Paulicians had formed in Europe is said to have been discovered at Orleans in the year 1017, under the reign of Robert. Its principal numbers were twelve men eminently distinguished by their piety and learning, among whom Lisogius and Stephen held the first rank; and it was composed in general of a considerable number of citizens who were far from being of the lower order. A council held at Orleans used every exertion that could be devised to bring these people to a better mind, but all endeavors failed.

Thirteen Paulicians burnt alive

They adhered strenuously to their principles, and therefore were condemned to be burnt alive, which sentence was actually executed on thirteen of them. Afterwards the Puritans that came from France into Bulgaria were murdered without mercy. They held that baptism and the Lord’s supper possessed no virtue to justify. These clergymen, says Archbishop Usher, affirmed that there was no virtue capable of

sanctifying the soul in the Eucharist or in baptism. For preaching this doctrine, their enemies took liberty of charging them with denying baptism and the sacrament; which, taking it in its broad sense, was very far from being true. They denied the Eucharist before baptism, and that baptism conferred no grace, and denied that ordinance to children.—Orchard's History.

Synod at Toulous

We here quote from Mr. Orchard: "In 1019 a synod was held at Toulous, to consider the most effectual method to rid the province of the Albigenses; and though the whole sect was in 1022 said to have been burnt, yet the emigrants from Bulgaria, coming in colonies into France, kept the seed sown, and the churches recruited, and soon after the same class of people was found inhabiting Languedoc and Gascony."

Berengarius and Gundulphus

About the year 1035 two reformers made their appearance, Berengarius of France and Gundulphus in Italy.

Orchard says Berengarius, by his discourses, charmed the people, and drew after him vast numbers of disciples. Some men of learning united themselves with him, and spread his doctrines and views through France, Italy, Germany and other kingdoms. The effects of these reformers' preaching was not only the enlightening of the ignorant, but it gave encouragement to the Baptists to become more prominent in society. The alarm was great to Catholics. One of their prelates, Deodwin, Bishop of Seige, states that there is a report coming out of France, and gone through Germany, that Bruno, Bishop of Angiers, and Berengarius, Archdeacon of the same church, maintain that the host is not the Lord's body, and as far as in them lies overthrow the baptism of infants. Matthew, of Westminster, speaks of Berenger (Berengarius) as having corrupted all Italy. It means, says Dr. Allix, that his followers who were of the same stamp with the Paterines, kept to the primitive faith of the church, which it was the object of the Popes to remove them from, and in their opposing the Church of Rome, they were called heretics and corrupters, though this name and practice belonged rightly to the popish party.

His success was so great that old historians say that France, Italy, Germany, England, the Belgic countries, etc., were infected with his principles. No doubt thousands joined with him that had been strongly opposed to the church and party in power, but dared not avow it for fear of the persecution and punishments that were inflicted upon dissenters, but finding in Berengarius a bold defender of their faith, they took courage and came out from their state of obscurity, and publicly professed their disapprobation of the corruption of the Church of Rome, a community of malignants, the council of

vanity, and the seat of Satan. It is said that he was required by the Pope to renounce his errors and burn his writings, which he actually did, and yet he ceased not while he lived to write and speak in the same severe strain.”

Orchard’s statement

Orchard says of Gundulphus: “Having given some persons in his connection a portion of spiritual instruction, he sent them forth as inheritors to preach the gospel. Some of his followers were arrested in Flanders, and on their examination, they acknowledged they were followers of Gundulphus.

“They were charged,” says Dr. Allix, “with abhorring baptism, I.e., the Catholic baptism.” These disciples said in reply; “The law and discipline we have received of our Master will not appear contrary either to the gospel decrees or apostolic institutions, if carefully looked into. This discipline consists in leaving the world, in bridling carnal concupiscence, in providing a livelihood by the labor of our hands, in hurting nobody, and affording charity to all, etc. This is the sum of our justification to which the use of baptism can superadd nothing. But if any say that some sacrament lies hid in baptism, the force of it is taken off by three causes; First, because the reprobate life of ministers can afford no saving remedy to the persons baptized.” Second, because whatever sins are renounced at the font, are afterwards taken up again in life and practice. Third, because a strange will, a strange faith, and strange confessions, do not seem to belong to a little child, who neither wills nor runs, who knoweth nothing of faith, and is altogether ignorant of his own good and salvation, in whom there can be no desire of regeneration, and from whom no confession of faith can be expected.”

Baptists in Piedmont

In the valleys of Piedmont during the same time, while in the countries around them, the Baptists were persecuted for refusing to buy or sell under the mark of the beast, the Baptist people here had protection from the oppression of all nations, where they could hide from the face of the serpent. Their enemies acknowledge they were very zealous, and that they never ceased from teaching night and day.

Their churches were divided into sixteen compartments, such as we call associations. The association of Milan is thought to have had about one thousand five hundred members in all.

SECTION 9 Twelfth Century

It is recorded that in the beginning of this century the Waldenses had spread their doctrine and influence all over Europe. They were often described nearly in the following language: If a man loves those that desire to love God and Jesus Christ; if he will neither curse, nor swear, nor lie, nor commit lewdness, nor kill, nor deceive his neighbor, nor avenge himself of his enemies, they presently say, he is a Vaudois—he deserves to be punished.

Articles of faith

In an article of faith the following is recorded by Mr. Jones that will be of interest to the readers: “We believe and firmly maintain all that is contained in the twelve articles of the symbol commonly called the Apostles’ Creed, and we regard as heretical whatsoever is inconsistent with the said twelve articles.

“We believe there is one God—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

“We acknowledge for sacred canonical Scriptures the books of the Holy Bible. (Here follow the title of each, exactly conformable to our received canons, but which it is deemed, on that account, quite unnecessary to particularize.)

“The books above mentioned teach us that there is one God, Almighty, unbounded in wisdom, and infinite in goodness, and who, in his goodness, has made all things. For he created Adam after his own image and likeness. But through the enmity of the devil and his own disobedience, Adam fell, sin entered into the world, and we became transgressors in and by Adam.

“That at the time appointed by the Father, Christ was born—a time when iniquity everywhere abounded, to make it manifest that it was not for the sake of any good in ourselves, for all were sinners, but that he who is true might display his grace and mercy upon us.

“That Christ is our life, and truth, and peace, and righteousness—our shepherd and advocate, our sacrifice and priest, who died for the salvation of all who should believe, and rose again for their justification.

“We also believe that after this life there are but two places—one for those that are saved, the other for the damned—which two we call paradise and hell, wholly denying that imaginary purgatory of anti-Christ invented in opposition to the truth.

“We acknowledge no sacraments (as by Divine appointment), but baptism and the Lord’s Supper.”

