

GROW IN GRACE NEWSLETTER

PLEASE USE the Grow in Grace Newsletter for your own spiritual growth; and **AS A RESOURCE** to help equip you to MINISTER to others!

Volume 46, No. 43, October 26, 2021 / Southside Baptist Church / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / **The Grow in Grace Newsletter is a WEEKLY Bible Study**, plus local church news notes— designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church; and is sent forth with the desire to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide), in the experience of 2 Peter 3:18. ***"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD JESUS CHRIST!"***

OCTOBER 2021— THE 504th ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION! [Part 4] Anabaptists: "Forgotten Voices of the Reformation" (By Dr. Glen R. Reider, Dallas Theological Seminary: Prior to teaching at DTS, Dr. Kreider served as Director of Christian Education and then as Senior Pastor in Cedar Hill, TX. His research and writing interests include Jonathan Edwards, theological method, theology and popular culture, and our eschatological hope. Dr. Kreider believes that grace really is amazing; it is a thought that will change the world.)

Upset over the sale of indulgences, among other things, **Luther** posted a set of ninety-five theses for public discussion on October 31, 1517. **In Zurich**, Switzerland, within a few years, Huldrych (or Ulrich) **Zwingli** led a reformation in his church. A couple of decades later, **John Calvin's** influence in Geneva, Switzerland, brought reformation there. **The church in England** experienced reformation largely due to the pope's refusal to grant King Henry VIII the divorce he requested. **These were not organized attempts to change the church but organic and disconnected reform movements that occurred in various places in Europe at about the same time.**

As influential and significant as these figures were, other voices called for reformation in this era. **Often overlooked, even forgotten, for a variety of reasons, the numbers of their followers were, and still are, much smaller than the Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican communities.** Seen as dangerous by both the Roman Catholic Church and

the Protestant magisterial reformers because of their rejection of infant baptism and their support of the separation of church and state, many of them were martyred. Among them were some radicals, and disdain for these extremists sometimes is applied to everyone outside of the magisterial Reformation.

Radical Reformers

The strength of this movement was its attempt to apply the Bible's teaching to life in this world, no matter the cost. George Williams identified three major groups within what he called the "Radical Reformation"—Anabaptists, Spiritualists, and Evangelical Rationalists.

1 The significance of the Anabaptists, Williams explains, is that they "organized disciplined communities of believers, stressing at once individual faith and witness (adult baptism) and corporate discipline (the ban); and they adhered pacifistically to the authority of Holy Scripture, pre-eminently the New Testament."

2 These Christians attempted to put into practice their understanding of the teachings of Jesus, particularly the in Sermon on the Mount. ***In short, the strength of this movement was its attempt to apply the Bible's teaching to life in this world, no matter the cost.***

The term "Anabaptist" has been used broadly to designate any of the groups that practice believers' baptism. They rejected the Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed practice of baptizing infants based upon a covenant or state church model.

The Anabaptists understood the New Testament to teach that baptism follows conversion; thus only believers should be baptized. Since these believers had already been baptized as infants, they were called "Anabaptists," a pejorative label emphasizing their "rebaptism." **In response, these Christians insisted that they were not re-baptized, since their "baptism" as infants was not Christian baptism!**

Snyder writes, "The direct descendants of the Anabaptists are the present day Mennonites, Amish, Hutterites, and some groups of 'Brethren'; the

indirect descendants of the Anabaptists are above all the Baptists, the largest Believers' Church denomination today.”³ **The followers of these forgotten voices are found in Baptist, Bible, and other churches that practice believers' baptism.**

Common Elements

Generalization beyond the view of baptism is difficult since “the movement was pluralistic.”⁴ Yet there are some general tendencies within these movements. **Alister McGrath** summarizes these common elements: “A general distrust of external authority; the rejection of infant baptism in favor of the baptism of adult believers, the common ownership of property; and an emphasis on pacifism and nonresistance.”⁵ Not all groups identified as Anabaptists were pacifists, but many were.

Rejection of the authority of the state, which was an implication of the denunciation of infant baptism, resulted in the charge of anarchy. Throughout Europe, the state and the state church saw the Anabaptists as dangerous. As a result, **thousands were killed.**

Estep puts it well: “Martyrdom became an Anabaptist hallmark. Among those who died at the hands of the authorities for their faith were countless worthy, often unknown, unforgettable witnesses.”⁶

The roots of Anabaptism sprouted in Switzerland. After multiple attempts to get Zwingli to accept their proposal to endorse believers' baptism, several of Zwingli's disciples in Zurich decided to baptize themselves. **On January 21, 1525, the first rebaptism of believers in the era of the Reformation took place in the home of Felix Mantz; this group included Conrad Grebel, George Blaurock, and others. Grebel baptized Blaurock who then baptized the rest.**⁷

Estep writes, “This was clearly the most revolutionary act of the Reformation. No other event so completely symbolized the break with Rome. **Here, for the first time in the course of the Reformation, a group of Christians dared to form a church after what was**

conceived to be the New Testament pattern.”⁸ Within a decade everyone in this group had been martyred.⁹

[Martyred by ‘Christian’ religionists!]

