

The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator (USPS Standard Mail Permit Number 876) is published monthly (subscription free) by the Central Baptist Church, PO Box 876, Grenada, MS. Postage paid at Grenada, MS 38902.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator PO Box 876, Grenada, MS 38902-0876

Editor: Pastor Bill Lee

billleecb@gmail.com

Assistant Editor: Laurence A. Justice

PLANNING TO MOVE?

If at all possible, please notify us three weeks in advance of your change of address so that we may keep your paper coming. It costs approximately 49 cents to get your new address from the Postal Service and that may take long enough that two papers are returned at a cost of up to \$1.50 before we get the correction. This will mean you miss one or two papers.

Non-profit Org.
Presorted Standard
US Postage Paid
Grenada, MS 38901
Permit No. 876

The Grace Proclamator & Promulgator
PO Box 876
Grenada, MS 38902-0876

Address Correction Requested

Please notice an email change for
Pastor Bill Lee:

billleecb@gmail.com



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

To testify the gospel of the grace of God.. Acts 20:24

Published as a mission project of
Central Baptist Church Grenada, Mississippi

January 2022

Page 1

ARE BAPTISTS REFORMED?

LAURENCE JUSTICE

More and more Baptists and more and more Baptist churches today are calling themselves Reformed. Part of the reason why some Baptists choose to call themselves Reformed is because they have been so anxious to turn away from the destructive influences of Arminianism that they have taken the label of Reformed in order to distinguish themselves from an intellectually bankrupt Fundamentalism.

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines **Reformed** as "Pertaining to or designating the body of Protestant churches originating in the Reformation." The Random House Dictionary of The English Language defines the **Reformation** as "the religious movement in the sixteenth century which had for its object the reform of the Roman Catholic Church and which led to the establishment of the Protestant churches."

A person who is referred to as Reformed is by that term connected either directly or indirectly to the Protestant Reformation. Further the name Reformed implies the corruption of the Catholic Church and the revolt of the Reformers against that corruption.

Many Baptists have read and been blessed by what John Calvin and other Reformed leaders have written about God's sovereign grace in salvation. Our greatest Baptist confession of faith, the London Confession of 1689 and its American version the Philadelphia Confession of 1743 state almost exactly the same things about salvation as does the Reformed Westminster Confession of Faith.



But does the fact that Baptists believe the same thing about God's sovereignty in salvation, as did John Calvin and other Protestants place Baptists in the category of being Reformed? And does the fact that the great Baptist Confessions say virtually the same thing about salvation, as did the Reformed Westminster Confession make Baptists therefore Reformed?

I submit that the answer to these questions as well as to that in the title of this message is, **No! Baptists are not Reformed!** In this message I am going to offer five basic reasons why Baptists cannot properly be called Reformed: First it is not proper to refer to Baptists as Reformed

BECAUSE OF WHAT BAPTISTS BELIEVE ABOUT GOD'S WORD

The motto of the Protestant Reformation included the Latin words *Sola Scriptura* which means **the scriptures only**. In seeking to reform the Roman Catholic Church the Reformers at first insisted that the only authority for faith and practice was the scriptures.

But the Reformers never consistently followed this motto. Whenever they could not support some doctrine or practice from God's word they soon began relying

on the church fathers, tradition, expediency and creeds as well.

Baptists are the ones who take *Sola Scriptura* seriously. Only Baptists consistently apply this great principle in matters of faith and practice. Baptists simply believe that all doctrine and practice in the church must have New Testament support. The principle of *Sola Scriptura* is consistently followed only when one can confidently state from the New Testament, "Thus saith the Lord!"

One major difference in Baptists and Reformed people is that Baptists insist on Solo Scriptura for every other area as well as for salvation. Baptists believe that the teachings and practices of the New Testament churches are binding for all time.

Our confessions of faith are merely what we believe the Bible teaches but are not authoritative and not binding on the churches. When we Baptists speak of the principle of *Sola Scriptura*, we more often use the term, the sufficiency of the scriptures.

The apostle Paul recognized the sufficiency of the scripture for all matters of faith and practice when he wrote to young preacher Timothy in II Timothy 3:16-17. II Timothy was Paul's last New Testament letter and

tion, guaranteeing full religious freedom, came into being against the wishes of many colonial Protestants. Virginia Baptists, led by John Leland, were responsible for this amendment.