Peter de Bruis

About the same period Peter de Bruis became prominent as a bold defender of the truth. Mosheim gives the following account of this man:

“Peter de Bruis made laudable attempts to reform the abuses and to remove the superstitions that disfigured the beautiful simplicity of the gospel; but after having engaged in his cause a great number of followers, during a laborious ministry of twenty years, he was burned at St. Giles, in the year 1130, by an enraged populace, instigated by the clergy, whose traffic was in danger from the enterprising spirit of this reformer. The whole system of doctrine, which this unhappy martyr, whose zeal was not without a considerable mixture of fanaticism, taught to the Petrobrusians, his disciples, is not known; it is, however, certain that the five following tests made a part of his system: First, that no persons were to be baptized before they had the full use of their reason. Second, that it was idle superstition to build churches for the service of God, who will accept a sincere worship wherever it is offered, and that therefore such churches as had already been erected were to be destroyed. Third, that the crucifixes, as instruments of superstition, deserved the same fate. Fourth, that the real body and blood of Christ were not exhibited in the Eucharist, but were merely represented in that holy ordinance by figures and symbols. Fifth, and lastly, that the obligations, prayers, and good works of the living could in no respect be advantageous to the dead.”

Arnold of Brescia

Arnold of Brescia is another of the faithful ministers of this century. Arnold was an Italian by birth, but went to France early in life, and was made to love the ways of the Puritans. He received into his heart the light of the gospel. He returned to his former home and began his public ministry even on the streets.

He pointed his zeal at the wealth and luxury of the Roman clergy. The eloquence of Arnold aroused the inhabitants of Brescia. They revered him as the apostle of religious liberty, and rose in rebellion against the bishops. The church took an alarm at his bold attacks, and in a council he was condemned to perpetual silence. Arnold left Italy and found an asylum in the Swiss canton of Zurich. Here he began his system of reform, and succeeded for a time, but the influence of Bernard made it necessary for him to leave the canton.

Arnold's defense of truth

This bold man now hazarded the desperate experience of visiting Rome, and fixing the standard of rebellion in the very heart of the capitol. In this measure he succeeded,

so far as to occasion the change of the government, and the clergy experienced for ten years a reverse of fortune and a succession of insults from the people. The pontiff struggled hard, but in vain, to maintain his ascendancy. He at length sunk under the pressure of the calamity.

Successive pontiffs were unable to check his popularity. Eugenius III withdrew from Rome, and Arnold, taking advantage of his absence, impressed on the minds of the people the necessity of setting bounds to clerical authority, but the people, not being prepared for such liberty, carried their measures to the extreme, abused the clergy, burnt their property, and required all ecclesiastics to swear to the new constitution. "Arnold," says Gibbon, "presumed to quote the declaration of Christ, that his kingdom was not of this world. The abbots, the bishops, and the Pope himself must renounce their state, or their salvation." The people were brave, but ignorant of the nature, extent and advantages of a reformation.

Arnold's death

He was not devoid of discretion, he was protected by the nobles and the people, and his services to the cause of freedom, his eloquence thundered over the seven hills. He showed how strongly the clergy in vice had degenerated from the primitive times of the church. He confined the shepherd to the spiritual government of his flock.

In 1155 this noble champion was seized, crucified and burned. His ashes were thrown into the river. "The clergy triumphed in his death; with his ashes his sect was dispersed; his memory still lives in the minds of the Romans."

Peter Waldo

In 1160, whilst anarchy and confusion awfully prevailed in the Roman community, strife, rebellion and conflict between popes and emperors, cardinals, clergy and councils on the claims of contending pontiffs, a person was called by Divine grace to advocate the cause of truth.

Peter, an opulent merchant of Lyons, in translating from Latin into French the four gospels, perceived that the religion which was taught in the Roman church differed totally from that which was originally inculcated by Christ and his apostles. Struck with a pious zeal for religion, he abandoned the glaring difference and animated his mercantile vocation, distributed his riches among the poor and formed an association with other pious men. He adopted the sentiments of the Waldenses of Piedmont, and from them borrowed those reforming notions which he diffused successfully over the continent.

In 1165 he assumed the character of a public teacher in the city of Lyon. He maintained at his own expense several persons, who were employed to recite and expound to the people those translations of the scripture he had made, which proved of unspeakable service to the cause he espoused.

The rules of practice adopted by Peter of Lyons, or Peter Waldo, and his followers, were extremely severe. They took for their model, to regulate their moral discipline, Christ's sermon on the mount, which they interpreted and explained in the most literal and rigid manner, and consequently prohibited war, lawsuits, and all attempts towards acquisition of wealth; the infliction of capital punishments, self-defense against unjust violence, and oaths of all kinds.

Various names of Baptists

The followers of Waldo, like himself, renounced all worldly property and interest, making common stock with the poor of the church. From this circumstance the enemies termed them, "the poor of Lyons," and from the city where Waldo commenced his labors, they were named Lionists; but in general they were mixed with the Waldenses, their sentiments being the same, and were known in general by that name.

They are said to have been men of irreproachable lives. They were the pious of the earth. Their views of the ordinance were, says Reiner, "that the washing (immersion) given to children does no good." Dissenters were called by various names, as the poor of Lyons, Lionists, Paterines, Puritans, Arnoldists, Petrobrussians, Albigenses, Waldenses, etc., etc., different names expressive of one and the same class of Christians.

"However various their names, they may be," says Mezeray, "reduced to two, that is, the Albigenses and the Vaudois, and these two held almost the same opinions as those we called Calvinists." Their bards or pastors were every one of them heads of their churches, but they acted nothing without the consent of the people and clergy. Deacons expounded the gospels, distributed the Lord's Supper, baptized, and sometimes had the oversight of churches, visited the sick, and took care of the temporalities of the church—Orchard's History.

"Peter Waldo and his brethren were bitterly opposed by the Catholic party, and were finally made to flee for protection. Some went to the mountain home in the Pyrenees, and some to Germany. In the same year, a council was convened at Tours, at which all the bishops and priests in the country of Toulouse were strictly enjoined to take care, and to forbid, under pain of excommunication, every person from presuming to give reception, or the least assistance to the followers of this heresy; to have no dealings

with them in buying and selling, that thus, being deprived of the common necessities of life, they might be compelled to repent of the evils of their way.”

Thus they were compelled to leave this part of the country for refuge in other parts.

Section 10 Thirteenth Century

Jealousy of the Pope

The cruelty of the twelfth century was increased in this century. In 1200 the cities and towns were filled with the Baptists being protected by the lords, barons, viscounts and others of the French nobility. This awakened the jealousy of the Pope and different measures were taken to subdue them. In the fall of 1209 the monks preached up a crusade against the more northerly provinces of France. To stir up the nation, they opened to all volunteers the gates of paradise, with all its glory, without any reformation of life or manners.