The martyrdom of these Swiss Anabaptists did not stop the spread of Anabaptist though. **Even the threat of imprisonment and death had little effect.** Many of the leaders in the movement were converted Catholic monks or priests and many of them paid for their adoption of Anabaptist convictions with their lives. One of these influential leaders was Michael Sattler, a former Benedictine monk.¹⁰

Michael Sattler

Although the details of a meeting of Anabaptist leaders at Schleithem, Switzerland, (early in 1597) are unclear, what came out of it was a confession of faith that summarized the convictions of many of the Swiss Anabaptists. Written by Sattler, the **“Seven Articles of the Schleithem Confession”** affirm that baptism is only for believers, unrepentant baptized believers should be banned from the table—the table is only for the baptized—believers should separate from the evil and wickedness in the world, pastors should be selected from and supported by the church, the sword is “outside the perfection of Christ,” and Christians should not swear oaths.¹¹ The intent seems clear; to preserve and protect the purity of the community of faith.

In the “Cover Letter,” Sattler warns his followers: “Watch out for all who do not walk in simplicity of divine truth, which has been stated by us in this letter in our meeting, so that everyone might be governed among us by the rule of the ban, and that henceforth the entry of false brothers and sisters among us might be prevented.”¹² The intent seems clear; to preserve and protect the purity of the community of faith.

Soon after the meeting at Schleithem, Sattler was arrested and charged with multiple infractions:

1. That he and his associates have acted against imperial mandate.
2. He has taught, held, and believed, that the body and blood of Christ are not in the sacrament.

3. He taught and believes that infant baptism is not requisite toward salvation.
4. They have rejected the sacrament of unction.
5. Despised and scorned the mother of God and the saints.
6. They have said that one should not swear to the government.
7. Initiated a new and unheard-of usage in the Lord's Supper, with wine and bread crumbled in a basin, and eating the same.
8. He has forsaken the order and has married a wife.
9. He has said, "If the Turk were to come into the land, one should not resist him, and, if it were right to wage war, he would rather go to war against the Christians than against the Turks."¹³

For these charges Sattler was executed as the verdict commanded:

"In the matter of the prosecutor of the imperial majesty versus Michael Sattler, it has been found that Michael Sattler should be given into the hands of the hangman, who shall lead him to the square and cut off his tongue, then chain him to a wagon, there tear his body twice with red hot tongs, and again when he is brought before the gate, five more times."¹⁴ Finally, his body was burned.

The Right to Discipline

Most of the Swiss Anabaptists were pacifists, following the "Schleitheim Confession," but not all the Anabaptist leaders agreed on the use of the sword. **Balthasar Hubmaier**, a onetime colleague of Zwingli in Zurich, defended the state's use of force. He argued from Matthew 18:15-20 that the state has the right to discipline using the sword and the church disciplines through the ban: "These two offices and mandates of the ban and external sword are not against each other since they are both from God."¹⁵ He concludes, "Thus can also the church with its ban and the government with its sword go along with each other and neither interfere in the office of the other."¹⁶

On Romans 13:1-7, Hubmaier observes that Paul instructs everyone, believers and unbelievers, to be subject to the government and asserts that the government does not bear the sword in vain. Hubmaier continues, "He also explicitly adds that the authority is the servant of God. Where then are those who say the Christian cannot use the sword? For if a Christian could

not be a servant of God, could not fulfill the mandate of God without sinning, then God would not be good. He would have made an order which a Christian could not fulfill without sin. That is blasphemy.”^[17] Hubmaier’s position was never widely accepted by the Anabaptists.^[18] **Hubmaier, too, paid for his belief in believers’ baptism with his life. He was executed on March 10, 1528, in Vienna, less than three years after he was baptized. He was burned to death. Three days later his wife was drowned in the Danube.**^[19]

Resolute Abandonment for Christ

Perhaps the most powerful story of pacifism and the desire to live out the ethical implications of Jesus is **the story of Dirk Willems**. He was captured,



tried, and convicted by the Roman Catholic Church as a heretic in the Dutch village of Asperen in 1569. He escaped from his prison castle by letting himself out of a window using a rope of knotted rags. He took off across a frozen pond. **A guard saw him and chased him across the thin ice but, due to his heavier weight, the guard fell through**

the ice. Willems heard his pursuer’s cries for help and returned to rescue him. The only kind of love I know that extends to enemies is the love taught and lived by Jesus.

