

Morning Star Baptist Church

"I am a Baptist Because..."

The Trail of Blood

4/1/07

Introduction

Luke 21:12-20 (12) But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.

John 15:16-23 (23) He that hateth me hateth my Father also

The Lord Jesus Christ did not withhold the future biography of His Church. Rather He has identified another mark of His True Churches. They will be maligned, hated, and persecuted. John the Baptist was beheaded, Christ was Himself crucified, and Stephen stoned. Every apostle was martyred.

The cycle of church persecution begins with the threatening of evangelistic efforts, then legal infractions, imprisonments and trials, and finally capital punishment as persecution grows increasingly widespread. Rome, from Nero on down, has set the stage for a pattern of persecution that continues to this day.

II Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

The Lord's True Churches will not be popular with the world.

I. The Early Years

A. Christianity spread across the Roman Empire moving west to east into Europe and Africa. Many millions must have been converted during the first three centuries after Christ, because three million were martyred. Obviously, the early saints were soul winners.

B. Montanus and Novation were great early preachers to Syria and Italy, respectively. **Their** followers in these countries were nicknamed after them, Montanists and Novations.

C. Meanwhile, Nicolaitianism began to take root in churches throughout the region. In Rome, after the death of Fabian, these churches followed Cornelius, while Novation demanded fruits meet of repentance. He would rebaptize those who came to him from the apostate churches, hence the name Anabaptists.

D. By 300 A.D., Donatus, had started an independent godly church in North Africa that shared the common faith of the Montanists and Novations.

E. Around this same time, **(330-350 AD)** Emperor Constantine's vision of the unholy wedlock of the church and state began to form, the Catholic Church. Infant baptism, the first convention, becomes a sacrament and **made common by the end of the century**. Those who opposed were massacred.

F. Schools of higher learning became cesspools of heresy and corrupt Bibles.

G. In Britain also, New Testament Christianity had spread, planted by Paul or his converts. Padraig, was an early church leader there. You may know him by his Catholic name, St. Patrick, however he was anything but Catholic.

H. The influence of the Holy Roman Church darkens the religious landscape in the 6th century as true churches go into hiding.

II. The Dark Ages

A. Catholic degeneration continued with Mariolatry / The mother of God concept appearing to have sprung up in Ephesus in around 431 A.D. It was reaffirmed by council in Chalcedon around 451 with the setting up of the Holy Eucharist, baptismal regeneration, the state church, and purgatory. The Bishop of Rome became Papa or Pope in 461 beginning with Leo II.

B. None of the persecuted groups would tolerate infant baptism and the Donatists were massacred to extinction in Africa by 600 A.D. From 600-900 A.D. the Paulicians formed in Eastern Europe, fighting the Catholics in their own backyard.

C. Around the 8th century Rome and Constantinople split, forming the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches. Prayers to saints, paid indulgences, and image worship became the norm in Rome. Primitive Christians were subdued by the Catholics in the British Isles.

D. With Europe firmly under the spell of the crucifix, Rome turned its' attention to the Middle East, and the Crusades began along with the continued slaughter of Paulicians.

E. By the 11th century, Paulicians pop up in the Alps, France, and Northern Europe while in Italy the Paterines and Waldenses, sometimes called Cathari (the pure ones) appear on the scene. They shared doctrine, fellowship, and baptism, along with bloody persecutions. Over 4,000 were burned in Toulouse alone in the 12th century. Bohemian brethren named Bogomils and in southern France, a group that was particularly viciously persecuted named Albigenses arose. Over a million Albigenses were butchered between 1200 and 1250 A.D.

F. Some of the great Christian men of the area and times included Henry of Lausanne, Peter de Bruce, Arnold of Brescia, and Peter Waldo.

G. The one name that was shared among these scriptural churches was Anabaptists. "Ana" means "re" in the sense of rebaptizing those people that left the false churches.

III. The Protestant Reformation

A. Men like Walter Lollard, John Wycliffe, and John Huss lead the break from Catholicism in the 1300's.

B. The Trail of Blood now becomes a river. The Roman Catholic Church, the richest, most powerful organization on earth, renews her commitment to stamp out all "heresy."

C. The "Holy Inquisition" spreads across Europe with imprisonment, torture, confiscation of private property, and death. Jerome of Prague was burned at the stake in 1416.

D. Some light was given to the Reformers, who believed in justification by faith, salvation by grace, the priesthood of the believer, biblical authority, and Roman corruption. But they still practiced infant baptism, prosecuted heretics, and had a church hierarchy that aligned themselves with governments.

E. By the 1600's, the Anabaptists were mainly Welsh, Dutch, and German Baptists. Calvin weakened Baptists while Luther and Zwingli outright hated them.

IV. The Expansion Years

A. 1600-1900. The Catholic Church instigated many wars because she was losing ground in Germany, Bohemia, and England.

B. The King James Version of the Bible came from England in 1611 based on Welsh Baptist and Waldensian Bibles.

C. America was being settled by Baptists, with the first church built in Newport, Rhode Island in 1638. John Clarke

D. Great men of the era included John Bunyan, Obadiah Holmes, Hanserd Knollys, John Clarke, Benjamin and Elias Keach. The last martyr burnt at the stake in England was Elisabeth Gaunt on October 23, 1685.

E. Wesley and Whitfield led a great awakening in England and America but many of their converts went to Baptist Churches. America owes a debt of gratitude the Baptists like John Leland and John Gans, while Patrick Henry defended men like John Walker and others who preached the Gospel of the Son of God!

F. Modern missions began with Baptists like Andrew Fuller, William Carey, Joshua Marschman, Abraham Booth, William Ward, and Christmas Evans.

G. Other false movements began to arise with the Quakers, Shakers, Arminianism, and Hyper Calvinism and continued in the 1800's with Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, the

Church of Christ, and 7th Day Adventists.

H. Baptists thrived in the 1800's under men like Spurgeon, Carroll, Judson, Peck, Graves, and Haldane during the "Philadelphian Age."

V. The Last Apostasy

A. Open persecution occurred in the last century and continues today in some Muslim and Communist countries.

B. Revival spilled over into the 1900's but there was increasing compromise. There were new bible translations, Ecumenism, liberalism, and deterioration of major denominations in spite of strong preaching against sin and great evangelistic churches.

C. In the last 50 years pragmatic Arminianism has destroyed Baptists by growing the Charismatic and then seeker-sensitive movements.

D. There were many other men who stood in these recent times, but now there are few precious lights who truly stand on God's truth.

Conclusion

Baptist blood is still being shed, but not openly in America. It's been said, "If you really want to destroy Baptists, love them to death." Rather than open persecution, it is the de-emphasizing of sound doctrine, morals, ordinances, fashions, evangelistic fervor; and the welcoming of corrupt Bible translations, and Religious Rock music that is killing Baptists. But, praise God, when the smoke of compromise clears, the few left standing will be strong enough to persevere until Jesus comes. The death march at Corregidor, the Cherokee Trail of Tears, or the Underground Railroad, cannot compare to the Baptist Trail of Blood.

REMEMBER: The only thing that men learn from History, is that men NEVER learn from History.

Hebrews 11:33 - 12 :3 (33) Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,(34) Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.(35) Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: (36) And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: (37) They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (38) (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. (39) And these all, having obtained a

good report through faith, received not the promise: (40) God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, (2) Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (3) For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

This trail of blood has been well documented and researched. Please e-mail us at www.msbc.com if you would like more information or references.