Alice's Army

The army raised from these efforts was directed in the ensuing spring, 1210, by Alice, Simon de Montfort's wife. With this army a renewal of last year's cruelties commenced. All the inhabitants found were hung on gibbets. A hundred of the inhabitants of Brom had their eyes plucked out, and their noses cut off, and then were sent, under the guidance of a man with one eye spared, to inform the garrisons of other towns what fate awaited them. The destruction of property and life must have been very great, from the sanguinary character of those who managed these cruel measures.

Albigenses die for their faith

The most perfidious conduct was conspicuous in the leaders of the Catholic cause. Pope, bishops, legates, and officers of the army; whatever terms were submitted to availed nothing, when in the hands of their enemies. On the 22nd of July, the Crusaders took possession of the castle of Minerva. The Albigensian Christians were in the meantime assembled—the men in one house, the women in another, and there, on their knees, resigned to the waiting circumstances. A learned abbot preached to them, but they unanimously cried, “We have renounced the Church of Rome—we will have none of your faith; your labor is in vain, for neither death nor life will make us renounce the opinions we have embraced.”

An enormous pile of dry wood was prepared, and the abbot thus addressed the Albigenses, “Be converted to the Catholic faith, or ascend this pile,” but none of them

were shaken. They set fire to the wood, and brought them to the fire, but it required no violence to precipitate them into the flames. Thus more than one hundred and forty willing victims perished, after commending their souls to God. This sacrifice of human life under this crusade cannot be computed,”—Orchard’s History.

A time of great trial

“I have,” says Mr. Jones, “traced the total extermination of the Albigenses, and with it the extinction of the cause of reformation, so happily introduced in the twelfth century. The slaughter had been so prodigious, the massacre so universal, the terror so profound, and of so long duration, that the church of Rome appeared completely to have obtained her object. The churches were drowned in the blood of their members, or everywhere broken up or shattered. The public worship of the Albigenses had everywhere ceased. All teaching had become impossible.

Almost every pastor or elder had perished in a frightful manner, and the very small number of those who had succeeded in escaping the edge of the sword now sought an asylum in distant countries, and were enabled to avoid persecutions only by preserving the most studied silence respecting their opinions. The private members who had not perished by either fire or sword, or who had not withdrawn by flight from the scrutiny of the inquisition, knew that they could preserve their lives only by burying their creed in their bosoms. For them there were no more sermons, no more public prayers, no more ordinances of the Lord’s house—even their children were not to be acquainted for a time at least, with their sentiments.”

Raymond’s protection

Raymond was an earl of Toulouse, who spent his days in opposition to the church in power, but at his death his young son Raymond, feeling stung by the injustice done his father, banished the crusaders and inquisitors from the country of Toulouse, and continued to give the whole Catholic party trouble until about the middle of the century. But in 1243 Raymond was subdued and the land became quiet. Thus terminated all hopes of protection in Toulouse and the blood of one million inoffensive lives was spilled. It is asserted, however, that 800,000 faithful Christians yet remained in that part of France.

Liberty in Piedmont

Let us now turn our attention to the valleys of Piedmont. While the other countries were persecuting the saints, the dukes of this country protected them.

Mosheim says, "Their numbers became so formidable as to menace the Papal jurisdiction with a fatal overthrow. It has been observed, and the thing is worthy of notice, that a period when all the potentates of Europe were combined to second the intolerant measures of the court of Rome, the Dukes of Savoy, who were now become the most intolerant monarchs in Christendom, should have allowed their subjects the liberty of conscience, and protected them in the legitimate exercise of their civil and religious principles.

They were secluded in a considerable degree from general observation, and led a quiet and peaceful life, in all godliness and honesty. The princes and the governors of the country in which they lived were constantly receiving the most favorable reports of them, as a people simple in their manners, free from deceit and malice, upright in their dealings, loyal to their governors, and ever ready to yield them a cheerful obedience, and in everything that did not interfere with the claims of conscience; consequently, the governors constantly turned a deaf ear to the solicitations of priests and monks to disturb their tranquility.

The tolerant principles of the dukes, with the sequestered habitations of these people; the difficulty of approaching their territories; their little intercourse with the world, connected with their simplicity of manners, were favorable circumstances to all the pious of the glens of Piedmont, while it afforded nothing inviting to strangers or the polite and fashionable. Consequently these people appear to have enjoyed a considerable share of tranquility, while their brethren in the south of France were exposed to the fury of Papal vengeance."

Origin of Albigenses

It is natural to conclude, therefore, that when persecution raged against the church of France, the persecuted would seek protection where there is freedom.

These people were sound in doctrine and were faithful to their profession, even through the most severe persecution. It is asserted by Orchard, "First, it has been fully admitted by all creditable historians, that the Albigenses were originally called Puritans, from the Novatian, Paulician, and Paterine dissenters, whose sentiments have passed under review.

Secondly, the constitution of all those dissenting churches left on record, viz., Novatianists, Donatists, Paulicians, with the Albigenses, was strictly on the terms of "believers' baptism indispensable to church fellowship."

Thirdly, after Novatian, Donatus and Constantine appeared as reformers, Gundulphus, Arnold of Brescia, Berengues, Peter of Bruys, Henry of Toulous, and Peter Waldo, who

all equally renounced infant baptism, with those who were called after their names, which subject we shall refer in full section.

Fourthly, the productions of their pens, their creed, or confession of faith, the Noble Lesson, and What is Antichrist, are in accordance with Baptist views.”

Dr Wall records that the Lionists, or followers of Waldo, say that the washing given to children does no good.

Dr Allis says, “Baptism added nothing to justification, and afforded no benefit to children.”

Persecution in Italy

In Italy the Paterines were very numerous during this century, and it is said they kept up correspondence with other countries. They were bitterly opposed by the Catholic party, however, as they were in many other places. In 1224 a cruel decree was passed according to the desires of the Pope, denouncing all Puritans, Paterines, Arnoldites, etc., expressed in these terms, “We shall not suffer these wretches to live.” A second, third and fourth followed, all of the same cruel character. The edicts declared that all those Paterines to whom the bishops were disposed to show favor, were to have their tongues pulled out that they might not corrupt others by justifying themselves.

The new settlement

The extreme cruel opposition of both King and Pope caused many of these Baptists of Italy to go to the valleys of Piedmont with the Waldenses, but they continually increased in Italy, and they suggested the propriety of seeking a new territory. They obtained a district north of Italy, with terms of liberty. This new settlement prospered and their religious peculiarities awakened displeasure in the old inhabitants, but the landlords were pleased with their industry and afforded them protection. This colony increased from time to time by those who fled from the persecution raised against them in other countries.

Thus we find that the truth prevailed and the church was preserved in all parts of the world, as we have traced from the apostolic day to the end of the thirteenth century.

