

Morning Star Baptist Church
"I am a Baptist Because..."
The Baptists I Have Known
5/6/07

Introduction

Romans 16:1-16 (16) Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

Let it be remembered that in New Testament times that there was only one church - one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. Therefore all the preachers and saints had doctrinal agreement. There was some heresy, but churches maintained basic unity. Only in Revelation 2 and 3 do we see some churches were in danger of losing their candlesticks.

Not until the 3rd century do we see apostasy in full bloom with two churches claiming to be true to Christ. By the 15th century, three more branches split from the Catholic Church. Today we have a variety of two to three hundred different churches.

Many godly Protestants have lived or are living today, but some of the godliest and most noble people are Baptists.

I. Baptists in History

A. John the Baptist is the first that comes to mind, called John by his parents and "the Baptist" by God **Matthew 3:1** and **21:24-27**. John would not baptize anyone unless they brought forth fruits meet for repentance **Luke 3:4-8**.

B. The Apostle Paul rebaptized twelve Ephesians **Acts 19:1-5**. He said there was only one baptism Ephesians **4:1-5**. He said that the Body of Christ was a local church **I Corinthians 12:27**. He did his mission work from under the authority of a local church **Acts 13:1-3**. He preferred preaching the gospel to baptizing **I Corinthians 1:17-19**.

C. Polycarp was a student of John the Apostle who was martyred around 166 A.D. Betrayed by a friend, Polycarp refused to revile Christ or pay homage to Caesar. At age 96 he was thrown from a moving chariot, and limped with his busted ankle into the arena. Threatened with wild beasts, Polycarp said, "Bring them." The Emperor then decided he should be burnt at the stake. They tied him fast to the stake as he prayed, " O Lord God Almighty! I give thee thanks that thou hast counted me worthy, this day and this hour, to have a part in the number of thy martyrs, in the cup of thy Christ." The flames leapt around and about him but as they died down without harming him the executioner finally had to stab him to death.

D. Peter de Bruis preached and practiced regenerated membership in France around 1100

and laughed at infant baptism. He encouraged people to burn their wooden idols and crosses to roast their meat. He rebaptized all who came from the RCC, who considered him the father of all heretics. He was burned at the stake in 1126.

E. Peter Waldo detested Roman Catholicism and its' doctrines and traditions. The leader of the Waldensian movement, this great itinerant evangelical preacher died an old man in Bohemia.

F. Several Swiss Baptists were murdered by Zwingli and the Protestants.

- Felix Mantz, 1522, drowned
- George Jacob Blaurock, 1529, drowned
- Balthazar Hubmor, 1529, burned after several attempts to force his recantation. His wife was later drowned in the Danube when she refused to denounce her husband.

G. Great English and Welsh Baptists (with birth dates).

- Thomas Watts
- Hanserd Knolleys 1598
- William Kiffin 1616
- John Bunyan 1628
- Benjamin Keach 1640
- John Gill 1697
- Abraham Booth 1734
- John Rippon 1751
- Andrew Fuller 1754
- William Carey 1761
- Robert Hall 1764
- Christmas Evans 1766
- Charles Spurgeon 1834
- Timothy Thomas 1854

H. Baptists in America

In the 1600's John Clarke, John Crandall, and Obadiah Holmes were imprisoned and Holmes beaten.

In the 1700's Lewis Craig, John Waller, and James Childs were defended by Patrick Henry after imprisonment in Virginia for preaching the Gospel of the Son of God.

So many more in the 1800's and early 1900's: BH Carroll, John Graves, John Peck, Adoniram Judson, Luther Rice, Ben Bogard, George W. Truett, RG Lee, J. Frank Norris, and Clarence Walker.

And of course the men of recent history: Lawrence Crawford, Leonard Buttram, Chester Ratliff, Roth Barnard, Gail Terrell, Al Gormley, Peter Connolly, and Elton Wilson.

I. All these men lives bear further study than we can give them here. But, these men's

lives all converge into the present through those they have trained and those who have studied their writings. What an investment! **II Timothy 2:1-2 (1) Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. (2) And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.**

II. Baptists in Mystery

A. Compromise seems so trivial when it is small, but so does a boa constrictor. After several years it will squeeze the life out of those who have fed it.

B. It is doctrine that saves - **I Timothy 4:15-16** as does proper baptism **I Peter 3:21**. They save lives and your usefulness to God!

C. Baptists flourished in America in the 1940's and 50's but throughout the 60's and 70's they were more concerned with numeric success and mass evangelism than teaching the doctrine.

D. Their silence has cost us dearly, a whole generation untrained, leading to Baptists that are even more ecumenical than ever.

E. Pastors and preachers today are silent about their Baptist convictions due to peer pressure, pragmatism, pride, pursuit of the purse, and fear of failure. Those that drop the Baptist moniker do us a huge favor.

III. Baptists in Destiny

A. A resurgence of Biblical Evangelism, Baptist Distinctives, and Baptist Piety is possible in these last days. Baptists flourish when the landscape is black and white and the world snarls and hisses. That is when Baptists rally.

B. Protestants and Neo-Evangelical groups are more and more liberal and shallow. The seeker sensitive movement will send many of their disgruntled to us.

C. By God's grace we must train more John Marks. We must pass the baton.

Conclusion

We salute all of God's children, but true Baptists are an elite group. If Morning Star Baptist Church will hold true then we can make a huge difference in the world through our many ministries.