

To Servetus, the Holy Trinity was like Cerberus. Indeed, in mythology, Cerberus was seen as the three-headed dog of Satan -- the Hell-hound guarding the entrance of Hades!

### **43. The influence of Servetus among Anabaptists internationally**

The influence of the rabid Antitrinitarian Miguel Serveto alius Servetus, soon spread to Italy. Then, also with that of the Italian Unitarian Socinus, it reached Hungary and Poland.

Soon Vilnius too, the capital of Lithuania, was a centre of Anabaptism.<sup>260</sup> There, the Calvinist Georg Weigel stated that the Antitrinitarian Anabaptists "tell their dreams and visions...[and] introduce plurality of wives, community of goods, contempt of the magistrate, of the courts, and of every rank."

As the later Calvinist Rev. Professor Dr. H. Bouwman has shown: "In Bohemia, Italy and Poland -- many still remained Anabaptists." There, "they intermixed especially with the Antitrinitarians..., absorbing themselves into the Socinians."<sup>261</sup>

Interestingly, even the American Baptist Rev. Professor Dr. H.C. Vedder admits<sup>262</sup> that "we find definite proofs of immersion only among the Anabaptists...in Poland." Namely, onefold submersion among the unitarian Antitrinitarians.<sup>263</sup>

The Anabaptists included even what Harvard's G.H. Williams has called "immersionist *Trideistae*" alias thrice-submersing Tritheists [*cf.* the later polytheistic Mormons]. Poland then had many Anabaptist Tritheists; but even more once-submersing Anabaptist Arians.

Through its crypto-subordinationistic denial of the *Filioque* alias the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Son as well as from the Father, the nearby 'Russian Orthodox' alias "Greek Orthodox formulation of the Trinity [altogether quite unintentionally] helped the Proto-Unitarians." Such were "the antitrinitarian antipaedobaptist Radicals."<sup>264</sup> Indeed, "their Protestant and Catholic foes called them 'Arians.'<sup>265</sup>

These deadly heresies were then quite general among Anabaptists. As the very eminent Church Historian Rev. Professor Dr. Kurtz has explained:<sup>266</sup> "It was agreed...to summon an Anabaptist Council to meet at Vienna in September 1550.... About sixty deputies...[there] laid down the following doctrinal propositions as binding upon all their congregations:

"Christ is not God, but man.... There are neither angels nor devil.... There is no other Hell than the grave in which the elect sleep...till they shall be awakened at the last day.... The souls of the ungodly, as well as their bodies -- like those of the beasts -- perish in death."

The Iberian Anabaptist Servetus spread his Antitrinitarianism to Italy, and thence his fellow-heretic Faustus Socinus then exported Unitarianism to Poland and thence to Holland and even to England. Walter Klaassen's *Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant* -- and I.B. Horst's *The Radical Brethren: Anabaptism and the English Reformation to 1558* -- help substantiate these facts.<sup>267</sup>

"The Anabaptists," claims the Baptist Estep, "made the New Testament alone normative for the Christian life" -- and not also the remaining four-fifths of the Holy Bible! Even the 'moderate' Anabaptist Pilgram Marbeck (alias Marpeck) held to "an absolute distinction between the Old Testament and the New."<sup>268</sup>

Too, the Neo-Anabaptist Harold Bender states<sup>269</sup> the case extremely accurately -- in the *Mennonite Quarterly Review*. Writes Bender: "Anabaptism was not fully conformant to Reformation Protestantism, in that it refused to place the Old Testament on a parity with the New Testament...., relegating therefore the Old Testament to the position of a preparatory instrument.... Baptism is not the counterpart of circumcision, therefore."

However, God's Holy Bible teaches the very opposite. Romans 4:10f & 6:1f; Galatians 3:6-29; Colossians 2:11-13. Dispensationalists -- note well!

#### **44. Candid assessment of the Anabaptists' faith and practice**

The famous Swiss-American German Reformed church historian Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff has explained<sup>270</sup> that "the early history of the Anabaptists exhibits...violent revolutions, separatism, mysticism, millenarianism, spiritualism, contempt of history, ascetic rigor, fanaticism, communism, and some novel [Neo-Gnostic] speculations concerning the body of Christ as being directly created by God and different from the flesh and blood of other men.... They rebaptized those baptized in infancy.... They themselves denied the validity of infant baptism...and regarded voluntary baptism in 'years of discretion' as the only true baptism."

To Schaff, the Anabaptist Münster was the "evangelist of the social revolution." He anticipated the Marxists and Leninists (who praised him). Thus, as a 'Revolutionary Communist' he signed his pamphlets: "Münster with the hammer [and sickle]!" And "Let not the saint's sword grow cold from blood!"

While sympathetic even to the Antitrinitarian Servetus,<sup>271</sup> Harvard's Dr. G.H. Williams has admitted<sup>272</sup> that among the Anabaptists in general "the imminent advent...was discussed and calculated with enthusiasm. Group confession led to disclosures that alarmed spouses.... Glossolalia broke out. There was lewdness and unchastity, and the extraordinary declaration of a deranged woman that she was predestined to give birth to the Antichrist."

According to the American Baptist Rev. Professor Dr. M'Glothlin,<sup>273</sup> it was not till 1527 that the first Anabaptist 'Articles of Confession' were drawn up -- inculcating, however, the teachings of Communism. This was done by the ex-priest Michael Sattler -- at Schleithem, on the border of Germany and Switzerland. The full title of that document is *The Brotherly Union of a Number of Children of God Concerning Seven Articles*.

Those *Seven Articles* of Schleithem were the ecumenical 'basis of agreement' defining the Brotherly Union of German and Swiss Anabaptists. They consisted of: (1) the total rejection of infant baptism; (2) the rigid affirmation of the mandatory ban; (3) a heretical view of the Lord's supper; (4) an unbiblical doctrine of ministry; (5) their statement on the need to

separate from political 'abominations'; (6) their rejection of the State's sword; and (7) their repudiation of the oath.<sup>274</sup>

The great Church Historian Philip Schaff has noted<sup>275</sup> that "the earliest Anabaptist articles" in these "Swiss statements of 1527...bear solely on practical questions. Two of the teachings inculcate communism; and that the Lord's supper be celebrated as often as the brethren come together." Ah, modern advocates of weekly-communionism, and even of daily-communionism -- here we come!

For a refutation of this Communism of the Anabaptists, see Francis Nigel Lee's *Biblical Private Property Versus Socialistic Common Property* and his *Communist Eschatology*.<sup>276</sup> For a refutation of their overly-frequentative use of the Lord's supper, see Francis Nigel Lee's *Quarterly Communion at Biblical Seasons Annually*.<sup>277</sup>

It is very significant that the author of the *Seven Articles*, the Anabaptist Michael Sattler himself, felt obliged to write a revealing disclaimer in the *Preface* thereof. Acknowledged Sattler:<sup>278</sup> "A very great offence has been introduced by some false-brothers among us[!] -- whereby several...[attempted] to practise and observe 'the freedom of the Spirit'...[in] the lasciviousness and licence of the flesh. They have esteemed that faith and love may do, and permit, everything -- and that nothing can harm nor condemn them, since they are 'believers.'"

However, neither Schleithem's Saddler nor the Hutterite Stadler ever softened their hatred of private property and their promotion of communal goods.<sup>279</sup> So Calvin himself amply refuted<sup>280</sup> Schleithem, in 1544. Indeed, even the somewhat-liberal American Professor Dr. Henry Preserved Smith<sup>281</sup> rightly called these Anabaptists: 'Bolsheviks.'

The *Articles of Association* of the Moravian Anabaptists forbade the Lord's supper to persons holding private property.<sup>282</sup> (Needless to say, those Moravian Anabaptists should not be confused with Count Zinzendorff's later 'Moravian Brethren' who converted Wesley.)

Also the 'Articles of Faith' of the Dutch Mennonites upheld many heterodox beliefs. Thus the various editions of the (1580f) *Confession of Waterland*<sup>283</sup> still denied the guilt of hereditary sin (article 4); taught that God predestinated all men for salvation (article 7); rejected war, secular office-holding, and oaths (articles 18 & 37 & 38); and repudiated infant baptism as 'unscriptural' (article 31).

Significantly, the Mennonites in the Netherlands later called themselves *Doopsgezinden* (alias 'Baptist-minded'). This occurred even before the very-much-later establishment of Baptist congregations in Holland.

All of the Anabaptists attacked infant baptism. Yet most of them 'rebaptized' adults by way of pouring alone. Only such Anabaptists as were unitarian, seem to have submersed.

The first clear case of submersion among the Anabaptists -- thus the Baptist M'Glothlin<sup>284</sup> -- occurred when the altogether-naked Ulimann got himself submersed in the Rhine. Thereafter, it was especially the unitarian Polish Anabaptists who submersed -- and, indeed, onefoldly and not trinely.

Only during the seventeenth century did the first English-speaking (Re-)Baptists baptize and/or rebaptize by submersion alone -- and, indeed, also onefoldly. Fortunately, they then did so only by way of non-naked submersions -- and, indeed, as Non-Unitarians.

As Wheaton College's Rev. Professor Dr. Donald M. Lake has very candidly insisted<sup>285</sup> in his article on *Baptism*: "Only with the English Baptists, about 1633, did the issue of immersion [or rather submersion] arise among the Particular Baptists. Prior to this, even the Baptists practiced affusion or sprinkling."

Most of the Anabaptists were intolerant and violent, although some of the later ones were pacifistic. Some Anabaptists even killed all who refused rebaptism.

Most affirmed soul-sleep, and denied the existence of Hell, and of the Devil. Many were Communists, polygamists and/or advocates of 'group marriage' alias 'free love' (*sic*).

The majority seem to have been a miscellaneous assortment of Antitrinitarians -- namely Binitarians, Modalists (alias Sabellians), Pantheists, Tritheists, Polytheists, and/or Unitarians. Even the uniquely-trinitarian Anabaptist Menno Simons denied Christ's incarnation; and the Anabaptist Servetus denounced the Holy Trinity as a 'dog from Hell with three heads.'

Already by 1534, Anabaptism had been exported even to England.<sup>286</sup> Practising community of property and community of wives, the violent kind of Anabaptists were the forerunners of the Red Revolutions of 1848 and 1917 and thereafter -- even till today.

Those Anabaptists then, in effect, as much as declared in the closing words of the later *Communist Manifesto*: "Communists of the World! Working men of all nations -- ignite!"

#### **45. Fundamental nature of the views on baptism of the Anabaptists**

Appreciating that most Anabaptists did not immerse (or rather submerge) under water, we need not dwell on the maverick plunging of the noted Anabaptist Ulimann in the Rhine -- nor on the single submersionisms of the Unitarian Polish Anabaptists. Accordingly, we here confine our attention only to the widespread Anabaptist denial of any 'sealing' during baptism -- and especially their individualistic denial of household baptism (and thus of that of covenantal infants).

The Anabaptists did not heed the Biblical statements about the 'sealing' (or confirmatory) effect of baptism -- especially in respect of covenantal children (Romans 4:11f *cf.* Colossians 2:11f). Nor did they understand that believers' children, even before their birth, are already to be regarded as being among the faithful.<sup>287</sup> (See Psalm 22:9f and Jeremiah 1:5 and Luke 1:13-17 & 1:41-44 and First Corinthians 7:14 *etc.*)

Thus the Anabaptists denied the possibility of regeneration and faith within unborn babies, and also in newly-born children.<sup>288</sup> Consequently, they also denied that any newly-born children should receive baptism as the 'seal' of regeneration and faith.

Holy Scripture, however, teaches that only those sinners who have been regenerated can enter into the Kingdom of God. See John 3:3-8. This clearly means that all unregenerates, even if still very tiny, are lost.

Yet the Anabaptists held that babies are: neither lost; nor sinners; nor regeneratable. Misunderstanding the Covenant, they maintained that all babies are merely 'innocent' -- as too, they wrongly alleged, were also the positively-righteous unfallen Adam and Eve.<sup>289</sup> Ecclesiastes 7:29.

The Anabaptists correctly saw that saving faith is not acquired by baptism. Neither is faith obtained for the very first time only at that sacrament's administration.<sup>290</sup>

Yet the obvious fact that believers' babies should be seen as already residing among the faithful even before their birth -- never dawned upon the Anabaptists. These heretics accordingly denied the possibility of regeneration and faith inside believers' unborn infants themselves -- and also inside just-born babies and other young children of believers.<sup>291</sup>

Following the heretic Pelagius, the Anabaptists quite wrongly held that all children -- even those of pagan parents -- were devoid of guilt.<sup>292</sup> Sinless infants (said the Anabaptists) need neither repentance; nor faith in Christ; nor baptism.

Indeed, they concluded that even the infants of believers have no faith at all -- at least while still infants. Holy Scripture, however, teaches quite the opposite -- Psalm 22:9f; Matthew 18:6; Luke 1:44 & 18:15f; Second Timothy 1:5 & 3:14f cf. Hebrews 11:6.

#### **46. Butzer, Oecolampadius and the 1532 First Basle Confession on baptism**

In 1530, the Reformed *Tetrapolitan Confession* appeared. This was drawn up by Calvin's mentor Martin Butzer alius Martin(us) Bucer(us) and others. It rightly states<sup>293</sup> that without faith, it is impossible to please God [cf. Hebrews 11:6].

Declares that *Confession*: "Baptism is a sacrament of the Covenant which God makes with those who belong to Him. There, He promises to protect them and their descendants and to regard them as His people....

"It [baptism] should be imparted even to the children.... Every promise applies just as much to us, as to those of old; 'I will be the God of you, and of your seed.'" Genesis 17:7-14.

Butzer also wrote to the Anabaptist Margaret Blaures in 1531 about the well-known Anabaptist Pilgram Marbeck. Asked Butzer:<sup>294</sup> "What is the view of your Anabaptist about whom you wrote to me -- but that of the ancient Cyprian, who [wrongly] wanted to rebaptize all who had been baptized by heretics?"

Also Rev. Professor Dr. Johann Heuszgen or Hausschein (alias Oecolampadius) -- Zwingli's friend in Basle -- firmly believed that regeneration often precedes infant baptism. In his *Instruction Against Rebaptism*, he urges Christians not to trust in baptism itself.

For not the earthly water but only the Spirit of Christ washes away sins and brings about regeneration. Yet baptism is necessary, so that people can regard us as belonging to the number of the Christians. Also infants of believers need forgiveness of sin, and regeneration. For they too follow the sinful Adam.<sup>295</sup>

"If that were not so," explains Oecolampadius, "it would be incorrect to baptize them. For then, it would be a lying sign."

Indeed, baptism indicates the forgiveness precisely of sin -- through faith in the cleansing blood of Jesus. The fact is, however, that God "provides" the "Holy Spirit" to at least such of His elect who die in their infancy before receiving baptism!

At the same time, God provides also that those who do not die before their baptism in infancy, but who live till early childhood and beyond, then have "further grace poured over" them. See Johannes Oecolampadius's 1527 *Answer to Balthazar Hübmaier's "Little Book Against...Infant Baptism."*<sup>296</sup>

Above, it should be noted that Oecolampadius advised "to baptize" also the infants of believers -- and then to expect them to have further grace "poured over" them. Very clearly, these words indicate his conviction that also the babies of believers already had received **grace** -- pre-baptismally. Therefore, they too should be baptized unto yet "further grace" -- and, indeed, thus be baptized not by submersion but precisely by having the water "poured over" them (by way of sprinkling). For that baptism itself was to be a forerunner also of many additional and further blessings to be imparted to them -- precisely post-baptismally.

Oecolampadius presupposed the regeneratedness of, and tiny faith within, covenantal infants of believers -- even before those infants' later baptism as tiny babies. Yet he also presupposed a (post-regenerational) addition of "further grace poured over" them during their baptism by way of affusion -- as well as their receiving still further grace subsequent to their infant baptism and by way of their ongoing sanctification.

It was probably Oecolampadius who wrote the 1532 *First Basle Confession*.<sup>297</sup> That was subsequently revised in 1534 by his Zurich successor, Rev. Professor Dr. Oswald Myconius.