CHAPTER 3 WALDENSES

From their Origin to the end of the Seventeenth Century

We will now turn our attention to the Waldenses. At the beginning of the fourteenth century they had become so numerous that they were compelled to emigrate. Several of them went to the colony east of Italy, where arrangements were made for their enjoying civil and religious privileges. Many of them went to different parts of the known world in sufficient numbers to set up churches.

Liberty in New Colony

“For one hundred and thirty years after the destruction of the church in France, the Waldenses in these valleys experienced a tolerable portion of ease, and a respite from the severity of a general persecution; all which time they multiplied greatly, and were as a people whom the Lord had evidently blessed. They took deep root, they filled the land, they covered the hills with their shadow, and sent out their boughs unto the sea, and their branches unto the rivers,”—Orchard’s History.

Cruel persecution in the Piedmonts

In some parts of the country, however, the Waldenses were troubled by the inquisitors during this century, and especially at the close of it.

About the year 1400, the Catholic party disturbed the peace of the Waldenses in the valley of Pragela in Piedmont. The most outrageous attack was made in the winter, when the mountains were covered with snow and the inhabitants of these valleys were not looking for it, and were taken by surprise.

The inhuman enemies took possession of the caves and kept the people from their place of retreat. When the news came to the people they fled to one of the highest mountains in the Alps, with their wives and children. These inhuman servants of the Catholic party pursued them in their flight, and many were slain before they could reach the mountains. When night fell upon them they were hid from the enemy, but were exposed to cold, and when day revealed the facts many children were frozen in their cradles, and many mothers lay dead by their sides in the snow. During the night the enemy took what they could find that was valuable in the homes.

Many other inhuman persecutions followed, and though the King desired to protect this inoffensive people, yet the Catholic party had such power that these servants of Satan could not be checked, and the evil continued.

Pure life of the Waldenses

In 1480, Candius Scisselius, Archbishop of Turin, resided in the valleys; from his situation and office, he must have known something of these people. He says of the

Waldenses, “Their heresy excepted, they generally live a purer life than other Christians. They never swear, but by compulsion. They fulfill their promises with punctuality, and live, for the most part, in poverty; they profess to preserve the apostolic life and doctrine. They also profess it to be their desire to overcome only by the simplicity of faith, by purity of conscience, and integrity of life; not by philosophical niceties, and theological subtleties. In their lives and morals they are perfectly irreprehensible, and without reproach among men, addicting themselves with all their might to observe the commands of God. All sorts of people have repeatedly endeavored, but in vain, to root them out, for, even yet contrary to the opinion of all men, they still remain conquerors, or at least, wholly invincible.”—Jones History.

Innocent the Pontiff

In 1484, Innocent the Eighth was made Pope of Rome. This Pontiff follows the footprints of Innocent the Third, by issuing his bulls for the destruction of the Waldenses. “We have heard,” said the Pope, “and it is come to our knowledge, not without much displeasure, that certain sons of iniquity, followers of that abominable and pernicious sect of malignant men, called “the poor of Lyons,” or Waldenses, who have so long ago endeavored, in Piedmont and other places, to ensnare the sheep belonging to God,” etc.

Inhuman persecution

“An army raised by Albert, the Pope’s legate, and marched directly into the valley of Loyre. The inhabitants, apprized of their approach, fled to their caves at the tops of the mountains, carrying with them their children, and whatever valuables they possessed, as well as what was thought necessary for their support.

3000 perished

The lieutenant, finding the inhabitants all fled, and that not an individual appeared with whom he could converse, had considerable trouble in discovering their retreats; when, causing quantities of wood to be placed at the entrance of their caves, he ordered the same to be set on fire. The consequence of this inhuman conduct was, four hundred children were suffocated in their cradles, or in the arms of their dead mothers, while multitudes to avoid death by suffocation, or being committed to the flames, precipitated themselves headlong from their caverns upon the rocks below, when they were dashed to pieces; if any escaped death by the fall, they were immediately slaughtered by the brutal soldiers. It appears mor that three thousand men and women, belonging to the valley of Loyre, perished on this occasion.”—Orchard’s History.

The monk's confession

Desiring to put an end to heresy without so much bloodshed, and in fact seeing that even the shedding of blood did not put a stop to it, a monk was selected to instruct the people in the right way. The monk on his return said he had learned more Scripture than he had in his whole life, the few days he was conversing with the heretics. Others visited them, being sent by the Catholics, and came back with the same report.

“The first lesson the Waldenses teach those whom they bring over to their party,” says Reiner, “is, as to what kind of persons they disciples of Christ ought to be, and this they do by the doctrine of the evangelists and apostles; saying that those only are followers of the apostles, who imitate their manner of life.”

The customs of the Waldenses

The celebrated president and historian, Thuanus, says, ‘Their clothing is of sheep skins, they have no linen; they inhabit (1540-1590) seven villages; their houses are constructed of flint stone, having a flat roof covered with mud. In these they live with their cattle, separated, however, from them by a fence. They have also two caves set apart for particular purposes, in one of them they conceal their cattle, in the other themselves, when hunted by their enemies. They live on milk and venison, being, through constant practice, excellent marksmen.

Poor as they are, they are content, and live in a state of seclusion from the rest of mankind. One thing is very remarkable, that persons externally so savage and rude, should have so much moral cultivation. They know French sufficiently for the understanding of the Bible, and singing of Psalms. You can scarcely find a boy among them who cannot give an intelligent account of the faith which they profess. In this, indeed, they resemble their brethren of the other valleys. They pay tribute with good conscience, and the obligation of this duty is particularly noted in their confession of faith. If, by reason of the civil wars, they are prevented from doing this, they carefully set apart the sum, and at the first opportunity, pay it to the king's tax gatherers.” This man was a candid enemy.

Orchard says, “Calvin, who began in 1534 to preach the reforming doctrines, was found in his views more in accordance with the sentiments of the sacramentarians, or Anabaptists, than Luther. It does not appear that any great difference existed between the Anabaptists and Calvin's doctrinal views, but the principal points of discrepancy were on the churches constitution and discipline.”

A boy disputes with a monk

“An Observantine monk, preaching one day at Imola, told the people that it behooved them to purchase heaven by the merit of their good works. A boy who was present exclaimed, ‘That’s blasphemy, for the Bible tells us that Christ purchased heaven by his sufferings and death, and bestows it on us freely by his mercy.’ A dispute of considerable length ensued between the youth and the preacher. Provoked at the pertinent replies of his juvenile opponent, and at the favorable reception which the audience gave them, ‘Get you home, you young rascal!’ exclaimed the monk. ‘You are just come from the cradle, and will you take it upon you to judge the sacred things, which the most learned cannot explain?’ ‘Did you never read the words, ‘Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, God perfects praise?’ rejoined the youth; upon which the preacher quitted the pulpit in wrathful confusion, breathing out threatenings against the poor boy, who was instantly thrown into prison, ‘where he still lies,’ says the writer. Dec. 31, 1544. M’Crie’s History.