C. H. Spurgeon well summarized our position: "We believe that the Baptists are the original Christians. We did not commence our existence at the reformation, we were reformers before Luther or Calvin were born; we never came from the Church of Rome, for we were never in it, but we have an unbroken line up to the apostles themselves. We have always existed from the very days of Christ, and our principles, sometimes veiled and forgotten, like a river which may travel under ground for a little season, have always had honest and holy adherents..." (*Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 1861, p. 225.)

..."[W]e, known among men, in all ages, by various names, such as Donatists, Novatians, Paulicians, Petrobrussians, Cathari, Arnoldists, Hussites, Waldenses, Lollards, and Anabaptists, have always contended for the purity of the Church, and her distinctness and separation from human government. Our fathers were men inured to hardships, and unused to ease. They present to us, their children, an unbroken line which

comes legitimately from the apostles, not through the filth of Rome..." (*ibid.*, p. 613.)

Twenty years later, Mr. Spurgeon reiterated, "Long before your Protestants were known of, these horrible Anabaptists, as they were unjustly called, were protesting for the "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism." No sooner did the visible church begin to depart from the gospel than these men arose to keep fast by the good old way. ...At times ill-written history would have us think that they died out, so well had the wolf done his work on the sheep. Yet here we are, blessed and multiplied..." (*Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 1881, p. 249.)

In conclusion, let it be said we are grateful to God who has shown us these things. We rebuke any fellow-Baptist who may be swollen with pride because of his knowledge of these truths. If God has given us these truths, we must receive them with humility.

We admit that we may not speak for all who call themselves Baptist today. Some will no doubt disagree with us. We can only say that these are issues in which our consciences are bound and upon which we cannot compromise. ♦

WCF says, "...by the right use of this ordinance, the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost..." To Baptists, this language sounds alarmingly similar to baptismal regeneration.

OUR VIEW OF CONVERSION

In light of the above, we must state unequivocally that we believe that salvation is a direct operation of the Holy Spirit of God. No saving grace is conferred by means of family or national privileges. The children of believers are just as depraved and lost as are the children of unbelievers. The promise of Acts 2:39 which says, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children," does not end there! It continues, "and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

God saves sinners individually, not families collectively. Infant "baptism" and the covenant-child concept obscure the truth about regeneration and conversion.

OUR VIEW OF CHURCH HISTORY

It may come as a surprise to contemporary Protestants and Roman Catholics to learn that Baptists did not originate at the Reformation. The more ancient historians, even those opposed to Baptist principles,

admitted this; but modern writers tend to ignore, dismiss or deny it. There is abundant evidence to affirm that evangelical churches, sound in the essentials of the faith, known by various names, existed in Europe from the days of the Apostles down through the Middle Ages. The Waldensian Confession of 1120 is an example of sound gospel belief during those times.

These Anabaptists, as they were deridingly called by their foes, were bitterly persecuted by the official pseudo-Christianity which apostatized under Constantine. These valiant people were our forefathers in the faith. (Of course, we do not identify with some truly heretical sects who were erroneously classified with them.) Many have forgotten that some of Calvin's theology was shaped by an Anabaptist cousin. "Calvin acknowledged...that he too 'was at one time a Waldensian.'" (Leonard Verduin, *The Anatomy of a Hybrid*, p. 199.)

When the Reformation came, these Anabaptists at first breathed a sigh of relief, but quickly discovered that the Protestants could persecute them just as severely as the Romanists, resorting to the same church-state model that Rome had brutally enforced for centuries. It is a forgotten fact of U. S. history that the first amendment to the Constitu-

tion in it he told Timothy that in view of the coming apostasy and perilous times and in view of his central work, which was preaching, the scriptures would be sufficient. And this applied to evangelism and doctrinal instruction and general pastoral oversight.

Here's what Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be **perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.**"

Baptists make no appeal to tradition or to the church fathers for our authority in matters of faith and practice. We ask, What do the scriptures teach? The Reformers have kept many doctrines and practices from Catholicism such as infant baptism, baptismal regeneration, sprinkling for baptism, and sacraments.

Baptists have sought to avoid such man made traditions as these and to follow instead the New Testament pattern. The Westminster Confession of Faith is the most prominent of the Reformed confessions. The London Confession of 1689 is one of the most prominent Baptist confessions. The glaring difference between the two is seen at the very beginning.

The Baptist confession says "The Holy Scriptures is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience." This sentence does not appear in the Reformed Westminster Confession.