The chief magistrate who watched this event from the shore demanded that Willems be re-arrested and on May 16, 1569, he was burned to death.^[20] Joseph Liechty concludes, “I am convinced that the only force strong enough to take Dirk back across the ice was an extraordinary outpouring of love. The only kind of love I know that extends to enemies is the love taught and lived by Jesus.”^[21]

Menno Simons, a Dutch priest, left the Catholic Church in 1536 to spend the rest of his life as “a hunted heretic, preaching by night to secret

conventicles of brothers and sisters, baptizing new believers in country streams and out-of-the-way lakes, establishing churches and ordaining pastors from Amsterdam to Cologne to Danzig.”^[22] He was one of few early Anabaptist leaders to die of natural causes, in 1561.

His biographer summarizes his thought well: “Practical Christianity meant for Menno the resolute abandonment by the Christian of all carnal strife and war, indeed of the use of force in any manner, as well as a thoroughgoing separation from the sin of the worldly social order. . . . **For him the church was the representative and agent of Christ on earth, and as such was to keep itself holy and pure in life and doctrine, and was to give a faithful witness for Christ until He came.**”^[23]

None of the reformers intended to start a movement of followers or a denomination. Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Menno Simons would hardly be pleased that, generations later, Christians identify themselves by claiming their names.

Rather, as they read the Bible, they saw inconsistencies between what God’s Word declared and what they saw in practice—in the church of their day and in their own lives. **So, out of submission to the authority of the Word of God, they began to put those teachings into practice.**

May such a desire to be doers of the Word characterize our lives too and may God give us the grace to stand for truth, no matter the cost.

^[1] George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 3rd ed. (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Publishers, 1992).

^[2] George H. Williams, “Introduction,” in *Spiritualist and Anabaptist Writers*, ed. George Hunston Williams and Angel M. Mergal, Library of Christian Classics, vol. 25 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), 23.

^[3] C. Arnold Snyder, *Anabaptist History and Theology: An Introduction* (Kitchener, Ontario: Pandora Press, 1995), 1.

^[4] Walter Klaasen, “Anabaptism,” *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, ed. Cornelius J. Dyck and Dennis D Martin, vol. 5 (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1990), 24.

^[5] *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 5th ed. (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 48.

^[6] William R. Estep, *The Anabaptist Story: An Introduction to Sixteenth-Century Anabaptism*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 57.

^[7] Snyder, *Anabaptist History and Theology*, 53-54

^[8] Estep, *Anabaptist Story*, 14.

^[9] Chris Good, “[The Anabaptists and the Reformation](#),” accessed 21 March 2017.

^[10] Gustav Bossert, Jr., Harold S. Bender, C. Arnold Snyder, “[Michael Sattler](#),” *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, accessed, 25 April 2017.

^[11] Michael Sattler, “The Schleithem Brotherly Union,” in *The Legacy of Michael Sattler*, ed. and trans. John H. Yoder, Classics of the Radical Reformation, vol. 1 (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1973), 36-42.

^[12] Sattler, “Schleithem,” 43.

^[13] Yoder, ed., “Trial and Martyrdom,” in *Michael Sattler*, 70-71.

^[14] Yoder, ed., “Trial and Martyrdom,” in *Michael Sattler*, 75.

¹⁵ Balthasar Hubmaier, "On the Sword," in *Balthasar Hubmaier: Theologian of Anabaptism*, ed. and trans. H. Wayne Pipkin and John H. Yoder, Classics of the Radical Reformation, vol. 5 (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1989), 506.

¹⁶ Hubmaier, "On the Sword," 506-7.

¹⁷ Hubmaier, "On the Sword," 521.

¹⁸ Estep, *The Anabaptist Story*, 99.

¹⁹ Estep, *The Anabaptist Story*, 103.

²⁰ Dan Graves, "[Dirk Willem Burned after Rescuing Pursuer](#)," accessed 9 April 2017, and "[Compassion for the Enemy](#)," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, accessed 9 April 2017.

²¹ Joseph Liechty, "[Why Did Dirk Willems Turn Back?](#)" The Anabaptist Network, accessed 11 April 2017

²² Timothy George, *Theology of the Reformers*, revised ed. (Nashville: B&H, 2013), 277.

²³ Harold Stauffer Bender, "A Brief Biography of Menno Simons," in *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, ed. J. C. Wenger, trans. Leonard Verduin (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1956), 29.