It ends with a section under the heading: 'Against the Errors of the Anabaptists.' Very significantly, the *First Basle Confession* there proclaims: "We openly declare that we not only do not accept -- but that we reject -- those strange erroneous teachings as abominable and as blasphemous. For these weird swarms (*Rottengeister*) also say -- among other condemned and evil opinions -- that one should not baptize children.

"We, however, **do** get them baptized! According to the custom of the Apostles and of the Primitive Church -- and also because baptism has come in the place of circumcision."

Thus, Oecolampadius and Myconius themselves both preached and practised apostolic baptism in accordance with Romans 4:11 and Colossians 2:11-13. The Anabaptists, however, were simply *Rottengeister*!

#### **47. Bullinger's Unashamed Wickedness and Second Basle or First Helvetic Confession**

Together with the relevant writers of Bucer and Oecolampadius as above, also the 1531 work *Unashamed Wickedness* (about the Anabaptist Pfistermeyer and his followers) should be compared. Written by Zwingli's successor Henry Bullinger, the latter there said of those Swiss Anabaptists:

"They be wholly given over to such foul and detestable sensuality.... They do interpret it to be the commandment of the Heavenly Father, persuading women and honest matrons that it is impossible for them to be partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven -- unless they do abominably prostitute and make common their own bodies to all men" who are Anabaptists.

Again according to Bullinger, these Anabaptists further taught that they "ought to suffer all kinds of infamy or reproach for Christ's sake. Besides that, the publicans and harlots [held the Anabaptists] shall be preferred to the 'righteous' in the Kingdom of Heaven....

[Furthermore, they also taught that] Christ was but a prophet. [Indeed, they were even fond of] saying that ungodly persons...and the devils also should enjoy the heavenly bliss."<sup>298</sup>

The *Second Basle Confession* alias the *First Helvetic [or Swiss] Confession* of 1536, was drawn up by the same Bullinger. He did so in association with Myconius, Megander, Leo Judae, Butzer and Capito.

Henry Bullinger was Zwingli's successor in Zurich. There, Myconius succeeded Oecolampadius as Professor of Theology. Megander was recommended by Zwingli for a Zurich Professorship. Leo Judae was Zwingli's co-worker in Zurich. And Butzer and Capito were Reformed Theologians from Strassburg.<sup>299</sup>

This *First Helvetic Confession* is directed largely against the Anabaptists. It insists<sup>300</sup> that Christ "has two different unmixed natures in one individual person.... He took our flesh upon Himself (yet without sin)...from the virgin Mary."

It further declares<sup>301</sup> that the "sacraments...are not merely empty signs -- but consist of signs and the things signified. For in baptism, the water is the sign. The signified thing itself, however, is regeneration and adoption in the family of God."

The *First Helvetica* continues: "We baptize our children with this holy washing." Literally, it says: 'we tinge our infants' (in the original Latin). It would be unfair if we were to rob those born from us [who are God's people] -- of the fellowship of God's people" [namely the Christian fellowship of the parents of such infants]. For "our children are predestined through the divine Word -- and they are those whose pious election is to be presumed."

In the last sentence, the official Latin text reads: "*infantos nostros...tingimus...de eorum electione pie est praesumendum.*" The official German translation here runs: "*taufen wir unsre Kinder...von denen man vermuthen soll, sie seien von Gott erwählt.*" To proof-text this

‘presumed election’ of the infant children of believers -- the *Confession* itself then immediately goes on to cite: "Titus 3; Acts 10; Genesis 17; First Corinthians 7; and Luke 18."

Note here that the word ‘presume’ is used! The *First Helvetica* thus teaches not the false and hypercalvinistic heresy of irrebuttable and asserted regeneration of covenantal infants.

Instead, it teaches the glorious Calvinistic (and also Pre-Calvinistic) doctrine of the rebuttable yet nevertheless presupposed or "presumed" regeneration of covenantal infants. And, indeed, of such a "presumed" regeneration even before their baptism.

Later apostasy, after infant baptism (and also especially after adult baptism), would certainly rebut this prebaptismal presumption. Wherever such apostasy then occurs to the point it cannot be denied, this proves the previous presumption to have been incorrect.

Yet, unless and until such post-baptismal apostasy might occur undeniably -- prebaptismal regeneration is indeed to be presumed -- as an appropriate prerequisite for the right administration of baptism. Indeed, also every intelligent Baptist rightly presumes regeneratedness before baptism -- and later rejects that presumption only if the baptizee should thereafter apostasize from the earlier presumption that he really did belong to Jesus already before his baptism.

The *Helvetica* then concludes with a warning against "all those who hamper the holy congregation and fellowship of the Church, and who introduce ungodly doctrines.... These are signs which in our time are displayed mostly by the Anabaptists....

"They [the ‘ungodly doctrines’ of ‘the Anabaptists’] should be suppressed, so that they [the Anabaptists] do not poison nor harm nor pollute the flock of God with their false doctrines.... The magistrate should punish and eradicate all blasphemy."<sup>302</sup>

#### **48. The development of the paedobaptistic John Calvin’s Anti-Anabaptist views**

Calvin attained advanced degrees in the Humanities, Law, and Theology. But it was only when about twenty-four, that he had a sudden conversion unto recognizing Christ’s Lordship. He then saw this as his own yielding to the Triune God Who previously had sealed him at his infant baptism in the Romish Church many years earlier in 1509.

It was thus only in 1533 that the 24-year-old Calvin underwent the internal crisis of a mighty and "sudden conversion" unto recognizing the Lordship of Christ. That was followed, three years later, by the first edition of his magnificent *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

Another twenty-four years later, in 1557, Calvin first published the *Preface* to his *Commentary on the Psalms*. There, he furnishes us with an account of some of the events leading up to his earlier "sudden conversion" adequately to recognize the Lordship of Christ -- and later to his production of the *Institutes*.



Already at the front of the first edition of his *Institutes*, in his 1536 *Preface to Francis King of France*, Calvin was defending himself against the Romanists' charge that the Protestants were Anabaptists. That charge, retorted Calvin, was false.

For, together with the Romanists, Calvin too opined that the "tumults and disputes" of Anabaptism "ought to be ascribed to the malice of Satan." Indeed, that malice -- insisted Calvin -- was then being manifested "by means of his Catabaptists [alias Rebaptists] and other portentous miscreants."<sup>303</sup>

Why, then, had Calvin gone and written his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*? There, he states he had done so precisely to persuade the Romish King Francis that the Calvinists stood with the Romanists -- against those malicious Anabaptists.

Later yet, the Reformer wrote in the 1557 *Preface* to his *Commentary on the Psalms*<sup>304</sup> that around 1533 "God by a sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame." At that earlier time, however, "certain wicked and lying pamphlets were circulated" by the persecuting French Romanists. Therein, they had assailed the true Protestants -- only obliquely, yet cruelly and very effectively.

They did so, explains Calvin, by claiming "that none were being treated with such cruelty [by the Romanists] except Anabaptists and seditious persons" -- as if cruelty even toward Anabaptists could ever be justifiable! They, Rome correctly claimed regarding those Anabaptists, "by their perverse ravings and false opinions were overthrowing not only religion but also all civil order."

To that, Calvin responded: "It appeared to me that unless I opposed them [the Anabaptists as well as the Romanists] to the utmost of my ability -- my silence could not be vindicated from the charge of cowardice and treachery. This was the consideration which induced me to publish my *Institutes of the Christian Religion*" -- in 1536.

#### **49. Calvin upheld covenantal infants' presumed faith before baptism**

In his *Institutes*, Calvin repudiated<sup>305</sup> the above-mentioned Romish allegations that Bible-believing Protestants -- those who witnessed for the purity of Christ's Gospel -- were "Anabaptists and seditious persons." Indeed, the very actions of the revolutionary Anabaptists themselves -- even toward Calvinists! -- clearly indicated the untruthfulness of the above Anti-Calvinistic allegations of the Romanists.

Calvin next stated that, in addition to the Romanists -- also "the Anabaptists began to assail us." Why so?

Because the Calvinists had opposed the anarchy of the Anabaptists -- including their revolutionary repudiation of infant baptism for covenantal children. Clearly, the revolutionary Anabaptists had broken with the Holy Bible and also with the Historic Church -- in a very major way.

Calvin yet further described<sup>306</sup> the "madness" of these "certain giddy men...who, while they make a great display of the superiority of the Spirit..., deride the simplicity of those who only delight in what they [the Anabaptists] call 'the dead and deadly letter.' But I wish they would tell me what 'spirit' it is whose 'inspiration' raises them to such a 'sublime' height -- that they dare despise the doctrine of Scripture!"

Against Scripture, "the Anabaptists...condemn all [oaths] without exception."<sup>307</sup> Indeed, adds Calvin,<sup>308</sup> "some Anabaptists in the present age mistake some indescribable sort of frenzied excess for the regeneration of the Spirit -- holding that the children of God...need give themselves no anxiety about curbing the lust of the flesh."

Now it needs clearly to be understood that the Bible and the Church Universal and also Calvin all sharply distinguish between unrepeatable prior and saving regeneration, on the one hand -- and, on the other hand, subsequent conversion (and repeated reconversions) as the later fruit(s) thereof. Thus, to the Bible and to the Church Universal and to Calvin, infants may indeed be regenerated and justified while yet babies -- whereas their conscious conversion follows only subsequently.

Indeed, even after such conversion -- also reconversions may follow, by way of later sanctification. *Regeneratio prima neque conversio secunda et continua!*

To the Anabaptists, however, regeneration and conversion were congruent. Therefore no baby could be regenerated, or be baptized. Nor were adult converts deemed further to be subject to yet ongoing conversion -- nor to subsequent reversion(s). Indeed, after one unrepeatable alleged conversion, Anabaptists easily regarded themselves as perfected. Sadly, on these points many Arminian Baptists too follow in their footsteps.

Observes Calvin: "It would be incredible that the human mind could proceed to such insanity.... There would be no difference, then, between whoredom and chastity; [between] sincerity and craft.... They say the Spirit will not bid you do anything that is wrong -- provided you sincerely and boldly leave yourself to His agency.

"Who is not amazed at such monstrous doctrines? And yet, this philosophy is popular with those who -- blinded by insane lusts -- have thrown off common sense. But what kind of Christ, pray, do they fabricate? What kind of 'spirit' do they [the Anabaptists] belch forth?

"We [Protestant Christians] acknowledge one Christ, and His one Spirit -- Whom the Prophets foretold and the Gospel proclaims as actually manifested. But we hear nothing of this kind [such as the Anabaptists advocate], respecting Him! That Spirit is not the patron of murder, adultery, drunkenness, pride, contention, avarice and fraud -- but the Author of love, chastity, sobriety, modesty, peace, moderation and truth.

"He is not a Spirit of giddiness, rushing rashly and precipitately, without regard to right and wrong -- but full of wisdom and understanding, by which He can duly distinguish between justice and injustice. He instigates not to lawless and unrestrained licentiousness, but -- discriminating between lawful and unlawful -- teaches temperance and moderation.

"But why dwell longer in refuting that brutish frenzy [of the Anabaptists]? To Christians, the Spirit of the Lord is not a turbulent phantom which they themselves have produced by dreaming -- or received ready-made from others. But they [real Christians] religiously seek the knowledge of Him -- from Scripture!"

Calvin then notes<sup>309</sup> that "certain frenzied spirits have raised and even now continue to raise great disturbance in the Church on account of paedobaptism.... The practice which we have of baptizing little children, is impugned and assailed by some malignant spirits....

"It will be very seasonable to...refute the lying objections which such seducers might make.... Should it [infant baptism] appear to have been devised merely by human rashness -- let us abandon it!... But should it be proved to be by no means destitute of His sure authority -- let us beware of discarding the sacred institutions of God, and thereby insulting their Author!"

## **50. The Unitarian Anabaptist Servetus versus the Trinitarian Reformer Calvin**

Calvin the consistent Trinitarian defended his own baptismal views especially against those of the antitrinitarian and antipaedobaptistic heretic Servetus the Unitarian Anabaptist. Those defences are very instructive.

To Calvin, "Servetus was both an Anabaptist and the worst of heretics."<sup>310</sup> For Servetus and his followers repudiated not only the triune baptisms of covenantal children -- but even the Triune God Himself. Nevertheless, Calvin still gave even Servetus every opportunity to put his case.

As Calvin writes in his *Last Admonition of Westphal* (in 1557): "I have not taught in word anything that I have not confirmed by act. For when Servetus was, by nefarious blasphemies, overthrowing whatever piety exists in the World -- I, nevertheless, called him to discussion; and not only came prepared to give an account of my own doctrine, but chose rather to swallow the reproaches of that vilest of men, than furnish a bad example by enabling anyone afterwards to object that he was crushed without being heard."

Calvin also writes:<sup>311</sup> "In our day have arisen certain frantic men, such as Servetus and others who by new devices have thrown everything into confusion.... The name of 'Trinity' was so much disliked, nay detested, by Servetus -- that he charged all whom he called 'Trinitarians' with being atheists." For to Servetus, as also to Islam and to Judaism, Trinitarians were and are 'polytheists' and hence unbelievers in only one God alone.

Continues Calvin regarding Servetus: "The sum of his speculations [about God] was that a threefold deity [meaning a compound of three separate gods] is introduced wherever three Persons are said to exist in His [one and only sole] essence.... He [Servetus] sometimes cloaks his absurdities in allegory, as when he says that the eternal Word of God was the Spirit of Christ with God.... He at last reduces the divinity of both [Son and Spirit] to nothing; maintaining that...there is a part of God as well in the Son as in the Spirit -- just as the same spirit substantially is a portion of God in us, and also in wood and stone."

Of Servetus's several serious and horrid heresies, it was the Antitrinitarianism of that Anabaptist -- involving the denial of Christ's essential Deity -- which was by far the worst. Explains Calvin:<sup>312</sup> "Out of many, let the one example of Servetus suffice!

"For this man who was already puffed up with Portuguese pride, and is now even more swollen with his own arrogance -- made up his mind that the best way to make a name for himself, was to overthrow all the principles of religion. Accordingly, not only does he repudiate as absurd all that was taught by the Fathers ever since the apostolic age itself and accepted by all believers all down the course of the ages -- but he also criticizes it, and tears it to pieces with the cruelest of insults....

"He imagines that the Word of God [alias the Eternal Son] did not exist before Moses introduces God speaking in the creation of the World." *Viz.*, at Genesis 1:1-3 & 1:26-28 and Psalm 33:6-9.

According to Servetus, "when God put forth such great power as He did, it is as if He [the Word] actually began to exist only then. Rather than that He [the Word thus] gave evidence of His eternal being" -- from all eternity past, and down into the endless future.

To Servetus, Christ "is the 'Son of God' only by the right that He was conceived in the womb of the virgin.... Servetus collects many wagonloads of speculations, which are so meaningless that it is easy for any sensible man to see that only someone bewitched by a blind love of himself can be so foolish."

Calvin further observes:<sup>313</sup> "I am unwilling to annoy the reader with the series of conceits which Servetus, not the least among the Anabaptists -- nay, the great honour of this crew -- when girding himself for battle, deemed...to be...arguments." He wrongly assumes that "infants...are unable to believe." To Servetus, all infants still "lie under condemnation."

Replies Calvin: "Seeing it is certain that [covenantal] infants are blessed by Him [Christ], it follows that they are freed from death.... Servetus cannot show that by divine appointment several years must elapse before the new spiritual life begins. Paul's testimony is that...the children of believers are holy by supernatural grace."

Indeed, already holy from their very conception onward -- provided the children of at least one believing parent. First Corinthians 7:14.

"Servetus" himself, Calvin continues, "afterwards adds that no man becomes our brother, unless by the spirit of adoption -- which is conferred only by the hearing of faith." Calvin answers: "Who will presume from this, to give [or prescribe] the law to God -- and say that He may not [priorly] ingraft infants into Christ by some other secret method" than by hearing the Word physically through one's ears?