Secondly Baptists cannot properly be called Reformed

BECAUSE OF WHAT BAPTISTS BELIEVE ABOUT THE CHURCH

Baptists have always held that there can be no proper standard for what constitutes the church but the one set forth in the New Testament and that the New Testament is not vague or indefinite concerning the church, either as to what it is or where it came from or how it is to be governed.

Baptists agree with the New Testament that the church is a congregation of believers, which has been called out of the world and assembles around Jesus Christ and his word. For Baptists the church is a visible congregation of regenerated, baptized individuals.

To the Reformers in the sixteenth century the Roman Catholic Church was still "the church" and it only needed reforming. They sought to reform a church, which they regarded as the true body of Christ.

They assumed that both the baptism and the ordination of the Roman Church were still valid. Neither John Calvin nor any other Reformers denounced their Catholic baptisms. The Reformers did not set out to restore the true church by copying the instructions revealed in Acts. Instead they worked to reform the “church” which already existed.

Reformed people view the church in two ways. They see it as the entire body of the elect. This body of course is invisible. They also see it as a local assembly or the aggregate of all local assemblies in a nation or on a continent. As such the church is visible.

So the Reformers believed in a universal invisible church and in a more local visible church.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 25 Article II page 133 is titled “Of The Church” and says in part, “The visible church...consists of all those throughout the world, that profess the true religion, together with their children...” Such a church would of necessity contain both non-elect and unregenerate persons.

The idea of a visible and an invisible church is not to be found in the New Testament. Baptists hold with the scriptures that the New Tes-

tament church consists of regenerate persons while the Reformed see it as also including unregenerate infant children of believers.

Baptists believe that each church is entirely independent of every other church in all that relates to its government. The church at Jerusalem did not tell the church at Corinth how to operate and didn’t threaten to excommunicate it when it heard of sinful members of the church at Corinth.

Every Baptist church chooses its own pastor and other officers, receives and dismisses its members, and makes its own rules and regulations. Baptists believe with the New Testament that no organization such as a synod or session should tell the local church what to do. The setting up of a centralized authority that claims to speak for the churches and pass laws to the local church has absolutely no New Testament authority. Reformed churches all seek to do this but according to the New Testament there is no higher court of appeal from the local church in any matter.

A basic disagreement between Baptists and Reformed people is the answer to the question, When did the church begin? Reformed people believe that Israel was the church in the Old Testament and the New

who claim otherwise must argue from silence.

We see the mission of the church as primarily spiritual, not social or political. We are more interested in proclaiming saving grace than promoting common grace. We are but strangers passing through, citizens of a heavenly kingdom. Our message has never been “Save this generation,” but rather “Be saved from this generation” (see Acts 2:40).

Moreover, believing that each church is autonomous, we reject all forms of church hierarchy. In things spiritual, there is no higher court on this earth than the local assembly. Major issues in the churches of the New Testament were decided by the vote of the members, not by a board of elders, presbytery, synod, bishop or archbishop.

We reject the Protestant concept of a universal invisible church and the ecumenism which naturally springs from that concept. God certainly knows all those who are His and eternally views us as one in Christ, but in our experience we will not be one assembly or church until all God’s elect are gathered together in glory. Although every believer is in God’s family and kingdom, the church of the New Testament is a local, visible assembly.

OUR VIEW OF THE ORDINANCES

Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are Christ’s symbolic ordinances given to His churches, not to individuals, families, or society at large. Baptism is for believers only; the Lord’s Supper is for baptized believers only. Since we do not recognize infant sprinkling as Scriptural baptism, we obviously must “fence from the table” those who have not been immersed as believers. Since we are only responsible for the baptism of our membership, and since we cannot invite to the table those over whom we do not have the authority to discipline, we further restrict the table to members of our local assembly only.

These ordinances are symbolic and in themselves have no efficacy to save, nor impart grace. However, the WCF states, “There is in every sacrament a spiritual relation, or sacramental union, between the sign and the thing signified; whence it comes to pass, that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other.” In his commentary on the WCF, A. A. Hodge states, “...through the right use of the sign, the grace signified is really conveyed” (p. 329). Again, Hodge states, “The sacraments were designed to ‘apply’—i.e., actually to convey—to believers the benefits of the new covenant” (p. 331). Commenting on baptism, the

This deducing from Scripture has left the door open to superimpose the system of covenant-child theology on the Scriptures. Then Scripture is interpreted by their covenant, rather than the covenants being interpreted by the Scripture.