Grace and Freedom: An Anabaptist Perspective, by Antonio González; *The Conrad Grebel Review* 25, no. 2 (Spring 2007)

"The first Anabaptists had a strong sense of the sovereignty of God's grace, made concrete in the experience of calling or vocation. By establishing believers' churches, they broke the equation between church and society that had prevailed since "the Constantinian shift." Rejection of infant baptism implied accepting the fact that not everyone born in a certain territory were members of the church of Christ.

To be a member of that church is something that, from an Anabaptist perspective, can be explained only given the sovereignty of a God who freely calls God's chosen and gathers them to become part of God's family. To belong to such a family would not bring social advantage to the Anabaptists, but persecution and death. To become a member of this kind of church could be explained only with a strict understanding of calling. The basis for belonging to such a body of believers, hated and persecuted by the social setting, was God's call, not the individual's interests or preferences.⁹ (See: W. Klassen, *Selecciones teológicas anabautistas* (Guatemala, 1985), 73-87.)

NATHAN FINN HAS SAID: "So on this Reformation Day, I'm thankful for the Protestant heritage we Baptists enjoy. We stand with Luther and Calvin on justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. We stand with the Anabaptists on a believer's church committed to radical discipleship and confessor's baptism. We stand with all three of these groups in their commitment to the supreme authority of Scripture. And as good Protestants, we ultimately stand where we stand, not because others stand there as well, but because we believe the Spirit still speaks through His Word to guide Christ's people on the narrow way!"

Grace! Peace! Love in Christ! To All Saints! James

www.southsidegallatin.org

NEWS NOTES:

EVERY Saturday, * 8:00 AM, 10/30/21 — Men's Bible Study: *THE BOOK OF JOB, Chapter 13-14*** (Doors open by 7:30am... coffee, juice, donuts, and Hardee's Biscuits are available!)

***** NEXT Ladies Bible Study! NOVEMBER 9 @ 11:00 AM**

SUNDAY SERVICES, OCTOBER: 31

1. * Sunday School at 9:30am:** Nursery, Children's classes, Youth, and Adult classes.

2. * WORSHIP SERVICE at 10:45am!**

OCTOBER 31! ... NO EVENING SERVICES at the church building

TUESDAYS: WEEKLY Youth Group Meeting, ages 12 and up ... Tuesdays a 7:15pm... at Jaden and Rhi's home...

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS @ SOUTHSIDE:

6:30pm— come in back 'double doors' under the Drive Thru awning!

**** Adult Prayer Service**

**** Young FAMILIES Prayer Service**

***** LOVE OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD BY MAIL or by ONLINE GIVING:**

SUCH funds, (if checks), make out to Southside Baptist) — **MAIL TO:** Southside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1594, Gallatin, TN 37066/ **OR YOU MAY CHOOSE TO GIVE** via ONLINE GIVING:

<https://southsidebaptist.breezechms.com/give/online>

HEALTH REMINDERS as to CHURCH SERVICES AND as to Responding with WISDOM and NOT fear IN SEEKING TO KEEP AS HEALTHY AS WE CAN— SO AS TO BE ACTIVE IN THE KINGDOM BUSINESS OF THE LORD!

1. IF YOU ARE SICK... [OR if you are in a state of high immune deficiency or if (at home or work) you are caring for one who is sick; or if you have • Fever; • Coughing; • Chills; • Headache; • Sore throat; etc.], Please stay home!]

2. IF YOU ARE HEALTHY and well... you may or may not choose to wear a mask... WE do not require it. WE CONTINUE to encourage FREEDOM as to 'social distancing'... masks ... vaccine choices, etc. — PLEASE HONOR THE LORD, by continuing to give sensitivity and respect one to another.

3. In addition to carefulness, good hydration, good nutrition, and sleep— ALSO: SEEK TO BUILD UP A STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM! I PERSONALLY TAKE ELDERBERRY, VITAMIN C, ZINC, GINGER, VITAMIN D, Quercetin, and a good multi-vitamin that includes fiber... And I have a PRESCRIPTION of Ivermectin... TO TAKE, if needed.

DO YOUR OWN RESEARCH! BE PROACTIVE! BE PREVENTIVE!

4. LET each of us DO OUR PART IN personal hygiene. [IF you use the restrooms— please wash your hands with SOAP; and use nearby SANITIZER.]

5. HERE IS AN EDUCATIONAL resource from The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons... FROM Doctors who successfully treat covid-19 patients!

CLICK => <https://breggin.com/covid-19-home-treatment/>

**Peter McCullough, MD testifies to Texas Senate HHS Committee.
BRIEF. EXCELLENT:**

→ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAHi3lX3oGM>

The PDF booklet: A Guide to Home-Based COVID Treatment can be downloaded ... **focus is on PREVENTION and early treatment!**

[COVID Treatment - Truth for Health Foundation](#)

<https://www.truthforhealth.org/patientguide/patient-treatment-guide/>