Indeed, also unborn infants can hear, and may well learn even the Holy Scriptures themselves also within their Bible-reading and Bible-heeding godly mothers. Second Timothy 1:3-6 & 3:14-16.

Servetus, continues Calvin, "objects that Cornelius was baptized after receiving the Holy Spirit.... He objects that infants cannot be regarded as new men.... But what I have said again and again, I now repeat.... From non-age...God takes His own methods of regenerating."

Indeed, from the Bible it is clear that the members of Cornelius's whole household already believed in the one true God. That was the case long before they later met Peter and were baptized by him. Acts 10:1-2.

Finally, we should note how Calvin thrashes the neo-pagan antipaedobaptistic arguments of the unitarian and pantheistic Anabaptist Servetus. Calvin concludes by observing that Servetus "at length calls in the assistance of [the pagan Egyptian god Thoth alias] Trismegistus, and the [syncretistic] Sybils, to prove that sacred ablutions are fit only for adults. See how honourably he thinks of Christian baptism -- when he tests it by the profane rites of the Pagans, and will not have it administered except in the way pleasing to Trismegistus!"

In a letter to Servetus, Calvin makes an even more pertinent remark. Says Calvin: "We say that Christ extends His hand to the children of holy parents as soon as they are born or conceived (*'simul ac nascitur'*) -- in order to liberate them from the general guilt of sin."<sup>314</sup>

We cannot here deal with Calvin's rôle in the final trial of Servetus. Yet it was but a minor rôle, before the trial took place in front of the (then) still Non-Calvinistic magistrates of Geneva. On this, see Francis Nigel Lee's book *The Godly Life of John Calvin*.

Harvard's Dr. G.H. Williams was sympathetic not toward Calvin but toward the heretic Servetus. Yet even Williams wrote<sup>315</sup> "that Servetus the Post-Nicene Anti-Chalcedonian Anabaptist was not a pacifist. For even Servetus expressly recognized the state as ordained **by Christ**. And Servetus also legitimated as proper to a Christian magistrate, the punishment of obstinate or blasphemous heretics by death....

"As the trial ran its course, Servetus was variously -- headstrong, truculent, and plaintive.... He [Servetus] demanded that Calvin be imprisoned likewise, with death to one [viz. Calvin] or the other [namely Servetus himself] under the *poena talionis*....

"Bullinger of Zurich...asked for the death penalty [for Servetus].... The condemnation of Servetus's doctrine was unanimous.... The public prosecutor Claude Rigot -- himself [not a Protestant but] a Libertine -- accused Servetus of **subverting the social order**, of a dissolute life, and of affinity with Jews and Turks....

"The court found Servetus guilty..., and condemned him to be burned at the stake.... Calvin intervened to secure an execution more merciful than death by burning, but the judgment was not changed.

"It was [not Calvin but] Farel who conducted Servetus to the place of execution..., urging him to recant. Servetus rejected all entreaties.... In his extremity, he was explicit in his belief -- still refusing to ascribe eternity [from all of the eternal past even before creation] to the person of Jesus Christ." Thus the pro-anabaptistic Dr. Williams.

Even while Servetus was on death row, the Trinitarian Calvin visited that Anabaptist in jail – and pleaded with him then and there to receive Christ as the eternal Son of God. But Servetus refused, and went to his death as an unrepentant and violent anabaptistic Unitarian.

### **51. Calvin's wife and babies and his many contacts with Anabaptists**

Calvin knew not only the Anabaptist Servetus. After publishing his *Institutes*, he in 1540 married Mrs. Idelette Stordeur. She was the widow of a former Anabaptist.

Earlier, indeed, Calvin himself had converted the Anabaptist Pastor Jean Stordeur -- as well as the latter's wife Idelette Stordeur -- from Anabaptism to Protestantism. Of course, neither Jean nor Idelette herself were rebaptized -- after they relinquished Anabaptism, when they became Protestants.

After Jean Stordeur's death, Calvin then married his widow -- the by-then-protestantized Ex-Anabaptist Idelette. Indeed, Rev. John and Mrs. Idelette Calvin's subsequently-born eldest child was baptized in infancy. Sadly, their subsequent children were never baptized at all -- because dying very shortly after birth.<sup>316</sup>

These examples of the baptisms in Calvin's own immediate family, are most instructive. Calvin was baptized by pouring or sprinkling -- while yet an infant (in the Church of Rome) -- and was never rebaptized. Nor was his wife -- after previously having been affused as an adult in the Name of the Triune God by Trinitarian Anabaptists in the Netherlands.

Their eldest child, expected to live, was baptized at Geneva in the Swiss Presbyterian Church. Their other children, even at birth, were seen to be dying already. Expected next to be seen only in glory, they were deliberately left unbaptized. For baptism is only for the viable. Romans 6:1-5.

Calvin was baptized, as an infant, by Romanists; his wife, as an adult, by Anabaptists. He himself, when a Presbyterian, baptized one of their babies. Their other babies died unbaptized. Not one single member of Calvin's entire family was ever rebaptized -- and still less submersed -- since becoming Protestants.

Why not? Because they all then believed rebaptism to be sinful [*cf.* Hebrews 6:1-8]. The Baptist Hulse, however, has offered us a very incorrect explanation. He claims:<sup>317</sup> "Calvin did not have...much contact with the Anabaptists."

Here, Hulse seemed oblivious to the fact that Servetus (with whom Calvin had much contact) was an Anabaptist. Indeed, Hulse also minimizes the contact Calvin had with Pastor Jean and Mrs. Idelette Stordeur -- especially when they were both still Anabaptists.

Moreover, blissfully, Hulse here seems to be unaware of Calvin's role in protestantizing the Anabaptists Herman of Gerbehaye and Count John Bomeromenus. Further, Hulse here seems to be unfamiliar with Calvin's several works about the Anabaptists and their doctrines. He seems to be unaware also of Calvin's references to Anabaptists like Münzer and Quintin.

Yet Hulse does concede that Calvin indeed "married Idolette de Bure, widow of John Stordeur." By "Idolette de Bure" (Hulse's misspelling) -- Mrs. Idelette Calvin's name at the much earlier time of her birth -- Hulse here means Idelette Stordeur.

According to the Baptist Rev. Erroll Hulse, the former Anabaptist Pastor "Stordeur had confessed 'his crime' of Anabaptism, and had gone over to the Reformed party." For the rest, Hulse seems to be aware of Calvin's contact with only one other Anabaptist -- viz. Belot.

Continues the Baptist Erroll Hulse: "We have only Calvin's description to go by, but he mockingly caricatures Belot as: 'giving himself, with raised head and rolling eyes, the majestic aspect of a prophet.' We can well understand how an unfortunate impression of Belot confirmed Calvin's bad impression of Anabaptists -- to whom he refers in his *Institutes* as 'furious madmen.'"

Here, Hulse omits mentioning that Belot had 'invaded' Geneva precisely in order to distribute Anabaptist tracts advocating perfectionism and denouncing the civil oath. Hulse further omits to mention that Belot had obnoxiously and falsely accused the humble and impoverished Calvin of living in luxury.

In his own customary way, Calvin had spoken politely to Belot. However, that Anabaptist then defiantly snubbed the great Reformer.<sup>318</sup>

Hulse also seems oblivious to the fact that it was Calvin the soul-winner himself who won both Jean and Idelette Stordeur. Calvin won them over from the errors of Anabaptism, and for the Protestant Reformation.

With similar patience, Calvin lovingly won over also the Anabaptist Leader Herman of Gerbehe. Not to speak also of Count John Bomeromenus.

For, writing to Farel on 6th February 1540, Calvin exulted<sup>319</sup> that "the Lord from time to time bestows something which refreshes us. Herman, who disputed against us at Geneva, besought me to appoint a day for conferring with him.

"In regard to infant baptism, the human nature of Christ, and some other points, he now acknowledges that he had fallen grievously into error.... "This affords good hope....

Even Herman's companion, "Count John, has at length presented his boy -- rather big for his age -- to be baptized. I have long borne with his [the Count's] weakness, since he told me that he thought he had good reasons for delaying. At length, he said that he no longer cared for those [the Anabaptists] whose perverseness could by no means be worn out or subdued."

On 27th February 1540, Calvin wrote<sup>320</sup> to Farel: "Herman has, if I am not mistaken, in good faith come to the fellowship of the Church.... He accepted instruction on the freedom of the will, the deity and humanity of Christ, rebirth, infant baptism, and other things.

"Only on the question of predestination did he hesitate.... He asked that this might not prevent his being received into the communion of the Church with his children. I received

him with fitting readiness.... I gave him my hand in the name of the Church. Then I baptized his little daughter, who was over two years old....

"He is a pious man. When I admonished him to lead others to the right way, he said: 'That is the least that I can do -- to exert myself no less in building up, than I did before in tearing down!'"

## **52. Calvin's opposition to the Anabaptists' soul-sleep theory**

Calvin's *Psychopannychia* is especially important. He wrote it in 1534, and published it in 1542 -- against the Anabaptist doctrine<sup>321</sup> of soul-sleep. That error is still taught today by certain Neo-Anabaptist groups -- such as by the Anabaptists' stepchildren the Seventh-day Adventists and the so-called Jehovah's witnesses.

"These babblers have so actively exerted themselves," wrote Calvin in the *Forward* to his book about the soul-sleep theory of the Anabaptists,<sup>322</sup> "that they have already drawn thousands into their insanity. And even the error itself has, I see, been aggravated.

"At first, some only vaguely alleged that the soul sleeps -- without defining what they wished to be understood by 'sleep.' Afterwards arose those *Psucho-ktonoi*, who 'murder souls' -- though without inflicting a wound.

"The error of the former, indeed, was not to be borne.... The madness of the latter ought to be severely repressed....

"The evil...makes far too much progress..., gaining ground daily and eating in like a cancer. Nor does it now appear for the first time. For we read that it originated with some [Pre-Islamic] Arabs, who maintained that 'the soul dies with the body and that both rise again at the Day of Judgment.' Eusebius: *Church History* VI:36[f]....

"It lay smouldering for some ages, but has lately begun to send forth sparks -- being stirred up by some dregs of Anabaptists. These, spread abroad far and wide, have kindled torches.... Would that they were soon extinguished by that voluntary rain which the Lord hath set apart for His inheritance!... Tumults of vain opinions!... Giddy spirits disturb the peace!"

Calvin explains<sup>323</sup> he was "referring to the nefarious herd of Anabaptists, from whose fountain this noxious stream did...first flow.... It was...more my intention to bring all back into the right way, than to provoke them.... **Those** err who, when the Word of God is brought to light which had been laid aside though perverse custom or sloth -- charge it with **novelty!**"

**Others**, however, "err in the **opposite** direction." For "such [others] are like reeds driven by the wind. Nay, [such] nod and bend at the slightest breeze" -- ecstatically!

Now the 'soul-sleeping' Anabaptists "with the greatest confidence, as if from a tripod [of Delphi], give forth decisions upon all things.... This is the head of the evil, while they proceed obstinately to defend whatever they have once rashly babbled....



"What do they not pervert?! What do they not adulterate and corrupt -- so that they may (I do not say bend but) distort it to their own view?" Indeed!

Consequently: "Is this the way of learning -- to roll the Scriptures over and over, and twist them about in search of something that may minister to our lusts, or to force them into subjection to our senses? Nothing can be more absurd than this.

"O pernicious pest, O tares certainly sown by an enemy's hand for the purpose of rendering the true seed useless!... It is certainly no trivial matter to see God's light extinguished by the devil's darkness."

### **53. Anabaptist soul-sleep refuted in Calvin's *Psychopannychia***

In the main text of his *Psychopannychia* itself, Calvin insists<sup>324</sup> that the [expanding] human "breath of life -- is distinguished from the [limited] souls of brutes.... Whence do the **souls** of...**animals** arise?

"God says, 'Let the **earth** bring forth the living soul [of animals]!' *etc.* [Genesis 1:24]. Let that which has sprung from earth, [later] be dissolved into earth! But the **soul** of **man** is **not from** the **earth**." It comes directly **from God**. Genesis 2:7 *cf.* Ecclesiastes 12:7.

"God created man, and made him after His **Own** image [Genesis 1:26].... The image of God extended [and would keep on expanding]....

"**Man** [is] **inexterminable** -- because created in the **image of God**.... God created the great whales and every living soul (Genesis 1:21)." But such are exterminable.

For indeed, man is more than "the great whales and every living soul!" Of all earthly creatures, man -- and man alone -- is the image of God. Hence man possesses an everlasting soul. Genesis 1:26-28 *cf.* 2:7 and Matthew 10:28-31.

"A 'living soul' is repeatedly attributed to the brutes, because they too have their own life. But **they** live after one way; **man** after another....

"The soul of **man** possesses reason, intellect, and will.... It subsists without the body, and does not perish like the brutes which have nothing more than their **bodily senses**....

"Man, if he had not fallen, would have been immortal.... The elect now are such as Adam was before his sin.... He was created inexterminable. So, now, have those become -- who have been renewed by Christ....

"As their most powerful battering ram, they [the 'soul-sleeping' Anabaptists] urge against us...the passage in...Ecclesiastes [3:19]." Thus: '**I** [*viz.* **Solomon**] said in my heart, of the children of men, that God would prove them to shew that they were like the brutes; as man dies, so do they also die.' But **God** then declares that 'the spirit of the sons of Adam ascends upwards, and the **spirit** of **beasts** descends **downwards**' -- at death.

States Calvin: "The wisdom of **God explains** -- assuring us that the spirit of the sons of Adam ascends **upwards**." Ecclesiastes 3:18-21 *cf.* 12:7; Second Peter 2:12; Revelation 6:9f & 20:12f.

Thus, the Anabaptists' soul-sleep doctrine is thoroughly unbiblical. Concludes Calvin:<sup>325</sup> "I again desire all my readers...to remember that the Catabaptists -- whom, as embodying all kinds of abominations, it is sufficient to have named -- are the authors of this famous dogma. Well may we suspect anything that proceeds from such a forge -- a forge which has already fabricated, and is daily fabricating, so many monsters!"

#### **54. Calvin's anti-revolutionary 1544 Treatise Against the Anabaptists**

Not just in the Church, but also in the Family and in the State -- these Anabaptists sowed revolution. Exclaims Calvin:<sup>326</sup> "Fanatics indeed delighting in unbridled license, insist and vociferate that...it is unworthy of us and far beneath our dignity to be occupied with those 'profane' and 'impure' cares which relate to matters 'alien' from a Christian man."

In his 1544 *Brief Instruction...Against the Errors of the Common Sect of the Anabaptists*, Calvin gives a detailed discussion of the various heresies of Anabaptism. There, he formally refutes *inter alia* also the Communism of their 1527 *Schleitheim Articles*.

Of the Anabaptists, Calvin declares<sup>327</sup> that "on several principal points of Christianity they agree closely with the Papists, holding a view directly repugnant to all the Holy Scripture -- as with free will, predestination, and the cause of our salvation. It is therefore with deception that they abuse this pretext, making the simple believe that they wish to be governed totally according to the Scripture. For they do not hold to it whatsoever -- but only to the fantasy of their brain."

The First Article of the Schleitheim Anabaptists declares that "baptism...ought to be administered to those who request it for themselves, not for infants as is done in the Pope's kingdom." Here, Calvin responds:<sup>328</sup> "Infant baptism is not a recent introduction, nor are its origins traceable to the Papal Church.... It has always been a holy ordinance observed in the Christian Church...."

"They [the Anabaptists] will not accept this similitude that we acknowledge between circumcision and baptism [Colossians 2:11f *etc.*].... Nevertheless, God did not fail to command little children to be circumcised." Genesis 17:7f.

The Second Article of the Schleitheim Anabaptists declared that "the ban ought to be used." By that they mean the total excommunicating and shunning of recalcitrants from their midst.

Here, Calvin simply responds<sup>329</sup> that even where the application of the ban might have lapsed, "we do not...persist in its necessity for communion [with the Church]. Nor do we hold that it is lawful for people [as the Anabaptists had done] to separate themselves from the Church" -- just because its discipline might be lax. First Corinthians 1:2 & 5:1f.