Confession of faith of 1554

We will now give an extract from a confession of faith put forth by the Waldenses in 1554. In Art. 4 they say, “We believe that there is one holy church, comprising the whole assembly of the elect and faithful, that have existed from the beginning of the world, and shall be to the end thereof.” Art. 7, “We believe in the ordinance of baptism; the water is the visible and external sign, which represents to us that which, by virtue of God’s invisible operation is within us, namely, the renovation of our minds, and the mortification of our members through the faith of Jesus Christ; and by this ordinance we are received into the holy congregation of God’s people, previously professing and declaring our faith and change of life.”—Jones’ History.

Confession of faith of 1655

Now we will quote a few articles from a Waldenses confession of faith of 1655, published in order to correct any false report that might be given by the enemies who were threatening persecution: “Art. 25. That the church is a company of the faithful, who, having been elected before the foundation of the world, and called with a holy calling come to unite themselves to follow the word of God, believing whatsoever he teacheth them and living in his fear. Art. 26. And that all the elect are upheld and preserved by the power of God in such sort that they all persevere in the faith unto the end, and remain united in the holy church, as so many living members thereof. Art. 29. That God hath ordained the sacrament of baptism to be a testimony of our adoption, and of our being cleansed from our sins by the blood of Christ, and renewed in holiness of life.”—Gilly’s Narr.

In 1685 the Pope would not tolerate one that opposed the Catholic Church to live in France or any other country. Fifteen days were allowed for these faithful ones to leave

the kingdoms. This caused millions to be banished from their native soil. In 1689, however, they were permitted to settle again at their old homes.

CHAPTER 4 BAPTISTS OF GERMANY

The same as the Waldenses, Novatians or Anabaptists

The wilds of Germany afforded a place of retreat for the persecuted Baptist people, and so many gathered in different parts that it is said that Baptist preachers could, during the ninth century, “pass through the whole German empire and lodge every night at the house of one of their friends.” It is very probable these traveling ministers were Paulicians or Paterines from Bulgaria or Italy. They were termed by Catholics Anabaptist preachers. Their sentiments of religion are learned, and their view of the ordinances proved, from their confession of faith, which asserts, ‘In the beginning of Christianity there were no baptizings of children, and their forefathers practiced no such things.’ and ‘we do from our hearts acknowledge that baptism is a washing which is performed with water, and doth hold out the washing of the soul from sin.’

“We shall now exhibit our claim to these pious Waldenses, so far as it respects the ordinance. We own their religious views are not fully known. They thought Christianity wanted no comment, but a pious walk; and they professed their belief of that by being baptized, and their love of Christ and one another by receiving the Lord’s Supper. Jacob Merning says that he had, in the German tongue a confession of faith of the Baptists, called Waldenses, which declared the absence of infant baptism in the early churches of these people, that their forefathers practiced no such thing, and that people of this faith and practice made a prodigious spread through Poland (yea Poland was filled with them), Lombardy, Germany and Holland. These people re-baptized such as joined their churches, as the Waldenses had done in early age; and although a law was made against the Picards for re-baptizing, yet they suffered burning in the hand and banishment rather than forgo what they considered their duty. Dr. Wall, who is a candid opponent, says the Beghards were also called Picards or Pighards. They spread themselves over the great territory of Upper Germany; they abominated popery; they chose their pastors from among married men; they mutually called one another brother and sister; they owned no other authority than the Scriptures; they slighted all the doctors, both ancient and modern; their ministers wore no other garments to celebrate communion; nor do they use any collection of prayers but the Lord’s Prayer; they believed or owned little or nothing of the sacraments of the Catholic Church; such as came over to their church must every one be baptized anew in mere water; they believe that the bread and wine do only, by some occult signs, represent the death of Christ—that the sacrament was instituted by Christ to no other purpose but to renew the memory of his passion, etc., etc. In this statement may

be discovered a family likeness of those churches in the south of France.”—Orchard’s History.

Kept by God

Many persecutions followed them from year to year, but through the providence of God we see that the church in its purity was likewise kept in Germany. Their history, however, seems to be somewhat obscure except the accusations that were brought against them by their enemies, until the able leader, Menno Simon, appeared as an assistant.

The terrors of death in the most awful form, were presented to the view of the people, and numbers of them were executed every day. It seemed that all their liberty was taken away from them. Many of them were discouraged, but like the Waldenses, they were willing to suffer death in any way that the evil one could devise.

Menno Simon

“The venerable Menno Simon was born at Witmansum, in Frieland, A.D. 1496. His education was such as was generally adopted in that age with persons designed to be priests. He entered the church in the character of a minister in 1524. He had no acquaintance with the sacred volume at this time; nor would he touch it, lest he should be reduced by its doctrines. At the end of three years, on celebrating mass, he entertained some scruples about transubstantiation; but attributed the impressions to the devil. No moral change was yet effected; he spent his time in dissipating amusements; yet he was not easy in his mind. He resolved, from the perturbed state of his thoughts, to pursue the New Testament. In reading this volume, his mind became enlightened; and with the aid of Luther’s writings, he saw the errors of popery. Menno was generally respected; and all at once became a Gospel Preacher, without the charge of heresy or fanaticism. This is accounted for, by his being courted by the world, and still continued in alliance with it.

Menno’s Experience

Among the thousands that suffered death for anabaptism, was one Sicke Snyder, who was beheaded at Lewarden. The constancy of this man to his views of believers’ baptism, preferring even an ignominious death to renouncing his sentiments, led Menno to inquire into the subject of baptism. Menno could not find infant baptism in the Bible; and, on consulting a minister of that persuasion, a concession was made, *that it had no foundation in the Bible*. Not willing to yield, he consulted other celebrated reformers; but all these he found to be at variance, as to the grounds of the practice; consequently he became confirmed, that the Baptists were suffering for

truth's sake. In studying the word, convictions of sinfulness and of his lost condition became deepened; and he found God required sincerity and decision. He now sought new spiritual friends, and found some, with whom he at first privately associated, but afterwards became one of their community. Menno was baptized by immersion, as he confessed that, "We shall find no other baptism besides dipping in water, which is acceptable to God and maintained in his word.—Orchard's History.

"They admit," says Mosheim, "none to the sacrament of baptism but persons that are come to the full age of reason." They rebaptized such persons as had that rite in a state of infancy; since the best and wisest of the Mennonites maintain, with their ancestors, that the baptism of infants is destitute of validity; they therefore refuse the term of Anabaptists as inapplicable to their views.

Baptists collected by Menno

It was in 1536, under Menno, that the scattered community of Baptists were formed into a regular body and church order, separate from all Dutch and German Protestants, who at that time had not been formed into one body by any bands of unity. Some of the perfectionists he reclaimed to order and others he excluded. He now purified also the religious doctrines of these people. As in the early, so among these modern Baptists, two classes are found, at a later period distinguished by the term of rigid and moderate. The former class observe, with the most religious accuracy, veneration and precision, the ancient doctrine, discipline and precepts of the pure Baptists. The latter are more conformed to Protestant churches."—Mosheim's History.

