

- I. Introduction.** Today's lesson is a continuation of the hard struggle for reformation with the Baptists giving continuous and valuable aid and fighting bravely with the Reformers. But, Baptists were doomed to bitter disappointment.
- II. Baptists in Germany** during the Reformation.
- A. In 1525, the city of Augsburg in Germany had become a great Baptist center.
 - 1. The Augsburg Baptist church had about 1,100 members with Hans Denck as pastor.
 - 2. An old historian, Clemens Sender, writes thus: "In Augsburg, in the gardens of the houses in 1527, men and women, servants and masters, rich and poor, more than 1,100 of them were rebaptized. They put on peculiar garments in which to be baptized, for in their houses were their baptisteries where there were a number of garments always prepared."
 - B. There were strong Baptist churches, like in Augsburg, located in many places in Germany during the Reformation.
 - C. Baptists were opposed, maligned, and belittled by Martin Luther.
- III. Baptists in the Netherlands** during the Reformation.
- A. The Baptists enjoyed great growth in the Netherlands during the Reformation. Rembrandt, the great painter in Holland was a Baptist.
 - B. Early in the Reformation, Simon Menno drifted from Baptist teachings, and are known today as Mennonites.
- IV. Baptists in Poland** during the Reformation.
- A. Baptists grew mightily in Poland during the Reformation.
 - B. By December 25, 1565, a meeting was held where forty-seven Baptist ministers attended.
 - C. There were many famous preachers and churches in Poland during the Reformation. During the Reformation in Poland, one of the most prominent preachers was Jan Łaski (John a Lasco), considered the "Father of the Polish Reformed Church," who played a key role in organizing the Protestant movement in the country and advocated for religious tolerance; other notable figures include Piotr Tomicki and Stanisław Hosius who were leading figures in the Catholic Counter-Reformation in Poland.

V. Baptists in England during the Reformation.

- A. The first churches planted in England were Baptist churches. Dr. Howell a historian writes, "The prevalence of Baptists from the earliest times and in no small number, will be questioned by no one who is at all familiar with the religious history of the land of our fathers.
- B. The Reformation Period was of long duration in England. It began with Henry VIII and really did not end until the reign of Charles I. During this time, the Church of England came into existence.
 - 1. Henry VIII brutally persecuted the Baptists. Many died by burning. Latimer, a historian writes, "The Anabaptists burnt here were in diverse towns in England as I have heard of credible men, I saw them not myself, went to their death, even intrepid [*fearless, adventurous*], as ye will say, without any fear in the world, cheerfully. Well, let them go."
 - 2. Queen Mary of Scots also persecuted the Baptists vigorously.

VI. During the time of the Reformation, accurate history reveals the presence of Baptists in all the countries of the so-called Christian world.**VII. Historical Summary.** It is proper to review several of the highlights of Church History. Remember we have now covered approximately the first seventeen centuries.

- A. Jesus Christ founded the first church at Jerusalem during His earthly sojourn 30 A.D. Read Matthew 16:18 ***18And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.***
- B. The first persecution of the Christians (33 A.D.) caused them to scatter from Jerusalem and resulted in many churches being established. Read Acts 8:1-4 ***1And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles. 2And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. 3As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. 4Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.***
- C. The Apostle Paul and other missionaries were successful in establishing churches over practically all of the then known world.

- D. For probably 200 years, the churches remained comparably pure in practice and doctrine. However, error had begun to appear, even in the time of the apostles. These churches were Baptists in practice and doctrine.
- E. Early in church history, the separation between the true churches that remained loyal to New Testament doctrine and practices and the churches that drifted into error began to take place.
- F. These churches that remained loyal were known by many different names such as Montanists, Novatians, Donatists, Paulicans, Anabaptists, etc. Through these groups the true, loyal churches lived on. Today these groups are called Baptists.
- G. In 306 A.D., the churches that had drifted into error were consolidated into one organization under one head. Emperor Constantine accomplished this. This consolidation of error was the real beginning of Catholicism and Catholicism was established as the “State Religion” of the Roman Empire. True New Testament churches refused to unite with the Catholic hierarchy.
- H. For the next 800 years, Roman Catholicism grew into a world organization – both politically and religiously. Catholicism unceasingly persecuted those churches that refused to accept their error. Baptists during these years were hunted and slain continually.
- I. By the thirteenth century, conditions had become so intolerably corrupt that some inside Catholicism began to call for a Reformation. Many men such as Wycliff, Huss, Savonarola, Zwingli, Knox, Calvin, Luther, etc. worked for a Reformation.
- J. During the Reformation years, the “Protestants” came into existence. There were four great divisions of the so-called Christian world: Baptists, Protestants, Catholics, and Greek Orthodox Catholic.