OUR VIEW OF THE COVENANTS

Protestantism sees one covenant, with various administrations. Baptists see distinct covenants. As Galatians 4:24-26 says, "...for these are the two covenants..." We see something new in the new covenant (or New Testament). "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3:6). "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb. 9:15).

Though we believe that the Old Testament saints were saved by the pure grace of God, without works, we do not equate the old economy (a national, ethnic, socio-politico-religious one) with the new (a spiritual one without national or social distinctions and without political ambitions). While we see a continuity between the old and new cove-

nants, we do not see an identity. There are significant differences between the Old and New Testament, though God's purposes of grace operate in each.

Therefore, we see the New Testament as the final word on the Old Testament, and not vice versa. Unlike both covenantalists (of the covenant-child stripe) and dispensationalists, we stand in the New Testament and interpret the Old in light of the New.

OUR VIEW OF THE CHURCH

Protestantism carried over from its roots in Roman Catholicism a sacralist mentality. If one were a member of society he must be a member of the "church" also. As the line of distinction between church and state became blurred, infant baptism emerged. These "churches" came to be composed intentionally of both the regenerate and the unregenerate. Efforts were made to justify this error on the basis of the Old Testament rite of circumcision.

Baptists take the New Testament position of regenerate church membership. There are simply no instances at all in the New Testament of infant baptism, nor of the baptism of anyone known to be an unbeliever. We are grateful that some honest Protestants admit this. Those

Testament church is but a continuation of the same body. They teach that the church in the Old and New Testaments are founded on the covenant of grace made with Abraham.

Baptists on the other hand see a radical break between the Testaments instead of a continuation of the Old into the New. They believe that Israel and the New Testament church are two distinctly different bodies and the Old Testament order of Israel is radically different from the New Testament order of the church.

Baptists teach with the scriptures that the church is strictly a New Testament institution, a mystery unknown before New Testament times but revealed during New Testament times. A mystery in the New Testament refers to something, which up until that time was unknown but now is revealed. In Ephesians 5:32 and 3:4-6 Paul says that the church is a mystery or something unknown until that time but now revealed.

Baptists historically have believed in the perpetuity of true churches just as the Lord Jesus promised in Matthew 16:18 when he said, "...I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

For this reason Baptists have

never claimed to be Protestants. They have always and unanimously until the present generation denied any connection with the Roman Catholic Church and have claimed to have originated with Jesus Christ and the apostles. They did not begin in the 1500's with the Protestant Reformation. Baptists go back to the New Testament period in history. They have never been part of any other denomination, therefore they have nothing to protest!

Not only do we base this on the Lord's promise in Matthew 16:18 that there would always be true churches in this world, we also know it from the testimony of history itself. Johann Mosheim, the great Lutheran historian recognized that the Baptists existed before the Protestant Reformation when he said "Before the rise of Luther and Calvin there lay concealed in almost all countries of Europe, persons who adhered tenaciously to the principles of the Dutch Baptists."

Zwingli, one of the Reformers, said in the midst of the Reformation, "They (Baptists) have caused a great disturbance for 1,300 years." Roman Catholic Cardinal Hosius who was involved in the Roman Catholic Council Of Trent in 1544 and who hated the Baptists nevertheless said very candidly, "If the truth of religion were to be judged by the

readiness and boldness of which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinion and persuasion of no sect can be truer and surer than that of the Anabaptists since there have been none of these 1200 years past, that have been more generally punished or that have more cheerfully and steadfastly undergone and even offered themselves to the most cruel sorts of punishment than these people.”

Thirdly Baptists cannot properly be called Reformed

Because of What Baptists Believe About the Relationship of Church and State

From the time of the apostles the true churches of Jesus Christ were mercilessly persecuted by the Roman government. But no matter how cruelly and how often they were persecuted the number and influence of Christians just kept growing rapidly. By about 314 AD the influence of Christianity in the Roman empire had grown so much that the Emperor Constantine decided to stop persecuting Christians and instead to embrace Christianity and thus use it to solidify and increase his power as emperor.

Constantine claimed to have seen a vision of a fiery red cross in the sky and written on that cross the

words “By This Sign Conquer.” He interpreted this to mean that he should become a Christian and he ordered all persecution of Christians to cease and declared Christianity the state religion of Rome.

Constantine called all the Bishops or pastors of the empire together at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD to get them to come into doctrinal unity. Thus state and church were married with the emperor exerting power over the churches and their pastors.