Let us now notice the candid admission of the careful Lutheran historian, J.L. Mosheim, in reference to the origin of the Baptist church in Germany.

Mosheim's testimony

"The true origin of that sect which acquired the denomination of Anabaptists, by their administering anew the rite of baptism to those who came over to their communion, and derived that of Mennonites, from that famous man to whom they owe much of their present felicity, is hidden in the depths of antiquity, and is of consequence difficult to be ascertained. This uncertainty will not appear surprising when it is considered that this sect started up suddenly in several countries at the same time, under leaders of different talents and different intentions, and at the very period when the first contest of the Reformers with the Roman pontiffs drew the attention of the world, and employed all the pens of the learned in such a manner as to render all other objects and incidents almost matters of indifference."

[These Anabaptists] “not only considered themselves descendants of the Waldenses, who were so grievously opposed and persecuted by the despotic heads of the Romish church, but pretend, moreover, to be the purest offspring of the respectable sufferers, being equally opposed to all principles of rebellion on the one hand, and all suggestions of fanaticism on the other.”

“It may be observed,” continued Mosheim, “that they are not entirely in an error when they boast of their descent from the Waldenses, Petrobrussians, and other ancient sets, who are usually considered as witnesses of the truth in times of general darkness and superstition. *Before the rise of Luther and Calvin*, there lay concealed in almost all countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland and Germany, many persons who adhered tenaciously to the doctrines, etc., which is the true source of all the peculiarities that are to be found in the religious doctrine and discipline of the Anabaptists.”

Baptists descended from the apostles

We will next give a quotation from a noted Dutch Reform Church history, published in 1819, “We have seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called ‘Anabaptists,’ and in later times ‘Mennonites,’ were the original Waldenses, and who have long in their history 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 all ages. The perfectly correct external and internal economy of the Baptist denomination tends to confirm the truth, disputed by the Romish Church that the Reformation brought about in the sixteenth century was in the highest degree necessary, and, at the same time, goes to refute the erroneous notion of the Catholics that their communion is the most ancient.”

CHAPTER 5 BAPTISTS OF ENGLAND (Same as Waldenses)

Baptists of Germany

We will now turn our attention to the Baptist people of England. In giving an account of them we will show that they were in line with the Baptist people of Germany and of the same denomination. We will, however, just give short sketches. It is observed that churches were planted in England as early as sixty years after the death of Christ. Many persecutions had been inflicted upon them by the Catholic party.

Walter Lollard

“In 1215, Walter Lollard, a German preacher of great renown among the Waldenses, and a friend to believers’ baptism, came into England and preached with great effect. His followers and the Waldenses generally in England for many generations after were called Lollards.”—Benedict’s History.

“Lollard,” says Mosheim’s history, “in the common tongue of the ancient Germans, denotes a person who is continually praising God with a song or singing hymns to his honor.”

John Wycliff

In the reign of Edward III, in 1340, John Wycliff began to be famous in England. Wickliff was an able, bold and enlightened Catholic *priest* and *doctor*, who, though living and dying in the Catholic communion, spent his life in translating, circulating and explaining the Scriptures, and exposing the corruption of the Catholics. Among the principles he advocated were that the church consisted only of believers; that baptism was a “sign of grace received before,” and consequently should be administered to those only who professed to have received *grace*. While Wycliff never entirely left the Catholic Church, yet in many respects he was a Baptist and bore a great part in the Reformation. Wycliff was the first to give the Bible to the English people in their own tongue, to their great delight, and the *Lollards* became familiar with its teachings and their numbers were greatly increased.

Tyndale

Tyndale, another learned man, took upon himself to translate the Bible into the English language in the sixteenth century. Because of the opposition of the King of England he was compelled to flee to Holland for safety, and there completed his work of translating the Scriptures. He was burned at the stake, however, at Smithfield, in 1533. His last words were, while burning in the flame, “Lord, open the eyes of the King of England.”

William Sawtre and Edward Wightman

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries hundreds of the Baptist people were imprisoned and those who would not repent and turn from their religion were put to death in the most horror possible. At the beginning of this period a devout man William Sawtre, who was a Baptist preacher, was the first to be burned. The last was Edward Wightman, who was burned at the stake at Litchfield, England, April, April

11, 1612. Many of his offspring came to America, some of whom were ministers in the Baptist Church.

Benedict says, "From the death of William Sawtre, who was burnt in London, to the time that Edward Wightman perished in the flames at Litchfield, was a period of two hundred and twenty years. We have very good grounds for believing that Sawtre was a Baptist; we are sure that Wightman was, and thus it appears that the Baptists have had the honor of leading the van, and bringing up the rear, of the part of the noble army of English martyrs who have laid down their lives at the stake."

This, however, was not the end of the persecution, for a great many were thrown into dark prisons and there died. The natural man never has been a friend of true Christianity, and never will be.

Confession of Faith in 1643

In 1643, the English Baptists drew up a "confession of faith," which was afterwards revised and published in 1689, known as "the London Confession of Faith," which contains all the doctrinal and practical features of all the former "confessions of faith" put forth by the Baptists. It has ever been recognized as the nearest expression of the faith of true Baptists everywhere, until the present time, that has ever been published in a like form. A short time afterwards it was republished, with the addition of two articles by the Baptists of America, known as the "Philadelphia Confession of Faith."

Means of tracing Baptists

These people can be traced through history (1) by the persecution and shedding of blood and banishment by the enemies; (2) by the practice of immersing anew all that came over to them from any other sect ever since there has been more than one denomination, which has been since A.D. 251; (3) by their claiming that God has but one church, and it alone has church authority; (4) by their refusing infant baptism entirely and contending alone for believer's baptism.

Robinson's evidence

Robinson says, "I have seen enough to convince me that the present dissenters, contending for the sufficiency of the Scripture and for primitive Christian liberty to judge of its meaning, may be traced back in authentic manuscripts to the Nonconformists; to the Puritans; to the Lollards; to the Valdenses; to the Albigenses; and, I suppose, through the Paulicians and others, to the apostles."

CHAPTER 6 BAPTISTS OF THE UNITED STATES

The organization of the First Churches and Associations and their Fundamental principles

We will next turn our attention to the Baptists of our native country. It has been with great interest that I have prepared this history of this period. There have been many things that I have omitted that would have been of great interest to many, but my only intention has been to give to our people a brief, useful record of the true church of Christ.

John Clark

From the most recent and thorough investigation it is believed that Dr. John Clark (a physician) and eleven other persons formed, at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1638, the first Baptist Church in America. Clark resigned the care of the church in 1651 to return to England, and was succeeded by Obadiah Holmes. The pastors and members of this church remained Calvinistic until the year 1820.