Why not? Because, unlike the preaching of the Holy Bible and the administration of Christ's two sacraments [which both belong to the very being or *esse* of the Church – the administration of ecclesiastical discipline (and even of the ban as the severest grade thereof), belongs merely to the bene esse or well being of the Church. Bans are transient; but God's Word and His Church are permanent!

The Third Article of the Schleitheim Anabaptists declares that "the sword [is]...outside the perfection of Christ.... [There,] the ban is the heaviest penalty -- without corporal death."

This Calvin refutes -- by stressing the Biblical teaching regarding the holy office of the magistrate -- **and** of capital punishment. Genesis 9:5*f*; Psalm 82:6*f*; John 10:34*f*; Romans 13:1-7.

"If this calling to fulfil the office of the sword or of temporal power is repugnant to the vocation of believers" -- observes Calvin<sup>330</sup> -- "then how is it that...especially good kings like David...and Josiah, and even a few prophets like Daniel, made use of it?" Anabaptists are not like good kings!

Yet, spurning these Old Testament examples, the 'New Testamentistic' Anabaptists had a quick response. It was this:

"Our Lord Jesus did not order that the woman who was caught in adultery be stoned to death, as the Law of God requires!"<sup>331</sup> Thus, lawless Anabaptists ungraciously rejected God's Law and especially His judicial punishments -- even before Christ's death on Calvary!

So Calvin then responds:<sup>332</sup> "They say that the ban has replaced the temporal sword in the Christian Church. So much so, that in place of punishing a crime by death, as was formerly done -- we must punish the delinquent [Christian only] by depriving him of the fellowship of believers [albeit then questionably shunning him thereafter]....

"I ask them how do they excuse Jesus Christ, for what He has done? For He did not observe their rule. For He neither condemned the woman by banishing her from the fellowship of believers [nor by shunning her] -- nor condemned her to death [John 8:3-11]....

"These poor fools in this passage follow that exposition with which the papal priests feather their nests. For since marriage was prohibited them -- they wanted as a recompense, a license to commit adultery. Thus they borrowed the wives of their neighbours.

"Now, in order for it not to appear that adultery was such a great sin -- they [the papal priests] said that we should be under the 'law of grace' with respect to it. And, hardly recognizing the grace of Jesus Christ in anything -- they said adulterers should go unpunished....

"Let us understand the office of our Lord Jesus!... His office is to forgive sins.... To mete out corporal punishments, is not His task.... He leaves these to those to whose authority it belongs, and to whom the charge has been commissioned -- according to what He says in another text: 'render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's!'"

In his comment on Deuteronomy 22:22, Calvin remarks: "It appears how greatly **God abominates adultery**, since He pronounces **capital punishment** against it.... If any man, though a bachelor, had committed adultery with the **wife** of another -- he was to **die**....

"By the **universal law** of the Gentiles, the punishment of **death** was **always** awarded for **adultery**. Thus it is all the baser and more shameful in Christians!"

Both in Calvin's time, and today -- there were and are those who call themselves Christians whose view of sexual morality is grossly inferior to that of many Pagans. Indeed, the sexual morals of many Anabaptists and Antinomians (and also especially of many pentecostalistic 'Television Evangelists') were and are worse than those of many Atheists.

Those Christians who are reticent in advocating the proper punishment for adultery -- explains Calvin -- would, of course, not "abrogate God's Law without a pretext!" So they "allege the example of Christ, Who dismissed the woman taken in adultery" -- rather than demand her execution.

Yet, as Calvin further states: "She ought to have been stoned." However, the latter was not Christ's task then. For at that time, He did not occupy the office of a judge....

"The popish theology is that in this passage [John chapter eight] Christ has brought in the 'law of grace' [*sic!*] -- by which adulterers may be freed from punishment.... What is this -- but that they may pollute with unbridled lust nearly every marriage bed with impunity?"

"This is the result of that diabolical celibacy -- so that those who are not allowed to have a lawful wife, may fornicate indiscriminately. But let us hold that though Christ remits men's sins -- He does not subvert the social order, or abolish legal sentences and punishments!"

Magistrates are also to protect against the theft of private property (the very existence of which the Anabaptists deprecate). Observes Calvin: "The miserable fanatics have no other goal than to put everything into disorder -- to undo the commonwealth of property in such a way that whoever has the power to take anything, is welcome to it....

"I thus put in opposition to the Anabaptists -- Moses, David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Joseph, Daniel, and all the kings and judges of Israel. See if they [the Anabaptists] can support their cause by asking whether these kings were banished from the Kingdom of God -- for having had charge of the sword in this World!...

"Isaiah [60:3] certainly contradicts them -- promising that earthly kings will serve in the heavenly and spiritual Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Saint Paul also says the same (First Timothy 2:2).... He shows that the chief end of magistrates is...to ensure that God is served and honoured in their countries, and that each person leads a good and honest life.

"Thus we see with respect to this matter how false and perverse the Anabaptists' allegations are -- by which they condemn the vocation of magistrates which God has so highly approved.... For they make war against God, in wanting to revile what He has exalted....

"We could not imagine a better way of trying to ruin the world and ushering in brigandage everywhere, than in seeking to abolish the civil government or the power of the sword. Which indeed is overthrown, if it is not lawful for a Christian man to exercise it!"

Calvin refutes also the Seventh Article of the Schleitheim Anabaptists, advocating either post-mortal soul-sleep or pre-resurrectional soul-death. Of those Anabaptists, the genius of Geneva remarks:

"They all commonly hold that souls, separate from the body, do sleep without any sense or understanding till the day of judgment; or that the soul of a man is his life which ceases when he dies, till he be raised again." *Per contra*, however: Luke 16:22f; Second Corinthians 5:1-8; Philippians 1:21f; and Revelation 6:9-11 & 20:4f.

### **55. The Anabaptist doctrine of Christ's "heavenly flesh" refuted by Calvin**

Coming now to the Anabaptist doctrine of Christ's flesh, Calvin declares:<sup>333</sup> "It is not good for me to close my eyes to these...gravely persistent and spiteful views, since they are so common among them. What some among them have held concerning property in common -- or that a man may have several wives, even compelling some who were content with one to take more [wives]....

"A thousand other absurdities [of theirs], I refrain from mentioning. For even they, being confounded in their madness, have for the most part retracted these." Not so, however, their views about the nature of Christ's flesh!

"Concerning the body or the human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ, we must note that there were two ancient heresies that conform to or approach what they [the Anabaptists] say about it. For the **Manichees** fantasized that Jesus Christ brought a heavenly body into the womb of the virgin His mother. The **Marcionites** [too, gnostically,] had a...delusion that He did not have a [really human or] truly substantial body....

"The end of both [heresies], has been to deny that Jesus Christ was descended from human seed.... The Anabaptists in this way only stir up errors that the devil has kept alive for one thousand four hundred years [since Marcion's till Calvin's time], and that were refuted by the Word of God.... From the beginning of the World, [however,] our Lord promised Eve that her Seed would be victorious over the serpent. Genesis 3:15."

Thus Christ, according to His humanity, is the **woman's** Seed. For He is the seed of Mary and of all of her ancestresses right back to Eve. Yes, Christ is the **Seed** of the woman.

### **56. Calvin refutes the Anabaptist denial of postmortal consciousness**

Continues Calvin:<sup>334</sup> "The Anabaptists in general all hold that souls, being departed from the body, cease to live -- until the day of the resurrection.... This was the error of the Sadducees, which was expressly reproved in Scripture [Acts 23:6f]....

"Let the Anabaptists [then] hold to the quarrel of the Sadducees their predecessors! And let them maintain it against Saint Paul" -- and even against the Lord Jesus Christ Himself! Luke 16:23-28 & 20:27f.

"We have reproved the error of the Anabaptists, who make believe that souls sleep as if dead and without any consciousness.... The **unfaithful person's soul**, [however] -- being **departed** from the body -- is like a malefactor who has already received his sentence of condemnation and now awaits only the hour when he shall be led to the gallows for execution.... They are in extreme agony, awaiting the execution of their sentence....

"Faithful souls after death, we can say...are [not asleep but] at **rest** [Revelation 6:9-11 & 14:13]. Not because they are in a perfect state of blessedness or glory, but because they **are content with the joy and consolation** that God grants them **while** awaiting the day of their final redemption....

"The Anabaptist's delusion concerning the sleep of souls was never advocated by anyone, save by a heretical [Pre-Islamic] sect called the 'Arabs.' And by Pope John of Rome, some [two] hundred and thirty years ago" (during the fourteenth century).

Luke 16:22<sup>f</sup> states that as soon as unmerciful men die, they are **tormented** in **Hell**, where they **suffer constant pain** -- whereas right after a believer like Lazarus dies, he "**enjoys comfort**" in the next life. There, Calvin comments that the Lazaruses "are received at death" into that "**blessed rest**" where they "**enjoy habitation in Heaven**....

"Believers, when they die..., approach to the **enjoyment of the heavenly life**.... Believing souls, when they have left their bodies, lead a **joyful and blessed life** out of this World....

"For the **reprobate**, there are prepared dreadful torments.... The wicked are described as fearfully tormented by the **misery** which they **feel**...and have that **anguish increased**.... He is **tormented in Hell**....

"You were created for an immortal life, and the Law of God raised you high to the contemplation of the **heavenly life**. But you, forgetting so exalted a condition, did choose to resemble a sow or a dog....

"Lazarus, on the other hand..., **enjoys comforts**.... On the contrary, wicked despisers of God...will experience **immediately after death**, such **torments** as will efface their [memory of their former] empty enjoyments.... These **comforts**, which the sons of God **enjoy**, lies in this -- that they...**rest** in the **joyful expectation** of it.... On the other hand, the wicked are tormented by the apprehension of the future judgment which they see coming upon them."

As Calvin notes also in his *Institutes* (III:5:10 & III:25:5) -- human "death is not destruction [or annihilation], but a passage from this life to another.... Solid **comfort** is furnished by Scripture, when it declares '**Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord**' -- and adds the reason, 'for they **rest** [not sleep!] from their hard-labours [but their works do follow them]' (Revelation 14:13)....

"The minds of men...have called death the end of all things -- the **extinction of man**.... The Sadducees had the hardihood openly to profess...that the soul was mortal [Acts 23:8].... The whole Scripture [however,] proclaims that there will be no end either to the happiness of the **elect**, or to the punishment of the **reprobate**."

Indeed, on Matthew 22:23, Calvin comments: "The Scriptures inform us that the spiritual life depends on the hope of the resurrection -- and that **souls**, when separated from the bodies [at death], **look forward** to it [the resurrection]. Whoever destroys the resurrection, deprives souls also of their immortality...."

"This enables us to perceive the dreadful confusion of the Jewish Church [at the time of the incarnation of Christ].... Their rulers in religious matters [the Sadducees] took away the expectation of a future life, so that after the death of the body men differed in no respect from brute beasts...."

"Experience plainly shows that they were chargeable with the grossest stupidity. Since it is manifest that the reward which is laid up for the good, is left incomplete till another life; and likewise that the punishment of the wicked is not wholly inflicted in this World...."

"It is impossible to conceive anything more absurd than this dream -- that men, formed after the image of God, are extinguished by death like the beasts.... When they [the Sadducees] saw that the holy fathers earnestly aspired to the heavenly life and that the Covenant which God had made with them was spiritual and eternal -- they who remained blind in the midst of such clear light, must have been worse than stupid."

Also Revelation 6:9-11 teaches exactly the same truth regarding the conscious life of souls after death and before the final bodily resurrection. For there, the infallible Bible states that the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God cried out with a loud voice, saying:

"'How long, O holy and true Lord, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those that keep on dwelling on the Earth?' And...it was said to them that they should keep on resting [**not** 'keep on sleeping'!] for yet a while -- until their fellowservants too, and their brethren that would be killed as they were, would be fulfilled."

So, then. Immediately after death, says Calvin, the faithful souls enter into a conscious condition of contentment and restful joy in Heaven. Unfaithful souls, however, then enter into a conscious condition of extreme agony and torment in Hell.

Such shall be the experiences of all human souls after death, until re-inserted into their resurrected bodies at the very end of the World. Thereafter, that conscious joy or that conscious pain shall be intensified, in both body and soul -- for ever.

As Calvin states in his *Treatises Against the Anabaptists* (pp. 232f): "The teaching of Scripture is simple.... God has made our souls.... They...indwell our bodies.... When they depart from them...., some go to **consolation** and **rest**; others to **anguish** and **torments**."

## **57. Pseudo-glossology of the Anabaptists refuted by Calvin**

John Calvin also seems to reprehend the Quasi-Pentecostalism of the Anabaptists. Declares the great Reformer: "I should warn all the truly faithful of their malice.

"For the Anabaptists cannot make their cause appear good, except by muddling everything to the extent that their entire teaching is a confused mess. For like a body without a head or arms or feet, they often use forms of speech that are absurd and outlandish."<sup>335</sup>

In 1545, Calvin published his *Against the Fantastic and Furious Sect of the Libertines Who Are Called 'Spirituals.'* Here, as its modern editor Rev. Professor Dr. Farley has pointed out,<sup>336</sup> one encounters "the concept of 'spiritual marriage' also observed among other groups."

Indeed, one here also comes across "a radical application of the Anabaptist principle of the 'community of goods'...associated with the excesses of the Anabaptist movement at St. Gall in Switzerland.... Polygamy was practiced by a variety of groups."

At least one such Libertine Anabaptist group, that of Quintin, seems also to have been pseudo-pentecostalistic. For, explains Calvin, like "wandering beggars, as they are called, they possess a unique jargon which is understood only by their brotherhood.... The Quintinists possess an unbelievable tongue in which they banter, to the extent that one understands it about as little as a bird's song."

Such phenomena have only pseudo-patristic roots -- indeed, truly-pagan roots. See Francis Nigel Lee's book *Pentecostalism: New Outpouring or Ancient Heresy?*

Calvin calls these followers of the libertine Anabaptist Quintin, "loud-mouthed boasters" -- like the "scum and froth" mentioned in Second Peter 2:18 and Jude 16. "They babble," observes Calvin of these Quintinists.

"I remember once in a large group how Quintin...told me that I found his ideas unacceptable -- owing to a lack of understanding. To which I replied that I understood better than he -- since he knew nothing that he was saying, and I at least recognized that he wanted to seduce the World by means of absurd and dangerous follies....

"God created the tongue for the purpose of expressing thought, in order that we might be able to communicate with each other. Consequently, it is a perversion of God's order to pommel the air with a confused sound that cannot be understood.... The Scriptures ought to be our guide with respect to how God's mysteries are handled. Therefore, let us adopt the language that it uses -- without being lightheaded.... He [the Lord] uses an unrefined way of speaking to us, in order to be understood.

"Whoever therefore reverses this order -- only succeeds in burying God's truth.... We must labour to unravel their [Quintinistic] obscurities -- in order to drag them, if necessary by force, into the light. So that their abominations, which they make a point of hiding, might be known to all the World.



"Similarly, every Christian must be warned that when he hears them garbling as they do -- he must cut them off immediately at the spigot. And say to them: 'Either speak the language that the Lord has taught us and which He uses in His Scriptures -- or go speak to the rocks and trees!'"

Yet, adds Calvin, it is before **men** that Quintinists still "speak with a doubtful tongue -- a practice that even pagans condemned." Indeed, our Lord "Jesus Christ...did not...babble unintelligently...after the example of their predecessors the Priscillianists" alias the proto-pentecostalist Montanists! First Kings 18:26-28 cf. Matthew 6:7.

As to the Anabaptist Quintinists, continues Calvin, "they pursue a double purpose" (*sic*). They say "one should not be content with what is written, or acquiesce in it at all -- but one should speculate higher, and look for new revelations...."

"This sect is certainly different from that of the Papists -- inasmuch as it is a hundred times worse and more pernicious!" We repeat. Such Anabaptists, emphasizes the great Protestant Reformer John Calvin, are **a hundred times worse** than Papists. Pentecostalists and glossolalic 'charismatics' -- note well!