Ironically when church and state were united under Constantine, Constantine was not even a Christian. He had agreed to become one but he did not yet claim to be a Christian. He finally professed to become a Christian but refused to be baptized until just before his death several years later. Some years after this in 407 AD infant baptism was made mandatory for all and a person became a citizen of the state by being thus baptized.

Obviously when church and state were united in this marriage and infant baptism was required for citizenship in the state great numbers of unregenerate persons came into the churches. When some Christians refused to go along with Constantine’s wedding of church and state he began using the power of the state to

WHY WE ARE NOT PROTESTANTS

DANIEL CHAMBERLIN

The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century was a mixed blessing, part bitter and part sweet. Baptists rejoice in many truths often associated with the Reformation, such as the sovereignty of God in all things, justification by faith only, and exalted views of the worship of God. We have benefited from many outstanding writings which have come through Protestant authors. On the other hand, some aspects of the Reformation have always been a thorn in the side of Baptists. Some of these issues are so foundational that we cannot sacrifice them on the altar of unity.

Of course these non-negotiable issues deserve a more lengthy treatment than we can give here. We shall simply outline briefly six areas of difference which distinguish Baptists from Protestants. We do not wish to misrepresent any Protestants by an unfair caricature painted with a broad brush. Nor do we dare to imply that all Protestants are lost—any more than we would dare to say that all Baptists are saved!

OUR VIEW OF SCRIPTURE

While most everyone claims to believe in the Bible as the only rule of

faith and practice, the Protestant emphasis on creeds tends to subtly undermine this position. B. B. Warfield called the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (WCF hereafter) “...the final crystallization of the elements of evangelical religion...” Baptists believe such language should be reserved for the Bible alone. While Baptists do use confessions of faith as a summary of biblical truth, we never consider anything other than Scripture to be our standard. When in debate, we would rather say, “The Word of God says...,” than to say, “My confession says...” We have no creed but the Scriptures.

The WCF itself contains wording in its first chapter which goes too far for us as well: “The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man’s salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture.”



CONCLUSION

Are Baptists Reformed? The answer of both God's word and of history is, **No, Baptists are not Reformed** and when a Baptist identifies himself as Reformed he is saying something he doesn't really mean. The connotations of the term Reformed convey theological positions, which are contrary to the Baptist position. Hopefully what most Baptists who call themselves Reformed mean is only that they have the same view of salvation as the Reformers. They believe in the doctrines of God's Sovereign grace.

Some modern day Baptists have come to see the biblical doctrines of grace by reading the Reformers and Puritans. In doing so they have also swallowed the Reformed teachings concerning the church. Baptists should accept the biblical doctrines of God's grace but at the same time reject Reformed teachings about the church, which are not based in God's word.

Think about it! Whenever a person calls himself Reformed he is actually recognizing a connection in the past with the Roman Catholic Church because the Reformers came out of that false church. Why should Baptists seek to identify with baby sprinklers while teaching immersion themselves as the right way of baptism?

It is hard to understand how Baptists who were hated and persecuted by Calvin, Luther and other Reformers could now want to be called Reformed themselves. Why should Baptists identify with the Reformers who along with the Catholics are responsible for the blood of thousands of Baptist martyrs?

To call a Baptist church Reformed is confusion to those who know God's word and a little about history. The term "Reformed Baptist" is an oxymoron, a self-contradictory term. One cannot be Reformed and Baptist at the same time as we have defined Reformed and Baptist beliefs today.

In closing the scriptures nowhere call for a Reformation of the false church. Instead the scripture says in Revelation 18:4, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." ♦

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

II Timothy 3:16-17

force them to do so.

Some of these people were called Donatists. The Donatists would not accept the baptism of the state church and rebaptized people who joined them from the state churches. In 413 AD the emperor Theodosius issued an edict declaring that all persons who had been rebaptized and those who had rebaptized them should be punished by death and a river of blood resulted from the marriage of church and state under Constantine.

1,200 years later in the Reformation Calvin and the other Reformers left state and church united and baptism was still required to make one a citizen of the state.

The Reformed Westminster Confession of Faith said in its article titled The Civil Magistrate, "...he hath authority and it is his duty to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered and observed for the better effecting whereof he hath power to call synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever transacted in them be according to the mind of God..."

In the new American nation in the late 1700's this Reformed concept of church and state, which was held by the Puritans, was emphatically rejected. The article in the Westminster Confession had to be revised for Americans after the nation established the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The Donatists did not see the Constantinian arrangements as a victory for Christianity but as a perversion of the scripture's teachings and ultimately as "the fall of the church."