The Welsh Tract Church

The Welsh Tract Church, whose meeting house is two miles from Newark, in New Castle County, Delaware, is the oldest Old School, or Primitive Baptist Church in the United States, and the only American Baptist Church that was regularly organized in Europe before emigrating to this country. It was constituted in the spring of 1701, by sixteen Baptists, in the country of Pembroke and Caermarthen, in South Wales, with Thomas Griffith, one of their number, as pastor. A "Church Emigrant," they embarked at Milford Haven in June, 1701, and landed at Philadelphia, where they continued about a year and a half, and where their membership increased to thirty-seven. They then procured land in North Delaware, and in 1703, they built a small meeting house near Iron Hill. In 1746, they rebuilt on the same a stone house for worship, which they have now used for 163 years. Over two hundred years they have held regular service at that place. That was one of the five churches that formed the Philadelphia Association, the first association in America.

Hopewell Church

The second oldest Old School Baptist church in the United States is Hopewell in a village of the same name in New Jersey. This church, composed of twelve members,

five of whom were Stouts, was organized at the residence of Joseph Stout, April 23, 1715, upon these eight fundamental principles; 1st, the Three-Oneness of God; 2nd, His Self-existence and Sovereignty; 3rd, The Total Depravity of the Natural Man; 4th, The Eternal, Personal, Unconditional Election of all the Members of the Body of Christ; 5th, The Special and Definiteness of the Atonement; 6th, The Necessity of a Spiritual Birth in order to Worship God in Spirit and in Truth; 7th, The Sovereign and Efficacious Operations of Divine Grace upon all Vessels of mercy; 8th, The Baptism of Believers by Immersion.

Philadelphia Confession

The Baptists at that time adopted the London Confession of Faith with two additional articles known then as the Philadelphia Confession of Faith.

Elias Keach

The church at Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was constituted in A.D. 1746. Its organic members were from the church at Pennepek. The Pennepek Church was constituted in A.D. 1687. It was gathered by the faithful labors of Elias Keach, who was also its first pastor. He was the son of the noted Benjamin Keach of London, who was a member of the convention that drew up and published the London Confession of Faith in A.D. 1689.

Earliest associations in America

The Philadelphia Association in Pennsylvania, was the first Baptist Association formed in American, constituted in A.D. 1707; the second was the Charleston Association of South Carolina, organized in 1751; the third was the Sandy Creek Association in North Carolina organized in A.D. 1758; the fourth was the Kehukee Association of North Carolina organized in A.D. 1765; The fifth was the Ketockton Association of Virginia organized in A.D. 1766; the sixth was the Warren Association of Rhode Island organized in A.D. 1767; the seventh was the Stonington Association of Connecticut organized in A.D. 1772; the eighth was the Strawberry Association of Virginia organized in A.D. 1776; the ninth was the Shaftsbury Association of Vermont organized in A.D. 1780; the tenth was the Salisbury Association of Maryland organized in A.D. 1782; the eleventh was the Woodstock Association of Vermont organized in A.D. 1783; the twelfth was the Dover Association of Virginia organized in A.D. 1783; the thirteenth was the Georgia Association or Georgia organized in A.D. 1784; the fourteenth was the Vermont Association organized in A.D. 1785; the fifteenth was the Salem Association of Kentucky organized in A.D. 1785; the sixteenth was the Elkhorn Association organized in 1785; the seventeenth was the Holston Association of Tennessee organized in 1786.

First association in each state

The first associations organized in each of the following states were as follows: New Hampshire; the Meredith Association in A.D. 1789; New York, the Warwick Association in A.D. 1791; Ohio, the Miami Association in A.D. 1797; Mississippi, the Mississippi Association in A.D. 1807; Indiana, the Whitewater Association, in 1809; Illinois, the Illinois Association in A.D. 1809; New Jersey, the New Jersey Association in A.D. 1811; Massachusetts, the Boston Association in A.D. 1811; Alabama, the Bethlehem Association in A.D. 1816; Missouri, the Missouri Association in A.D. 1817; Louisiana, the Louisiana Association in A.D. 1820; Michigan, the Michigan Association in A.D. 1827.

Lewis and Joseph Craig and Aaron Bledsoe

To show some of the difficulties under which the Baptist people so rapidly grew in the early settlement of America, I will give a sketch of Lewis and Joseph Craig and Aaron Bledsoe. These three had been indicted for preaching the gospel of the Son of God in the colony of Virginia. The clerk was reading the indictment in a slow and formal manner, when he pronounced the crime with emphasis, "*For preaching the gospel of the Son of God in the colony of Virginia,*" a plainly dressed man, who had just rode up to the courthouse, entered and took his seat within the bar. He was known to the court and lawyers, but a stranger to the mass of spectators who had gathered on the occasion.

Patrick Henry

This was Patrick Henry, who, on hearing of this prosecution, had rode some fifty or sixty miles from his residence in Hanover county to volunteer his service in their defense. He listened to the further reading of the indictment with marked attention. The first sentence which caught his ear was, "For preaching the Gospel of the Son of God." When he was finished, and the prosecuting attorney had submitted a few remarks, Henry arose, reached out his hand and received the paper and addressed the court:

"May it please your worships, I think I heard read by the prosecutor, as I entered this house, the paper I now hold in my hand. If I have rightly understood, the King's attorney of this colony has framed an indictment for the purpose of arraigning and punishing by imprisonment three inoffensive persons before the bar of this Court, for a crime of great magnitude—as disturbers of the peace. May it please the Court, what did I hear read? Did I hear it distinctly, or was it a mistake of my own? Did I hear a statement as if a crime, that these men whom your worships are about to try for a

misdemeanor, are charged with—what?”— and continuing in a low, solemn, heavy tone, “For preaching the Gospel of the Son of God!”

Henry’s defense

Pausing, amid the most profound silence and breathless astonishment, he slowly waved the paper three times around his head, when, lifting his hands and eyes to heaven, with peculiar and impressive energy, he exclaimed, “*Great God!*” The exclamation—the action—the burst of feeling from the audience, were all overpowering. Mr. Henry resumed:

“May it please your worships: there are periods in the history of man when corruption and depravity have so long debased the human character that man sinks under the weight of the oppressor’s hand, and becomes his servile, his abject slave; he licks the hand that smites him; he bows in passive obedience to the mandates of the despot, and in this state of servility he receives his fetters of perpetual bondage. But, may it please your worships, such a day has passed away! From that period, when our fathers left the land of their nativity for settlement in these American wilds—for *liberty*—for civil and religious liberty—for liberty of conscience—to worship their Creator according to their conception of Heaven’s revealed will; from the moment they placed foot on the American continent, and in the deep imbedded forests sought an asylum from persecution and tyranny—from that moment— from that moment despotism was crushed; her fetters of darkness were broken, and heaven decreed that man should be free—free to worship God according to the Bible. Were it not for this, in vain have been the efforts and sacrifices of the colonists; in vain were all their sufferings and bloodshed to subject this new world, if we, their offspring, must still be oppressed and persecuted. But, may it please your worships, permit me to enquire once more, for what are these men about to be tried? This paper says, ‘For preaching the Gospel of the Son of God?’ *Great God!* For preaching the Gospel of the Savior of Adam’s fallen race!” And in tones of thunder he exclaimed, “*What law have they violated?*” while the third time, in a slow, dignified manner, he lifted his eyes to heaven and waved the indictment around his head.