Calvin continues: "We must note to what end our Lord has promised us His Spirit. Now **He did not promise the Spirit for the purpose of forsaking Scripture**, so that we might be led by Him [*sic!*] and stroll amid the clouds [away from Scripture] -- but in order to **gain its true meaning** and thus be satisfied...."

"After His resurrection, when He opened the understanding of His two disciples (Luke 24:27-32), it was not in order to inspire them with strange subjects not found in Scripture. But **in order to help them understand Scripture itself....**"

**"Spirit and Scripture are one and the same....** We choke out the light of God's Spirit, if we cut ourselves off from His Word.... **Preaching and Scripture are the true instruments of God's Spirit.**"

"Therefore, let us consider anyone a devil who wants to lead us astray from it, whether directly or indirectly! And let us flee from them, as we would [flee from] a poison!"<sup>337</sup>

Paul infallibly states in Romans 12:2, "be transformed by the renewing of your mind!" Be transformed by the renewing of your brain -- and not just your emotions!

As Calvin comments: "We must note here the renewal which is demanded of us. It is not that of the flesh only..., but of the **mind** which is our most excellent part and to which philosophers ascribe the pre-eminence."

"They call it *to heegemonikon*, the regulative principle, and maintain that reason is a queen of utmost wisdom.... We must be renewed -- in **mind**." Evanjellyfish and Pentecostalists -- note well!

## **58. Calvin refutes the anabaptistic denial of the soul's immortality**

It is clear that all of the Libertines, including also some of the Anabaptists, regarded men not as the Biblical image of the everlasting God but merely as an advanced animal with but a temporary existence. For they denied the immortality of the human soul.

Declares Calvin:<sup>338</sup> "Let us listen to their grand argument!" They say: '**There is only one God who [truly] ex-ists.**' This rightly implies man does not exist like the eternal God.

Yet actually, God does not even exist at all. For He is! Indeed, no creature is; but merely ex-sists. Still, it is quite true that there is only one God -- Who is.

"I admit that," concedes Calvin. "**But we do not cease to sub-sist in Him....** He created us..., and upholds us by His power." Genesis 1:26f & 2:7 & 5:1-5 and Psalm 8:1-8. Indeed, endlessly so. Ecclesiastes 3:21 & 12:7.

Only God is; and we, 'are' not! For God alone is, having independent being. We humans do not have "is-ness" at all -- but merely dependent, though unending, ex-sist-ence. Exodus 3:14 and John 8:58 and Acts 17:28 and Hebrews 13:8 and Revelation 4:8-11.

Yet, by God's will alone, all humans do at least 'ex-sist' (or stand out against God as their only Fundamental Background). They ex-sist, with an inexterminable or an everlasting dependence upon Him Who alone is.

Thus, all men have an unending existence -- either unto everlasting life, or unto everlasting punishment. Matthew 10:31 and Revelation 20:10-15.

Calvin continues, regarding the libertine Anabaptists: "Saint Paul, they argue, calls God alone immortal (First Timothy 6:16). I certainly agree with Saint Paul!

"But he means that God alone has this privilege in Himself and by virtue of His Own nature -- so much so, that **He is the Source of immortality.** Yet **what God has in Himself [independently] -- He has communicated [something analogous] to our souls, by His grace,** when He formed them [dependently] in His image [James 3:9]....

"Besides, the teaching of Scripture is simple and clear.... God has made our souls after His likeness.... They [our souls] so indwell our bodies that when they depart from them, each goes to the place which it has prepared for itself [by virtue of how it lived while yet] in this World -- some to consolation and rest; others to the anguish and torments of Hell....

"I have dealt with that so amply [in my tract] *Against the Anabaptists*, that it would be superfluous to mention it any further." See too: Isaiah 66:24; Daniel 12:2; Second Corinthians 5:1-8; Philippians 1:23; First Peter 3:19f; Jude 6f; Revelation 14:11-13 & 20:10-15 & 22:4-5.

Also Genesis 1:20-28 is fundamental. That passage teaches that animals had life, but not everlasting life, before the fall. Unfallen man, however, had dominion.

Even fallen man still has dominion over all of them. It implies also his right humanely to kill them, for their products (such as eggs and meat and milk and fish-roe and caviare).

First Timothy 4:3-4 is germane -- on man's essential omnivorousness of things "created to be received with thanksgiving." So too Second Peter 2:12, on the natural mortality of "natural brute beasts made[!] to be taken and consumed."

Man alone was and is the image of the immortal God. Genesis 1:26-28 *cf.* First Timothy 1:17 & 6:14-16. Accordingly, at the death of animals their souls or spirits go downward to the earth -- whereas the soul or spirit of man at death goes upward. Ecclesiastes 3:21 & 12:1-14.

That is why also the inspired Paul declares: "All flesh is not the same flesh.... There is one kind of flesh of men -- another flesh of beasts, another of fishes; another of birds....

"So also in the resurrection of the [human] dead. It [the human corpse] is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption...; it is raised in power...; it is raised a spiritual body.... The [human] dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed. First Corinthians 15:39-52.

The carcasses of dead animals, however, shall not be resurrected. But the corpses of men, as God's unique images, shall be resurrected -- unannihilably!

### **59. Anabaptism's sexual immorality refuted by Calvin**

On the sexual practices of the Anabaptists, Calvin has stated<sup>339</sup> that "they permit a man and a woman to unite with each other in whatever form seems good to them. They call it a 'spiritual marriage' when anyone is content with the other. Hence, if a man takes no pleasure in his wife -- in their view, he may provide for himself elsewhere, to solve his problem.

"At the same time, lest the woman remain destitute, they also grant her permission to meet her need and to accept it wherever it is offered to her.... If the day after tomorrow, should a bawd become angry with her pimp, she can make an exchange -- provided he can offer her someone new who pleases her better.

"Similarly, a philander[er] can flirt about. In order to acquire new 'spiritual wives' -- and take them as he finds them....

"What order, loyalty, integrity or assurance will remain if marriage -- which is the holiest Covenant, and the one which ought to be kept the most faithfully -- can thus be repudiated? For marriage, I say -- as God instituted...and blessed it -- transcends all natural unions....

"The Scripture says that 'the two shall become one flesh.'" It does not say 'three' or 'four' or 'five' *etc.*, but only 'two' -- adding that 'man [**not** men] shall leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife' -- **not** unto his wives; and still less unto another man or men. Genesis 2:24 & Mark 10:7.

"As if our Lord gave His Law in vain, when He forbids the coveting of another's wife (Exodus 20:14-17)! As if He had condemned without purpose, adulterers and lechers [Malachi 2:14-16]!

"As if Saint Paul had spoken in vain, when he exhorts every man to be content with his [own] wife! First Corinthians 7:2 *cf.* First Thessalonians 4:2-8.

"For this reason...I have shown above that this wretched sect [of the Anabaptists thinks it] has a license to commit every form of brigandage and murder against the body -- to steal, pillage and plunder the goods of others as being so much prey. We also see at the present how it constitutes an opening for defiling every bed and home, exterminating every form of chastity in the World....

"These wretches profane marriage, mingling men and women like dumb animals according to the lusts that drive them.... Under the name of 'spiritual marriage' they disguise this churlish corruption -- labelling as a 'spiritual movement' that wild impetuosity that goads and inflames a man like a bull, and a woman like a dog [or bitch] in heat!"

## **60. Calvin refutes Anabaptism's community of goods**

"Now in order not to leave any order among men," explains Calvin of the Anabaptists, "they create a similar confusion with respect to goods." For they state "that 'the communion of the saints' exists -- where no one possesses anything as his own, but each may take whatever he is able to get.

"At the beginning, there were indeed a few giddy Anabaptists who spoke like this. But because such an absurdity was repudiated by everyone as repugnant to human intelligence..., even the[ir] first authors became ashamed of it."

However, neither the Anabaptists Sattler nor Stadler mitigated their views here!<sup>340</sup> The Hutterites too did not soften their Communism. Nor did the Münsterite Anabaptists; nor the Davidjorists; nor the Batenburgers.

"They also cite what is written in Acts 4:32*ff.*," wrote Calvin<sup>341</sup> of the Anabaptists. "They are doubly mistaken!

"First of all, Saint Luke does not say that **everyone** sold [his possessions]. And as for those who did sell, he does not say that they sold **everything** without leaving themselves something.... Saint Luke...gave us two examples [Barnabas and Ananias], of whom one was even a hypocrite.... Are we to believe that among the six thousand believers or thereabouts who were present then, that all who had possessions sold them -- and that Saint Luke only produced one [Barnabas] as an example?

"In the second place, I reply that even the believers who sold their possessions at that time in order to aid their poor brothers -- did not so effectively sell everything as to have had nothing left. For each did not cease owning his house, or feeding his family, or using the

goods which God had given him.... It is said afterward that Tabitha...gave great alms (Acts 9:36). Whence could she have made them [and only now **given** those goods] -- if she [already previously] **had** given up all her goods?

"It is said that Saint Peter lodged at the home of Simon the tanner (Acts 10:6). This could not have been possible, if Simon had not [then still] had a house and a family! The same holds true for what is said next of Mary [Acts 12:12]. The same for Lydia (Acts 16:15)... The Apostle...returned to **her** house." Cf. too First Corinthians 11:22.

"The Christians...did not practise a confused 'community of goods' among themselves.... It would be a superfluous matter...to collect all the specific examples in order to show that when the believers brought their goods together, they did not mix what they had into a pile [like the Münsterite and Hutterite Anabaptists]. But, each retaining what was his in his own hands -- they distributed them [only] according as demand necessitated....

"There is [the Christian] Philemon.... He continues to possess not only his estate and his household goods, but also his serfs and servants [like Onesimus] -- who in those days were like slaves. For they were not servants whom one hires. But one owned them in order to be served by them all one's life -- or in order to sell them and transfer them....

"Paul does not require him [Philemon] to cast aside whatsoever he has! But he begs him to receive [back] Onesimus **his** serf, who had fled from him. If a man who is like a mirror of perfection for others, enjoyed his possessions in good conscience thus, and is approved by Saint Paul for doing so -- who will dare impose a completely different law?"

Who? Only the mediaeval monks; or their Anabaptist offspring; or their socialistic stepchildren such as John Brown's abolitionists and other mobocratic demagogues! See Francis Nigel Lee's *Biblical Private Property Versus Socialistic Common Property*.

Slavery is indeed an undesirable condition [First Corinthians 7:21-24]. But abolitionism is even more undesirable -- and plainly theft [Exodus 20:10,15,17 & 21:2-6].

Calvin then concludes:<sup>342</sup> "Thus let us learn to participate with decency and order in the fellowship which believers exercise concerning goods! And consequently, let us reject and hold in abomination this diabolical delusion of wanting to heap all goods into a pile in order to introduce not only a labyrinth into the world but a terrible brigandage!....

"As for Saint Luke's passages cited above [viz. Acts 2:44f & 4:32-37 & 5:1-4], it appears that they no more serve these fantastics [or fanatics], than they do monks who want to feather their own nests in order to found [or otherwise to firm up] their lovely communities of swine, such as we find in their cloisters.... The doctrine in itself is wicked, and damnable."

## **61. Anabaptism's superspiritualistic ecstasy refuted by Calvin**

The great genius of Geneva then took one last swing.<sup>343</sup> This time, at the Quasi-Pentecostalistic Anabaptist Anthony Pocquet.

Wrote Calvin: "I have decided to inform the reader more amply, by inserting here the ramblings of Monsieur Anthony Pocquet.... He begins to 'froth at the mouth' -- as Saint Jude says (verse 16)....

"On the surface, Monsieur Anthony Pocquet has become a demi-angel. Hearing him speak in such a lofty manner, as if he no longer had sensations of anything except heavenly matters....

"He pretends to save the World from the simple and pure teaching of the Scripture. **As if** it were the wisdom of Christians to search after **new** revelations! And he now calls it 'a double [portion of] spirit' -- to pass **beyond** the contents of Scripture.

"Still, whenever it suits them, they do interpret Scripture -- [but] in a totally different sense.... What he [the Anabaptist Pocquet] calls 'the natural law of growing and multiplying'; and what he adds about our having to return to that, in order to experience original innocence -- follows from their [libertine anabaptistic] doctrine of 'spiritual' marriage. *I.e.*, that each should unite with the other -- wherever it suits....

"These serpents twist the terms.... 'Spirit' to them is not derived from the grace of regeneration. Rather is it the [spiritualistic] fantasy that 'God is in us' -- and that we must permit Him to do whatever 'He' wants.

"We also see what **they mean by the life** which we have in Jesus Christ. *I.e.*, that everything is lawful -- and there is no evil, provided we are not conscious of it....

"Monsieur Anthony Pocquet...is a wolf in sheep's clothing.... We should not allow this wicked man to bring such shame on a Christian people.... He says [antinomianly, that]...we are under the law of 'love' [*sic!*]....

"I ask him, whether Moses and the judges did not hear the people's disputes -- and decide them? What sort of a scatterbrained man is it who plunges across [the] country on the basis of badly-founded speculations?... His daydreams are so silly and absurd, that among sane intelligent people it is enough to have pointed them out -- so that one can be on guard....

"He [Pocquet] says that medicine came into the World through the suggestion of the evil spirit. I say...that it came from God, inasmuch as it is a knowledge of carefully using the gifts of creation which He gives us." Miracle-makers and Pentecostalists -- note well!

"He [Pocquet] says we are not obligated to do God's Commandments.... This loathsome teaching...is not only repugnant to God, but so full of detestable errors as to make one's hair stand on end!" Antinomians -- note well!

## **62. Baptist misallegations that Calvin favoured submersionism**

Certain Baptists delight in quoting from Calvin's *Commentary on John's Gospel* (3:22), where it states that "John and Christ administered baptism by total immersion" -- where Jesus

caused baptism to be administered only through the hands of His Ministers (John 4:2). Yet they neglect to add that such ‘**im**-mersion’ (or ‘putting **into**’) is not the same as **sub**-mersion (or ‘putting **under**’). For all Presbyterian Ministers ‘**im**-merse’ (but never **sub**-merse) their fingers in baptismal water, before sprinkling babies therewith.

Such Baptists also neglect to complete Calvin’s above sentence. For it then goes on to say that "we must not worry overmuch about the outward rite, so long as it accords with the **spiritual** truth and the Lord’s institution and rule."

Indeed, three paragraphs later, Calvin adds: "The Law appointed various **baptisms** for the Jews.... A new rite of **purifying** is introduced by Christ and by John" the baptizer, by way of **sprinkling**. John 3:25 and 1:25-33 *cf.* First Kings 18:33*f* and Matthew 11:12*f* & 17:10*f*.

Interestingly, Calvin makes it clear that such baptismal **purifyings** practised by the Israelites -- were always accomplished by pouring or **sprinkling**. Thus, commenting on Hebrews 9:10-20, he explains: "When there was a **sprinkling** of hyssop and scarlet wool, there is no doubt that this represented the mystical **sprinkling** that comes by the Spirit...."

"Christ uses His **Spirit** in place of **sprinkling**, to **wash** us with His **blood**." Indeed, even in John chapters 1 to 4, we see the same teaching in respect of **water baptism**.

Thus, in his comment on the words of John the baptizer in John 1:31*f* (‘I came baptizing **with** water’ and ‘I have beheld the Spirit **descending** as a dove’) -- Calvin had said just previously that Christ had been "**consecrated** with a solemn ceremony.... When He wished to make Himself known to the World, He began with **baptism**. He therefore received the Spirit on that occasion -- not so much for Himself, as for His people. And the Spirit **descended**."

Commenting on John 3:5, Calvin adds: "We sometimes hear of Christ **baptizing with** the Holy Spirit.... It is as if Christ had said that no one is a son of God, until he has been renewed by ‘**water**’ -- and that this water is the **Spirit** Who cleanses us anew and Who, by His power **poured** upon us, imparts to us the energy of the heavenly life."

Again, commenting on John 3:34, Calvin declares "that God the inexhaustible **Fount** of all good does not at all exhaust Himself when He bountifully and plentifully **pours** out His gifts on men." For God is inexhaustible -- and so too the ongoing supply of His Spirit!