In the time of the Reformation 1,200 years later the Anabaptists would have nothing to do with a state church. This was one of the main reasons for their separation from Calvin and Luther and the other Reformers. The Reformers often referred to the Anabaptists as Donatists or Neo Donatists because the Donatists had opposed this marriage of church and state 1,200 years before the Reformation.

Baptists believe with the New Testament that the civil magistrate has no right to require a form of religion for us or to punish us for not following the religion he requires. Baptists believe that Jesus Christ is Lord of the church and Lord of the state but that he does not rule the state through the church nor the church through the state. We believe that the state can never compel men

to believe the truth. Only the Holy Spirit's quickening work can compel men to do this.

Baptists believe that Christians are citizens of two realms: an earthly realm which is ruled over by man for both the saved and the unsaved and a heavenly kingdom ruled by the Lord Jesus Christ. We base this partly on the words of our Lord in Matthew 22:17 and 21.

For Baptists the church and the world are basically separate and antagonistic to each other. Baptists have no thought and no desire for uniting the two and Baptists have never been the state religion anywhere.

The attitude a person has toward the Constantinian arrangements reveals whether he is Reformed or Baptist in what he believes about the church. Reformed people see the Constantinian change as a victory for Christianity. Baptists see it as the fall of the church.

It is clear that the Reformers did not believe in their motto of *Sola Scriptura* when it came to renouncing the Constantinian arrangements at the time of the Reformation.

Fourthly it is not proper to call Baptists Reformed

BECAUSE OF WHAT BAPTISTS BELIEVE ABOUT BAPTISM

Reformed churches sprinkle for baptism just like the Catholic Church does. They brought this unscriptural practice with them from Catholicism. At the time of the Reformation and even today the Reformers admitted that immersion was the practice of the churches in the New Testament but they sprinkle for baptism anyway. Reformed people tell us that sprinkling is as good as dipping for baptism. But Baptists ask, Will you please show us that in the scriptures?

Reformed churches practice infant baptism. They brought this with them from the Catholic Church. Reformed people say all Christian parents should have their babies sprinkled. Baptists ask, Will you please show us that in the scriptures? There is not a trace of infant baptism to be found in the New Testament. Scriptural, New Testament baptism is adult baptism. Nothing more clearly departs from the New Testament model than infant baptism.

Baptists rejected these errors and insist on believer's baptism and baptism by immersion only and we will not accept sprinklings or baptisms of infants as scriptural baptisms. Baptists demand that those who come desiring to join us from

Reformed denominations which practice these errors be re-baptized or scripturally baptized. This is where we got our name Anabaptists. It means rebaptizers. Later the name was shortened to just Baptists.

Finally it is not proper to call Baptists Reformed

BECAUSE OF THE UNCHRISTIAN WAY THE REFORMED HAVE TREATED BAPTISTS THROUGH THE CENTURIES

The story of Baptists is a story written in blood. Not only did they suffer terribly under Roman Catholic tyranny before the Reformation, they were equally persecuted and slaughtered by the Protestant Reformers.

The Reformers actually hated the Baptists because Baptists insisted that the only rule of faith and practice for the churches is God's word. The Reformers could not argue with this and what they could not destroy with arguments they sought to destroy with force. The Reformers unleashed a bitter and bloody persecution of Baptists because of Baptists' insistence on a consistent application of *Sola Scriptura* to the church and to baptism.

History shows that the leading Reformers shed Baptist blood as

freely as did the Roman Catholics once they achieved the power to enforce their edicts. Calvin himself had many bitter things to say about the Anabaptists calling them furious madmen, frenzied spirits, insane and barbarous men, idiots, and ignorant. He called their teachings delirious dreams, stupidity, mad bedlams and the vomit of a drunkard.

In his work titled "Against The Anabaptists" Calvin said, "Last of all like as a drunkard after he hath well belched doth disgorge the vile broth which charged his stomach, even so these wicked men, after they have detracted this holy estate which the Lord hath so much honored, finally with full throat they do spew out exceeding deformed blasphemies."

Thomas Armitage the Baptist historian refers to these statements by Calvin and other Reformers as "Anti-Baptist fits." Baptists were not part of the Reformation. They were victims of it. Baptists believe with the scriptures that all persecution for the sake of religion is radically wrong and it is a fact that Baptists have never persecuted others but have always been persecuted themselves.