The discharge of the prisoners

The Court and audience were now wrought up to the most intense pitch of excitement. The face of the prosecuting attorney was pallid and ghastly, and he appeared unconscious that his whole frame was agitated with alarm, while the judge, in tremulous voice, put an end to the scene, now becoming excessively painful, by the authoritative declaration, “*Sheriff, discharge those men!*”

CHAPTER 7 CAMPBELLITES

The origin and a short sketch of the church sometimes called Christians of Disciples

Origin of the Campbellites

Thomas Campbell, an ordained minister of the “Seceder Church of Scotland,” left Ireland in 1807. He came to western Pennsylvania. His son, Alexander Campbell, a licentiate minister in the same *church*, followed his father in 1809. The theological views of the Campbells became “altered and liberalized, and regarded by many as both novel and objectionable; hence they and the few who at first sided with them formed an isolated congregation, called the Christian Association, at Brush Run, Washington Country, PA, in 1811.” Their special plea was to restore the apostolic Christianity, and, becoming satisfied that immersion was the only scriptural baptism, both father and son and the majority of their members were immersed in 1812 by Elder Loos, a Baptist minister. They soon began to advocate that immersion was the essential part of regeneration or the new birth, without which ordinance there was no pardon or salvation.

On account of this doctrine the Baptist people withdrew fellowship from the followers of the Campbells, and the latter then constituted themselves into a separate body, that have called themselves “Disciples of Christ,” and afterwards some who were more aggressive called themselves “Christians,” but have been generally known by writers as “Campbellites.”

CHAPTER 8 “MISSIONARY BAPTISTS”

A division over “Means”

“Missions” and Sunday Schools

About the same time that the Campbells caused so much disturbance in the church another imposter came in view. When the persecution ceased, false teachers crept in to deceive and draw away disciples after them. So it ever has been and ever will be. Persecution never tears up a church, but draws it close together.

Through the influence of some progressive men some missionary societies were formed under the doctrine that the gospel is used as a means in regeneration, and from

these views originated the idea that “thousands were going to hell for the want of the gospel.”

Andrew Fuller

As Andrew Fuller is admitted to be the *standard* among the Missionary Baptists, I desire to give a brief sketch of his life and work.

He was born in 1754 and died in 1815. His parents were poor, and he had only the barest rudiments of an English education. He concluded that we should offer salvation freely to all sinners, without distinction, and in 1782 he published an essay entitled “The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation.” This involved him in a bitter controversy of twenty years with those who loved the old Bible principles.

First missionary society

The first missionary society was formed in Kettering, England, by Dr. William Cary, in 1792, and Andrew Fuller was chosen as secretary and remained in this office until death. The latter part of his life was spent in working in this cause.

Black Rock protest

When the Fullerite heresies had been introduced among the Baptists, and produced great discord and turmoil, some of the old veterans of the cross met at Black Rock, Maryland, in 1832, and published a solemn protest against all the newly introduced innovations upon our former faith and order, and made the rejection of the new departure a test of fellowship.

Old School and New School Baptists

To distinguish those who retained the apostolic doctrine from those who departed from it, we consented to be known by the name which has been given us by our opponents, viz., “Old School Baptists.” This appellation we agreed to accept, with the express understanding that it referred only to the school of Christ, and not to any humanly devised system of scholastic divinity. It was not that we had changed in any wise from what we had always been, either in faith or order, but simply to distinguish us from those who had changed, and still chose to be called by our name to take away their reproach. If the New School or Missionary Baptists claim to have a regular, unbroken succession from the Primitive Baptists of the Apostolic Age, upon the ground that they were largely in the majority when the division took place in 1832, will they please tell us why the claim of succession made by Catholics is not equally clear and valid?

The Old School or Primitive Baptists never did consent to any of the anti-Christian doctrines and institutions of the new order, even when mixed up with them in denominational connection; they protested against every practice for which there was no “Thus saith the Lord,” and after laboring to reclaim the disorderly until they found their labors were unavailing, they withdrew fellowship from them. Christ has commanded us to withdraw even from every brother that walks disorderly.

This disturbance continued in different parts of the United States until about the year 1845, and at this time there were about 50,000 of the members who came out and contended for the old principles that had been so much loved by this people all through these ages.

Another extreme

Because of this extreme position on the use of the gospel, some of the Baptist people went to an extreme on the other side, and believed that the actions of all men were predetermined and caused to be by the Lord, and, reasoning from this standpoint, they said that when God gets ready for his people to join the church they would join. This extreme doctrine weakened the church in many places. It caused churches to lock up their doors and quit having meeting, thinking that as it was God’s will, it was as much to his glory for them to quit holding meetings. It is likely that that is true— that it is as much honor to God for them to quit holding meetings as for them to publish to the world that God was compelling men to do what he has told them not to do. Those, however, that have advocated that doctrine have lost hold, and those who exhort the people of God to obedience have, in most places, held up their churches and built up the numbers until they have reached over 200,000; however, a definite number cannot be gotten, as many are opposed to giving the number.

Division over the “Means” question

About the year 1880, there arose a dispute among the ministers of the denomination over the use of means in regeneration, some claiming the preached word was used as a means in the hands of God in giving spiritual life, others claiming that life must be given before the sinner could hear or believe the gospel, and for that reason it could not be used as a means in giving that life.

This resulted in a division in parts of Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, and some other States. Later another effort was made to lead the church off into Arminianism, in about 1902, which resulted in some of the ministers who were weak in the faith leaving us and going to the Missionaries.

We see how that, through the ages, the church has been standing on the same grand principles, trusting in the providence of an all-wise God to support them. As it is written, “In the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed,” so we see that in the fulfillment of it God has wonderfully cared for it, not by giving worldly ease or honor, but heavenly blessings, that encouraged the true followers of the meek and lowly Jesus to press on to the mark of their high calling.

As the saints of old went in the mission of the gospel trusting in the Lord, for a financial as well as spiritual support, so the God-sent servants still are willing to do, with prayerful hearts, enthused with the inspiring thought that God’s redeeming love was their support, being impressed with a duty to God; they have ever been willing even to press into death for the welfare of the cause.