Also on John 4:2, Calvin comments: "Not only does Christ **baptize** inwardly by His **Spirit**, but the very [baptismal] **symbol** that we receive from a mortal man should be regarded in the same light as if Christ Himself had put forth His **hand** and **stretched** it out to us.... This suffices to refute the Anabaptists, who maintain that baptism is vitiated by the vice of the Minister, and disturb the Church with this madness." Compare too Calvin’s comments on Acts 1:5 and 2:17,33,38*f* (for which see later below).

Some Baptists also delight in quoting Calvin’s *Institutes* IV:15:19. There, they tell us, Calvin declares: "It is evident that the term ‘baptize’ means to **immerse**, and that this was the form used by the ancient Church."

Such persons here again confuse im-mersion with sub-mersion, and are quoting only the last part of Calvin's sentence. In its entirety, it states: "Whether the person baptized is to be wholly immersed, and that whether once or thrice -- or whether he is only to be **sprinkled** with water -- is not of the least consequence. Churches should be at liberty to adopt either, according to the diversity of climate. Although it is evident that the term **baptize** means to immerse and that this was the form used by the ancient Church."

Here, the word 'ancient' is not the same as the word 'apostolic.' Baptists often omit to add that (in the original French) Calvin here actually wrote "that the custom of thus entirely immersing, was anciently observed in the Church." Our English word 'anciently' here translates the original French word *anciennement*. That latter word in this context hardly means specifically 'during apostolic times' -- but certainly refers particularly to the mid-patristic period, especially after the rise of the heresy of baptismal regenerationism.

Regarding baptism during the **apostolic** period, Calvin has commented at Acts 8:37f on Philip's baptism of the eunuch: "Fanatics stupidly and wrongly attack **infant baptism**.... The children of the godly are born sons of the Church, and are numbered among the members of Christ from birth....

"**Christ initiates infants to Himself**.... The practice that has now become dominant, is for the Minister **only to sprinkle** the body or **the head**."

Indeed, Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin also wrote: "**We maintain...that in baptism...the forehead is sprinkled with water**."<sup>344</sup> Further: "The meaning of **baptism**...is set before us, when the **water** is **poured** upon the **head**....

"The blood of Christ...was **shed**, in order to wipe away all our stains.... We receive the fruit of this cleansing, when the Holy Spirit **sprinkles** our consciences with that sacred **blood**. Of this, we have a **seal** in the **Sacrament**."

Finally, the above applies also to the **babies** of believers. Concludes Calvin: "We **baptize infants**.... God, under the Old Testament, in order to show Himself [to be] **the Father of infants**, was pleased that the promise of salvation should be **engraven on their bodies** by a visible sign.

"It were unbecoming to suppose that, since the advent of Christ, believers [now] have **less** to confirm them!... The force and...the substance of **baptism** -- are common to **children**. To deny them the sign, which is inferior to the substance, were manifest injustice.... **Children are to be baptized**.... They are heirs of the blessing promised to the **seed** of believers."<sup>245</sup>

### **63. Calvin refutes the Anabaptists from Matthew 19:14**

Declared Jesus of tiny Covenanters: "Permit the little children, and do not hinder them (*mee kooluete auta*) to come to Me! For the Kingdom of Heaven is of such as these." Matthew 19:14.



Some Anabaptists believed baptism was not essential for salvation; but others believed the opposite. In chiding the latter kind of Anabaptist heretics, Calvin observes<sup>346</sup> that "baptism being, as they hold, necessary to salvation -- they, in denying it to infants, consign them all to eternal death.

"Let them now consider what kind of agreement they have with the words of Christ, Who says [in respect of covenantal little children or *paidia*] that 'of such is the Kingdom of Heaven!' Matthew 19:14." See too specifically the word "**infants**" in the parallel passage Luke 18:15f!

The Anabaptists often ignored this text. **Until** they thought they had disproved both infant regeneration and infant baptism.

Explains Calvin: "In regard to the meaning of this passage, they will [want to] extract nothing from it. Until they have previously overthrown the doctrine which we have already established concerning the regeneration of infants."

On this same passage, Calvin further comments: "The Anabaptists....refuse baptism to infants. Because [they say] infants are incapable of understanding that mystery which is denoted by it.

"We, on the other hand, maintain that...baptism is the pledge and figure of the forgiveness of sins and likewise of adoption by God. It ought not to be denied to infants whom God adopts and washes with the blood of His Son....

"Infants are renewed by the Spirit of God, according to the **capacity**[!] of their **age** -- till that power which **was** concealed **within** them, **grows** by **degrees** and becomes fully manifest at the proper time.... Hence it follows that they **were** renewed by the Spirit, **[un]to** the hope of salvation.

"In short, by embracing them, He [Jesus] testified that they were **[already]** reckoned by Christ among His flock. And if they **were** **[before baptism]** **partakers**[!] of the spiritual gifts which are represented by baptism -- it is unreasonable that they should be deprived of the outward sign" of holy baptism!

#### **64. The Great Commission implies faith within covenantal infants ere their baptisms**

In Christ's Great Commission, Jesus Himself commands His Ambassadors to go and preach -- *keeruxate* -- and then to baptize those who would believe that preached Gospel. Mark 16:15f. For the Lord enjoins those evangelizing Ambassadors -- His Ministers of the Word and Sacraments -- to "go disciple all nations": *matheeteusate panta ta ethnee*. Meaning: 'Go and turn **all** the **nations** into **disciples**' of the Lord Jesus! Matthew 28:19.

This obviously means the **people** in those nations -- including that large percentage of such people which constitutes the **babies** and the children of believers in all those **nations**. Christ's preaching Ambassadors -- His Ministers of the Word and Sacraments -- are thus to

keep on baptizing them: *baptizantes autous*. Then these Ambassadors are further to "keep on teaching them": *didaskontes autous*.

"The meaning amounts to this," Calvin comments,<sup>347</sup> "that by proclaiming the Gospel everywhere -- they should bring **all nations** to the obedience of the faith and...seal and ratify their doctrine by the sign of the Gospel.... It is said in Mark: 'he that shall believe and be baptized, shall be saved.'

"By these words, Christ...by a sacred bond...connects baptism with doctrine.... But as Christ enjoins them to teach before baptizing, and desires that none but believers shall be admitted to baptism -- it would appear that baptism is not properly administered unless when it is preceded by faith.

"On this pretext, the Anabaptists have stormed greatly against infant baptism. But the reply is not difficult.... Christ orders them [His Ministers] to convey to all **nations** the message of eternal salvation -- and confirms it by adding the seal of **baptism**....

"On what condition does God adopt as children those who formerly were aliens? It cannot indeed be denied that, when He has once received them [the aliens] into His favour, He continues to bestow it on their children and their children's children....

"Therefore, that promise which was formerly given to the Jews, must now be in force towards the Gentiles -- 'I will be your God, and the God of your **seed** after you.' Genesis 17:7." Cf. too Isaiah 59:19-21.

## **65. John Calvin's 1542 Form[ula] for Administering Baptism**

That Calvin regarded the above-mentioned 'Great Commission' of Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15*f* as in fact **requiring** the baptism **especially** of the **infants** of Christ-professing parents, is clear from his 1542 *Form[ula] for Administering Baptism*. That commences with the following very important statements:

"It is **particularly necessary** to know that infants are to be brought for baptism either on the Lord's Day...or at public service...under the eyes of the whole Congregation.... Our gracious God, not contenting Himself with **having adopt-ed** us for His children and receiving us into the communion of His Church, has been pleased to extend His goodness still farther to us by promising to be our God and the God of our **seed** to a thousand generations....

"He was pleased from the first (Genesis 17:12), that in His Church children should receive the sign of circumcision -- by which He then represented all that is now signified to us by baptism.... He adopted them for His children....

"St. Paul says (First Corinthians 7:14) that God sanctifies them from their mothers' womb. To distinguish them from the children of pagans and unbelievers." See too Genesis 17 and Colossians 2:11-13.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ received the children that were brought to Him, as is written in the nineteenth chapter of St. Matthew.... By declaring that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them..., He clearly teaches that we must not exclude them from His Church....

"After the promise [has been] made to the child [himself or herself]..., the Minister baptizes it. [That he does by] saying: 'I baptize thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit' [*cf.* Matthew 28:19].

"The whole is said aloud, and in the common tongue. In order that the people who are present may be witnesses to what is done..., and in order that all may be edified by recognizing and calling to mind the fruit and use of their own Baptism."

By the latter phrase, Calvin meant part of what is involved in and required by the life-long task of "the needful...duty of improving our baptism." See the *Westminster Larger Catechism*, Question & Answer 167p.

#### **66. "Be baptized [Acts 2:38f]..., for the promise is to you and to your children!"**

On Ascension Day, Jesus reminded His Apostles that John had truly "**baptized** [them] with water." Acts 1:5f. Yet He then added that they would also soon "be baptized with the Holy Spirit" -- on Pentecost Sunday, and indeed by Jesus Himself. Acts 2:32f *cf.* Mark 1:8.

This would be accomplished not by submersion under water but by a **rainy sprinkling** with the **outpoured** Holy Spirit. Indeed, **He was shed forth** from on high, and then came like **raindrops** and sat **upon** both the disciples and their **sucklings**. Acts 2:3-33 *cf.* Joel 2:16-29.

Now this 'baptismal' **outpouring** of God's Spirit on Pentecost Sunday attracted the attention even of many unconverted bystanders. Peter accordingly then preached the Gospel to those beholding bystanders.

Thus he told them: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you -- in the Name of Jesus Christ!... For the promise is to you, and to your children." Consequently, "they that gladly received his word, were baptized." Acts 2:38-41.

Note the order: first, repent; then, be baptized! Thus, both adults and their babies should start repenting **before** they get baptized. Repentance **commences** only **incipiently** -- and thereafter **needs to increase** and continue recurring also **post-baptismally** and even **life-long**.

Yet the **beginnings** of repentance should first be there, even in babies -- before any baptism is administered (either to adults or to infants). For **faith** can and **should** be **possessed**, even if not yet or ever able to be professed, also by mortal **babies**.

He who has repented and who believes in Jesus, even before he so professes, is obviously already regenerate -- prior to baptism. Regeneration should thus precede baptism. It was only after Peter's listeners had received his preached word -- by believing it -- that they were then baptized.

Therefore, as Peter infallibly told his convicted enquirers on Pentecost Sunday: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you!... For the promise is unto you and to your **children!**" Acts 2:38f. **Not** to you now, but to your children only if and when they become adults and themselves honk like you have just done. No! But to both you and your children, now!

#### **67. Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin's baptismal comments on Acts 2:38f**

Commenting hereon, Calvin insists<sup>348</sup> that "we can be reconciled to God only by the intercession of the death of Christ.... Our sins cannot be purged and done away -- other than by His blood.

"Peter recalls us to Him -- by Name. He puts **baptism**...as the **seal** -- by which the promise of grace is fulfilled... . **Not** that those who desire to be accounted **faithful**, and **have** their place **already** with the **Church**, are to make a **beginning** in **this** [baptism] -- but that they are to **continue** to **proceed** in it [their prebaptismal **faithfulness**]....

"**Baptism**...is nothing else but a **sealing** of the blessings which we **have** through Christ.... Baptism is a help for **confirming** and **increasing** our **faith**.... The promise was made first to the Jews, and then **to their children**, and finally...to the Gentiles.... **God reckons the children** -- with the fathers -- **in the grace of adoption**.

"This passage therefore sufficiently refutes the Anabaptists, who deny baptism to the children of the faithful while they are still infants -- as though they were not Members of the Church.... Peter spoke thus, because God adopted one nation as peculiarly His Own. And circumcision bears evidence that the right of **adoption** was shared even by **infants**....

"God made a Covenant with Abraham when he [Isaac] was not yet born -- because he [Isaac] was the seed of Abraham.... So Peter teaches that all the children of the Jews are covered by the same Covenant -- because the Word continues in force, which says 'I will be the God of your **seed**.'" Compare Genesis 17:7 and Isaiah 59:19-21.

#### **68. Were also infants of Samaritan believers baptized, in light of the Ethiopian?**

Soon, Christian "men and women" (some doubtless with babies) were driven into Samaria. Acts 8:1-3. Philip then preached the Gospel to the Samaritans. "When they believed," many "were baptized -- both male and female." Acts 8:12f.

It should be noticed it does not say that many were baptized -- both male and female adults only. It says that many "were baptized -- both male and female." Indeed, also babies are either male or female!

There in Samaria, Philip baptized also the Ethiopian. Thus did Christ "**sprinkle** many **nations**" and "see His **seed**" -- even as the Scripture passage the Ethiopian himself was reading itself promised! Isaiah 52:15 to 53:10 *cf.* Acts 8:27-36.

Calvin comments here:<sup>349</sup> "The fact that baptism came after faith, is in accordance with Christ's institution.... Mark 16:16. For they ought to have been ingrafted into the body of the Church by faith -- **before** receiving the sign.

"Anabaptists are being quite absurd, in trying to prove from these verses -- that infants must be kept back from baptism. Men and women could not have been baptized -- without making open confession of their faith.

"But they were admitted to **baptism** on this **condition** -- that their **families** were **consecrated** to God **at the same time**. For the covenant is in these terms, 'I will be your God, and the God of your **seed**.' Genesis 17:7."

It was from while next going **from Samaria**, that Philip **baptized the Ethiopian** -- not by submersion, but by **sprinkling** with some water in a desert. Thus did Christ continue to "**sprinkle many nations**" and "see His **seed**" -- even as the Scripture passage the Ethiopian himself was then reading itself promised! Isaiah 52:15 to 53:10 *cf.* Acts 8:27-36. Indeed, all **nations** were now beginning to become **baptized** (Matthew 28:19)!

Regarding the Ethiopian who, before he was baptized, professed that Jesus was the Messiah, Calvin comments that "fanatics stupidly and wrongly [and anabaptistically] attack infant baptism on this pretext." However: "**The children of the godly are born sons of the Church, and are from the womb numbered among the members of Christ. Because God adopts...our children.**"

## **69. Cornelius and his family trusted God long before their baptism**

Cornelius -- and apparently his family too -- was already "regenerated" prior to Acts 10:2. This was long before they all received baptism at the command of Peter in Acts 10:48.

For ere Peter arrived on the scene in Caesarea, that Gentile Roman Officer Cornelius was already "a **devout** man, and one who **feared God with all his house**.... He prayed to God **always**."

Indeed, even his own soldiers called him "a **just** man and one that **fears God**." Acts 10:2,22,31,35,45,47,48.

Also Peter perceived that Cornelius -- and apparently his whole household too -- had for quite some time been serving God, and had continually been "fearing Him and working righteousness." Hence, Peter finally concluded: "'Can anyone forbid water, that these [members of Cornelius's whole household] should not be baptized?' So he commanded them to be baptized in the Name of the Lord."

Commenting on this,<sup>350</sup> Calvin states: "Since baptism is an appendage to the spiritual grace -- a man who receives the Spirit is at the same time fit to receive baptism.... The inference that ignorant men [**anabaptistically**] draw from this -- that infants must be debarred from baptism -- is absolutely groundless....

**"Believers' children, who are born within the Church, are members of the family of the Kingdom of God -- from the womb.... God has adopted the children of believers before they are born.**

"This testimony...powerfully refutes the superstition of the **Papists**, who bind the grace of the Spirit to the signs.... Luke narrates that men who had not yet been initiated in baptism -- were **already** endowed with the Holy Spirit [Acts 10:1f,22,35]. He is showing that the Spirit is not shut up in baptism."

Peter soon gave a report to the other Apostles -- about this pre-baptismal faith of Cornelius's household. Acts 11:1f. Explained Peter of Cornelius: "He had seen an angel in his house, who stood and said to him...: 'All your household shall be saved'.... John indeed baptized with water.... Inasmuch then as God gave them [Cornelius and his household] the like gift as He did to us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ -- who was I, that I could withstand God [by withholding baptism from them]?" Acts 11:13-16f.

Here, Calvin again clearly castigates the **Anabaptists**: "Those who are **opposing Infant Baptism**, are waging **war on God**.... Those men are cruelly rejecting from the Church those whom the promise of God **adopts** into the Church.... Those whom God honours with the name of **sons** -- they deprive of the external symbol" of Infant Baptism!

## **70. Paul's actions at Antioch and Philippi and Corinth condemn Anabaptists**

Paul next told the Jews in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch that God had fulfilled the promises made to the[ir] fathers. God had now fulfilled those same promises to their children. For God had raised up Jesus from the dead. Acts 13:14,32f.

Calvin here comments:<sup>351</sup> "It is certain that Paul is here speaking about the natural children...of the holy fathers.... Certain **fanatics** [the **Anabaptists**], who make allegories out of everything, imagine that no account is to be taken here of descendants -- but only of 'faith.' But with a fiction like that -- they are **making meaningless the sacred Covenant of God** which says: 'I will be your God, and the God of your seed.' Genesis 17:7....

"Those who are **born children of Abraham** according to the flesh, **are also to be regarded as God's spiritual children** -- unless they cut themselves off by their own unfaithfulness. For the **branches are holy by nature**, because **they have been produced from a holy root** -- unless they are polluted by their own fault. Romans 11:16.... It is **by faith** that God separates His Own."

Calvin insists<sup>352</sup> that "children who happen to depart this life before an opportunity of baptizing them in water, are not excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven." For "by faith" -- God has already separated them as "His Own."

The conclusion to be drawn, explains Calvin, is obvious. For he states: "Hence it follows that the children of believers are not baptized in order that, though formerly aliens from the Church, they may then for the first time become children of God. But rather are

[they] received into the [Visible] Church by a formal sign because, in virtue of the promise, they **previously belong-ed** to the body of Christ."

Here, Calvin says "belong-ed." Past tense! Thus "the **children have faith** -- in common with the adults. Again, such covenantal "children have faith." Yes, such children have faith" – **before** their infant baptism.

Nevertheless, "the Lord sometimes calls adults too -- sometimes earlier, and sometimes later.... I am only saying that **all of God's elect enter into everlasting life by faith** -- at whatever time of life they may be removed from this prison of destruction."<sup>353</sup>

In Acts 16:13-16, the writer records that at Philippi "on the sabbath...a certain woman named Lydia -- a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira -- was worshipping God.... The Lord opened her heart, so that she gave attention to the things which were spoken by Paul. Then, when she and her household had been baptized, she besought us, saying: 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord -- come into my home, and stay there!'"

Here, Calvin comments: "It is clear...how in a short space of time, God had been effectively at work in Lydia. For there is no doubt that she genuinely embraced the **faith** of Christ, and gave her allegiance to Him -- **before** Paul admitted her to **baptism**.... Here, holy zeal and piety reveal themselves in the fact that she dedicates her **household** to God **at the same time**...."

"It certainly ought to be the common desire of all the godly to have their relatives who are under their charge, of the same faith.... Any man who wishes to rule over wife, children, and men-servants and women-servants in his home -- but will not trouble himself about giving any place to Christ -- **does not deserve** to be counted among the sons of God!"

Also to the penitent jailor in Philippi, Paul similarly commanded: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **you shall be saved -- and your household!**" Paul and Silas then "spoke the Word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house." Then **he "was baptized -- he and all his -- immediately."** The jailor then "rejoiced, **believing in God with all his household.**" Acts 16:31-34.

Comments Calvin: "Luke again commends the godly zeal of the keeper [of the jail], because he dedicated his whole household to God. The grace of God is also reflected in that -- because He suddenly **brought a whole family to godly unanimity.**"

Consequently, Calvin concludes in his *Institutes of the Christian Faith* (IV:16:8) that there is not "anything plausible in the objection that we nowhere read of **even one infant** having been baptized.... For although this is not expressly narrated..., they are **not expressly excluded** when mention is made of any **baptized family (Acts 16:15,32)**. What man of sense will argue from this that **they were not baptized?**"

When Paul was in Corinth, his chronicler Luke wrote that "Crispus the ruler of the synagogue believed in the Lord with all his household; and many of the Corinthians...believed and were baptized." Acts 18:8.

There, Calvin comments: "Luke names two of those who believed, Crispus and Sosthenes, about whom Paul also speaks in First Corinthians chapter one [verse 14].... He says that Crispus was baptized by him" – adding: "I baptized Crispus and Gaius...and I baptized also the household of Stephanus." First Corinthians 1:14-16.

Paul further indicates that "the household of Stephanus...is the firstfruits of Achaia, and...they...minister to the saints." So too did "Aquila and Prisca...with the church that is in their house." First Corinthians 16:15-19.

Comments Calvin: "What a wonderful thing to be put on record -- that the name 'church' is applied to a single family! And yet, it is fitting that all the families of believers should be organized in such a way as to be so many little churches."

Indeed, at First Corinthians 10:1-2, Paul says that Ancient Israelites too "all...were under the cloud and all passed through the sea [on dry land] and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud." There, Calvin comments: "There is no point of difference between the Israelites and us.... They had the same sacraments.... "

"Paul deals first with baptism, and he teaches that the cloud...was indeed like baptism [*cf.* Psalms 77:15-20 & 78:12-16].... He says they 'were baptized unto Moses'....

"Anyone who will give proper attention to these things, will find nothing absurd in what Paul says.... He will see, both in spiritual substance and visible form, the closest agreement between the baptism of the Jews and ours!"

### **71. Calvin insists that Acts 19:1-6 does not teach rebaptism**

Acts 18:25-28 says that in Ephesus "a certain Jew named Apollos..., deeply instructed in the way of the Lord and fervent in the Spirit, spoke diligently about the things of the Lord. Though knowing only the baptism of John, he began to speak boldly in the synagogue.

"When Aquila and Priscilla had heard him, they took him unto them. And they explained the Way of God more perfectly to him....

"Now when he was disposed to pass into Achaia [namely to Corinth], the brethren wrote [to the Church in Corinth], exhorting the disciples [there] to receive him.... When he had come [to Corinth], he [there] helped them who had believed.... For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publically -- showing from the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ."

Next, in Acts 19:1-7, one reads: "Then it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul...came to Ephesus.... Finding certain disciples [or 'taught ones' there], he said to them: 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you started to believe?'

"But they said to him: 'We have not so much as heard whether there is any "holy spirit!'" Then he said to them: 'With what baptism, **then**, were you baptized?' Then they said: 'With **John's!**' ...



"Then Paul said: 'John truly baptized, with the baptism of repentance. He said to the people that they should believe in Him Who would come after him -- that is, in Christ Jesus.'

"When they heard this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus.... And all the men were about twelve" in number.

On those twelve men, at Acts 19:2 Calvin rightly comments: "It is **not likely** that so few [**Christian**] disciples were left at Ephesus **by Apollos**. And **they** would have been instructed **more correctly** by him, seeing that he himself **had learnt** the Way of the **Lord [Jesus Christ more] precisely**, from Aquila and Priscilla.... I do not doubt that 'the brethren' [in Ephesus] whom Luke mentioned **previously** (18:27), were **different** from **these** particular men" mentioned in Acts 19:1-7.

One should carefully note it was indeed true Triune Christian baptism which was formerly administered also by John himself -- on behalf of God the Father; pointing to Christ the Son; Who would baptize with the Holy Spirit. Luke 3:8-16.

So too, when John the baptizer (for the sake of God's true people) gave also Jesus true Christian Baptism -- "the Holy Spirit descended...upon Him, and a voice came from [the Father in] Heaven, saying: 'You are My beloved Son in Whom I am well-pleased!'" Luke 3:22. As also Paul later observed: "John truly baptized!" Acts 19:4.

Yet, after the death of John it does seem that some of those of his disciples who had not followed Jesus, did **not continue** (as had John) to baptize from the Father and toward the Son with the Spirit. Quite wrongly, **those confused men then started to baptize** "in the name of John" -- weirdly dispensing what they then apparently called "John's baptism."

Also Simon the sorcerer, and his disciple Menander, would acted similarly. So too would Marcus the sorcerer. So too would many of the Montanists -- viz. such as baptized their converts into the name of Montanus or his false-prophetesses Maximilla and Priscilla.<sup>354</sup>

**Such** "John's baptism" was of course not at all the Christian Sacrament which John himself had administered! Indeed, it seems to be precisely such a Christless and Spiritless 'baptism' which the twelve in Ephesus had received, and which they there called: "John's."

At Acts 19:4f, Dr. Calvin therefore comments: "The baptism of John was a sign of repentance and remission of sins.... There is no difference between it and our own baptism.... We do not read that Christ baptized afresh those who came over to Him from John [see John 3:22f & 4:1f]....

"Fanatical men of our day...have tried to introduce Anabaptism.... Yet I do deny that the baptism of water was repeated." For also at Ephesus, there was only "one baptism." Ephesians 4:4-6 cf. Acts 19:1-7.

In his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (IV:15:18), Calvin further says of the Anabaptists that "they seem to think the weapon which they brandish irresistible -- when they allege that Paul rebaptized those who had been baptized with 'the baptism of John' (Acts

19:3-5)." However, "it seems to some [Non-Anabaptists] that it was **a foolish imitator of John** who by a former 'baptism' **had initiated them into vain superstition**.

"This, it is thought, may be conjectured from the fact that they [the twelve men Paul met at Ephesus] acknowledge their entire ignorance of the Holy Spirit -- an ignorance in which John never would have left his disciples.... John's was a true baptism, and one and the same with the baptism of Christ [administered by His Apostles who had earlier been disciples of John the baptizer himself].... I deny that they [the twelve men Paul met at Ephesus] were rebaptized!"

One should read Calvin's *Instructions Against the Anabaptists*. There, he states on baptism that in 'Article One' of *The Schleitheim Confession* of Sattler and his Anabaptists, "these poor fanatics [mis]cite the usage and practice of the Apostles [Acts 19:2ff]....

"But of **children** who belong to the Church before they depart their mother's womb..., their fathers and forefathers received the promise upon which their baptism is founded.... Peter testifies to the Jews that they are children of the promises..., inasmuch as they are descendants of Abraham's race (Acts 2:39 & 3:25)....

"Otherwise, it would be in vain for Saint Paul to say that a child of a believing father or mother is sanctified -- who would be impure, if he [such a child] were born of and descended from unbelievers (First Corinthians 7:14). Seeing then that the Holy Spirit, Author and Source of all sanctification, testifies that the children of Christians are holy -- is it our business to exclude them from such a benefit? Thus, if the **truth** of baptism is in them -- how can we dare deprive them of the **sign**, which is less significant and inferior?

"But the Anabaptists reply that the custom and practice of the Apostles was to the contrary.... They think they have a passage that is precisely in their favour, in Acts 19:2ff -- where it is written that Saint Paul, having discovered certain disciples who had not yet received the Holy Spirit, 'rebaptized' them....

"They [the Anabaptists] cannot accept anything other than that Saint Paul rebaptized these disciples -- owing to their ignorance. But if it is necessary for baptism to be repeated **on these grounds** -- then why weren't the **Apostles** rebaptized, who three years after their baptism were so filled with errors and misleading opinions as to think that the Kingdom of Jesus Christ was earthly, understanding nothing of His death and resurrection and many other things?" Thus Calvin, referring to Acts 1:5-8.

"As for **ourselves**," he adds, "we would constantly require a lake or river in readiness -- **if** it were a matter of receiving baptism anew, every time our Lord should purge us of error!" But, of course, it is not!

## **72. Calvin refutes the Anabaptist views against paedobaptism**

Speaking of the Anabaptists, Calvin adds:<sup>355</sup> "The assertion they disseminate among the common people, that a long series of years elapsed after the resurrection of Christ during

which paedobaptism was unknown -- is a shameful falsehood. Since there is no writer -- however ancient -- who does not trace its origin to the days of the Apostles."

In Romans 2:28f, Paul says that being a 'Jew' is not outward. Neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a 'Jew' who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart in the Spirit."

Calvin further observes<sup>356</sup> that Abraham "received the sign of circumcision [as] a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, [while] yet being uncircumcised; so that he might be the father of all them that believe [Romans 4:11f].... There is now no...circumcision, where baptism exists.... Circumcision does not justify, because Abraham was justified by faith [before he was circumcised].... We deny, therefore, that men are justified by baptism. Since they are justified by the same faith as that of Abraham....

"We have no doubt that in distinguishing the children of God from bastards and foreigners, that the election of God reigns freely.... He was pleased specially to embrace the seed of Abraham with His mercy -- and for the better attestation of it, to seal it by circumcision....

"As now in baptism there are two parts, so formerly in circumcision there were the two parts -- which testified both to newness of life and to the forgiveness of sins.... There is now no necessity for circumcision where baptism exists....

"Circumcision does not justify. Because Abraham was justified by faith [before he was circumcised]. The same argument also holds good for us. We deny therefore that men are justified by baptism, since they are justified by the same faith as that of Abraham....

"He received the sign of circumcision [as] a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, [while] yet being uncircumcised -- so that he might be the father of all them that believe' [Romans 4:11f].... We have no doubt that in distinguishing the children of God from bastards and foreigners, that the election of God reigns freely.... He was pleased specially to embrace the seed of Abraham with His mercy -- and for the better attestation of it, to seal it by circumcision....

"Paul declares that the Jews were sanctified by their parents." See Romans 11:16. "He elsewhere says that the children of Christians derive sanctification from their parents." First Corinthians 7:14....

"To the same effect, is the declaration of Peter to the Jews: 'The promise is unto you and to your children.' Acts 2:39.... God is so good and liberal to His people, that He is pleased as a mark of His favour to extend their privileges to the children [generated or conceived by and] born to them."

Indeed, also in Colossians 2:11-13 Paul insists that uncircumcised Christian Gentiles "**have been circumcised** with the circumcision made without hands...by the circumcision of Christ" -- because they have been "buried with Him in baptism.... [Thus,] He has enlivened the uncircumcision of your flesh...through the faith of the operation of God."

Comments Calvin: "It is He [Christ] Who circumcises the foreskin of our heart...not with the hand but by His Spirit.... Spiritual **circumcision**...we obtain...through **baptism**."

In his *Institutes* IV:16:11 & IV:16:30, Calvin adds: "Circumcision was a literal sign. The same view must be taken of **baptism**.... In the second chapter to the Colossians, the Apostle makes the one to be not a whit more spiritual than the other. For he says that in Christ we 'are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands'.... In explanation of his sentiment, he immediately adds that we are 'buried with Him in baptism'....

"What do these words mean, but just that the truth and completion of baptism is the truth and completion of circumcision -- since they represent one [and the same] thing? For his object is to show that **baptism** is the **same thing to Christians** [and their **infants**] that **circumcision** formerly was to the **Jews** [and their **infants**].... Circumcision...corresponds to our **baptism**, [and likewise] was intended for **infants!**"

Dr. John Calvin next refutes the Anabaptists' objection that "spiritual regeneration is not applicable to earliest infancy." For 'how' -- they ask -- 'are infants regenerated?'

Here Calvin replies: "We answer that the work of God -- though beyond the reach of our capacities [fully to understand it] -- is not therefore null" in infants. For such "infants who are to be saved -- and that some are saved at this age is certain -- must, without question, previously be regenerated by the Lord....

"The Judge Himself publicly declares that 'except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.' John 3:3.... God gave, in the case of John the baptizer -- whom He sanctified from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15) -- a proof of what He might do in others [compare Luke 1:41-44].... The child, not yet born, would be filled with the Holy Spirit [compare Luke 1:15 & 1:41f].... Instead of attempting to give a law to God, let us hold that He sanctifies whom He pleases in the way in which He sanctified John -- seeing that His power is not impaired!"

Continues Calvin<sup>357</sup> (recycling Irenaeus): "Christ was sanctified from earliest infancy [from His conception onward], so that He might sanctify His elect in Himself at any age.... He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, so that -- completely pervaded with His holiness in the flesh which He had assumed -- He might transfuse it [His holiness] into us.... In Christ...we have a proof that the age of infancy is not incapable of receiving sanctification (*infantiae aetatem non usque adeo a sanctificatione abhorrere*)....

"We set down as incontrovertible, that none of the elect is called away from the present life without previously being sanctified and regenerated by the Spirit of God.... We deny...the power of God cannot **regenerate infants**. This is as possible and easy for Him to do, as it is wondrous and incomprehensible to us. It were dangerous to deny that the Lord is able to furnish them with the **knowledge of Himself** in any way He pleases."

The Anabaptists, however, 'deem it very absurd to attribute any knowledge of God to infants.' But Calvin replies<sup>358</sup> that covenantal infants "are said **now** to receive some part of that grace of which they are to have the full measure shortly after.... Some of those whom

death hurries away in the first moments of infancy, pass into life eternal. They are certainly admitted to behold the immediate presence of God.

"Those, therefore, whom the Lord is to illumine with the full brightness of His light -- why may He not, if He so please, irradiate at present with some small beam...before He delivers them from the prison of the flesh?" For that He does, whenever He lets them die in infancy -- and then takes their souls to glory!

Hebrews 6:1-2 refers to "the doctrine of baptisms." There, Calvin comments: "The **children of believers** were **baptized** as **infants**." He also gives us the reason for this -- "since they were adopted from the womb."

Finally, at First Peter 3:19-21, that Apostle makes it very clear that God -- through the **baptism-like rainwater** from above on the roof of the ark -- preserved Noah's entire family therewithin. Even while God submersed and drowned the wicked outside that vessel.

Comments Calvin:<sup>359</sup> "In the time of Noah...[the] unbelieving...were drowned by the deluge.... Peter ascribes salvation only to the **family of Noah**, and gives over to ruin all who were not within the ark.... In the common ruin of mankind, the family of Noah alone escaped. He points out how this happened, and says that it was a kind of baptism....

"**Our baptism** is an antitype of the **baptism of Noah**.... He was preserved together with his small family. So too today, the death which is set forth in baptism -- is to us an entrance into life....

"Someone might object that our baptism is far different from that of Noah.... To this, he [Peter] replies that the external symbol is not sufficient unless baptism be received really and effectually....

"Fanatical men like [the Anabaptist Schwenkfeld alias] Schuenckfeldius pervert this testimony ridiculously, by wanting to take away from the sacraments all their power and effect. Peter here did not mean to teach that Christ's institution is vain and inefficacious, but only to exclude hypocrites from the hope of salvation....

"At the same time, we must beware of another evil such as prevails among the Papists. Because, in not distinguishing as they ought between the thing and the sign -- they stop at the outward element [of water] and fix their hope of salvation on that....

"What, then, ought we to do? Not to put asunder what has been joined together by the Lord! We ought to acknowledge in baptism a spiritual washing. We ought to embrace therein the testimony of the remission of sin and the pledge of our renewal -- and yet leave to Christ and also to the Holy Spirit Each His Own honour. So that no part of our salvation should be transferred to the sign!"

Also, almost to the very beginning of the Bible, the genius of Geneva comments on the baptism of Noah's whole family inside the ark -- at the very first mention of the word 'Covenant' in the written Word of God. Genesis 6:18 *cf.* 7:17 & 9:1-10. There, he says:

"Noah would be safe.... The Covenant with him is confirmed.... His family shall be preserved, for his sake.... He is commanded to lay up...for his whole family.... Noah and his family safely escaped....

"Peter taught that Noah's deliverance from the universal deluge was a figure of baptism [First Peter 3:21].... Noah -- believing the promise of God -- gathered himself, his wife, and his children together....

"God, as in a matter of present concern, makes a Covenant with Noah and his family.... He transmits His Covenant to posterity.... The ignorance of the Anabaptists may be refuted, who deny that the Covenant of God is common to infants.... God promises salvation to a thousand generations."

### 73. Calvin on why the babies of believers should be baptized

The Genevan genius also says that Christian believers' infant "children are baptized for...[ongoing] repentance and **faith**. Though these are not yet formed in them [fully], yet the **seed** of both **lies** hidden in them by the secret operation of the Spirit" -- *arcana tamen Spiritus operatione utriusque semen in illis latet*. Calvin then continues:<sup>360</sup> "If those on whom the Lord has bestowed His election...depart this life before they become adults -- He, by the incomprehensible energy of His Spirit, [first] renews them in the way which He alone deems expedient."

According to Calvin,<sup>361</sup> the antipaedobaptistic and anabaptistic apostate "Servetus cannot show that...several years must elapse before the new spiritual life begins. Paul's testimony is that, though lost by nature, the children of believers are holy by supernatural grace [Romans 11:16 and First Corinthians 7:14].... .

"When the office of teaching was committed to the Apostles, they were not prohibited from baptizing infants [Matthew 28:19].... The Evangelist uses the term *anthroopous* (which comprehends the whole human race without exception. He [the Anabaptist Servetus] denies that infants are included....

"We [however] defer more to the authority of God, Who has seen it meet to consecrate infants to Himself -- in order to change, in our baptism, that...law which God enacted in circumcision.... These reprobate spirits, as if they were under the influence of frenzy, introduce the grossest absurdities in defence of their errors.... I trust I have made it apparent how feebly Servetus has supported his friends the Anabaptists!"

Here Calvin then concludes: "No sound man...can now doubt how rashly the Church is disturbed by those who excite quarrels and disturbances because of paedobaptism. For it is of importance to observe what Satan means by all this craft -- viz. to rob us of the singular blessing of confidence and spiritual joy.... How sweet it is to pious minds to be assured...that they are...in favour with their heavenly Father!.... See how He acts towards us as a most provident Parent..., consulting and providing for our children....

"Doubtless the design of Satan in assaulting paedobaptism with all his forces, is to keep out of view and gradually efface that attestation of divine grace which the promise itself presents to our eyes. In this way, not only would men impiously be ungrateful for the mercy of God -- but be less careful in training their children to piety.

"For it is no slight stimulus to us to bring them up in the fear of God and the observance of His Law, when we reflect that from their birth they have been considered and acknowledged by Him as His children. Therefore, if we would not maliciously obscure the kindness of God -- let us present to Him our infants, to whom He has assigned a place among His friends and family, that is, the members of the Church!"

#### **74. Calvin said Anabaptists and Romanists were not too dissimilar on baptism**

In 1539, the Romish Cardinal Sadoletto absurdly insinuated that the Calvinists were essentially the same as the Anabaptists. In his reply, Calvin turned the tables. For he then demonstrated that the Anabaptists should rather be compared -- to the Romanists!

He says:<sup>362</sup> "There is similitude in appearance between the Pope and the Anabaptists. Satan never transforms himself so cunningly, as not in some measure to betray himself....

"The principal weapon with which they [Romanists and Anabaptists] **both** assail us, is the same. For when they boast extravagantly of the Spirit, the tendency certainly is to sink and bury the [written] Word of God, so that they may make room for their own falsehoods."

Against both Anabaptists and Romanists, Calvin again insisted in 1542: "Paul teaches that the children of believers are born holy (First Corinthians 7:14).... They do not become the sons of God through baptism.

"But because in virtue of the promise they **are heirs** of adoption, therefore the Church admits them to baptism.... As in Abraham the father of the faithful, the righteousness of faith preceded circumcision -- so, in the children of the faithful in the present day, the gift of **adoption is prior to baptism**."<sup>363</sup>

In 1547, Calvin also declared<sup>364</sup> to both the Anabaptists and the Romanists that "the Spirit of God must...be to us -- both an earnest and a **seal**. Romans 8:15 [cf. 4:11]. He it is Who...**sprinkles** our souls with the blood of Christ. First Peter 1:2....

"I do not, however, concede to them that **paedobaptism** had its origin in the tradition of the Church. It certainly appears to be founded on the institution of God, and to have derived its origin from circumcision....

"The **offspring** of **believers** is **born holy** -- because their children, while yet in the womb, before they breathe the vital air, are included in the covenant of eternal life. Nor indeed are they admitted into the [Visible] Church by baptism, on any other ground than that **they belong-ed to the body of Christ before they were born**....

"How could it be lawful to put [baptism as] the sacred impress of Christ -- on strangers? **Baptism** must therefore be **preceded** by the gift of **adoption**, which is...**afterwards** ratified by baptism."

### **75. John Calvin's strongly Anti-Anabaptist Paedobaptism**

Declares Calvin:<sup>365</sup> "If anyone at this time maintains paedobaptism keenly, and on strong grounds, I am certainly in the number.... **The children of believers, [even] before they were begotten, were adopted by the Lord** -- when He said, 'I will be your God and the God of your seed.' Genesis 17:7.

"That in this promise the baptism of infants is included, is absolutely certain.... The genuine children of Abraham -- [yes,] even before they are born -- are the heirs of eternal life.... I maintain that they [covenantal infants] may obtain salvation without baptism.... Because the promise which assigns life to them while still in the womb, has sufficient efficacy in itself.

"Paedobaptism rests on this ground -- that God recognizes those who are presented to Him by our ministry, as already His Own. Whence too He anciently called 'His Own' [Ezekiel 16:20f], all who derived their origin from Israel. And justly! For the offspring was holy, as Paul teaches. Romans 11:16 [cf. too First Corinthians 7:14]....

"[Even covenantal] **children have need of regeneration**. But I maintain that this gift comes to them by promise, and that **baptism follows** as a seal....

"John the baptizer was sanctified from the womb [cf. Luke 1:15 to 1:44].... That passage...I elsewhere produce...against the Anabaptists.... The infant [of a believer] is included in the Covenant by hereditary right -- even from its mother's womb."

Calvin's above reference to the horribly-mistreated but still 'un-de-circumcisable' Old Testament Israelites in Ezekiel 16:20f as still being 'His Own' alias "My children" -- despite the wickedness of their immediate parents -- strongly recalls his remarks there in his *Commentary on Ezekiel*. For there he explains that "the Jews were naturally accursed through being Adam's seed. But by supernatural and singular privilege, they were exempt and free from the curse -- since circumcision was a testimony of the adoption by which God had consecrated them to Himself. Hence they were holy.... As to their being impure -- it could not...abolish God's Covenant!

"The same thing ought at this time to prevail in the Papacy.... And so Paul says that the children [and even the grandchildren and other near descendants] of the faithful are holy -- since **baptism does not lose its efficacy**, and the adoption of God remains fixed. First Corinthians 7:14 [cf. Isaiah 59:21]....

"In the Papacy, such declension has grown up through many ages.... And yet it is certain that a portion of God's Covenant remains among them.... Hence it arises that **our baptism [within the Romish Church] does not need renewal!** Because although the Devil has long



reigned in the Papacy, yet he could not altogether extinguish God's grace. Nay, a Church is among them. For otherwise, Paul's prophecy would have been false when he says that Antichrist was seated in the temple of God (Second Thessalonians 2:4). If in the Papacy there had been only Satan's dunghill or brothel, and no form of a Church had remained in it -- this had been a proof that Antichrist did not sit in the temple of God."

In a sermon on Deuteronomy 12 preached on 7th October 1555, Calvin did not urge his listeners to get rebaptized as adults -- but instead to 'improve' their infant baptisms. There, the genius of Geneva observed:<sup>366</sup>

"We see that God is contented.... His will is that in our baptism we should have such an assurance of our washing and cleansing by the grace that is purchased for us in our Lord Jesus Christ, as should continue with us for ever."

"Have we that? We must hold ourselves contented with it!" And, indeed, we must also 'improve' it! That is to say -- we must increasingly live the way all baptized persons should!

In a sermon on Deuteronomy 31 preached in April 1556, Calvin declared:<sup>367</sup> "As soon as our children be born, they be carried to baptism. And there, God doth show that His will is that they should be as of His household."

"Therefore when an infant is thus declared to be a member of our Lord Jesus Christ..., should he not when he cometh to age of understanding endeavour to learn that he was created by God? God, having created him after His Own image, hath vouchsafed also to choose him to be of the number and company of His people, and has placed him in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ -- to the end he should be partaker of the inheritance of salvation. Considering so many and so inestimable benefits received at God's hand -- ought he not, say I, to give himself wholly to Him and to His service?" Of course he should!

## **76. Calvin refutes the Gnesio-Lutheranistic slander that he was an "Anabaptist"**

Again in 1556, Calvin declared<sup>368</sup> that hostile Gnesio-Lutherans like Joachim Westphal -- quite absurdly -- were "confusing us [Calvinists] with the Anabaptists." Here, Calvin then pointed out that in actual fact his greatest opponent was precisely "Servetus -- who was both an Anabaptist and the worst of heretics." Indeed, Calvin added: "I have accused Thomas Müntzer" too -- that most dangerous of all the Anabaptists.

Calvin continued: "Now it is also true that even we "sometimes allow children to die unbaptized.... [However, this] is because we [Calvinists] give hopes that infants may obtain salvation without baptism [which Servetus never did]. Because we hold that **baptism, instead of regenerating or saving them, only seals the salvation of which they were previously partakers....**

"**Let an Anabaptist come forward** and maintain 'that the symbol of regeneration is improperly conferred on the cursed children of Adam whom the Lord has not yet called to the fellowship of His grace!'" Then, the Gnesio-Lutheran Westphal would have no answer!

Yet God's "grace...is common to **them** [the **infants** of **believers**]. Hence it follows, that they are **not** '**absolutely regenerated by baptism**' -- from which they **ought** to be debarred, did God **not** rank them among the members of His Son....

""You have no pretext, [Westphal,] for charging me with holding none to be learned who have not been taught in the school of Zuinglius [alias Zwingli]. Though Luther differed from us -- did we ever contemn his erudition?"

The Gnesio-Lutheran Westphal "says there is good ground for the common proverb 'The unlearned make no heresies.'" To that, Calvin retorted:

"What then did the Anabaptists do? What Müntzer? What the Libertines? Nay, in the whole [heretical] crew of whom Irenaeus, Epiphanius and Augustine speak -- how many **more** were involved in error by gross **ignorance**, [rather] than by **erudition**?"

"More correctly and wisely does Augustine say that the mother of all heresies is **pride**, by which we often see that the most **ignorant** are most highly swollen." The **Anabaptists** were **proud** of their **ignorance**!

Explains Calvin: "I say that infants begotten of believers **are holy**, and members of the Church [Invisible], **before** they are baptized.... They were members of the Church before baptism.... There is nothing to prevent our applying this to infants....

"God gives the name of sons to those to whom the inheritance of salvation has been promised in the person of their parents.... There is nothing, however, to prevent His **sealing** this grace [in **baptism**] -- and confirming anew the same thing that He had given before" **baptism to babies** of believing parents.

"I deny that any are duly baptized, if they do not belong to the body of the Church.... Who authorized you, Westphal, to bestow the pledge of eternal life -- the symbol of righteousness and renovation -- on [one whom you Gnesio-Lutherans wrongly consider to be] a 'profane' person lying under curse? Were an Anabaptist to debate with you, I presume your only valid defence would be [that of Calvinism -- namely] that baptism is rightly administered to those whom God **adopted** [even] **before** they were **born**....

"If God did not transmit His grace from parents to children -- to admit new-born infants into the Church, would be a mere profanation of baptism! But if the promise of God, under the Law, caused holy branches to proceed from a holy root [Romans 11:16] -- will you restrict the grace of God under the Gospel, or diminish its efficacy, by withholding the testimony of adoption by which God distinguishes infants?"

"The Law ordered infants to be circumcised on the eighth day.... Scripture declares them to have been **holy from the womb**; as being the offspring of a holy race.... Paul teaches that the children of believers are **now** holy [First Corinthians 7:14].... Those whom God has **already** set apart for Himself, are rightly brought for baptism. We are...speaking of...an **adoption** manifested by the Word which [has] **sanctified infants not yet born**....

"[The family of] Cornelius -- **before** he was baptized with his household -- having received the Holy Spirit..., justly **held** some place among **the children of God.**" Acts 10:2,4,24,34f,43f.

Calvin concludes: "Fanatical men impugn paedobaptism!" Indeed -- the antipaedobaptistic Anabaptists were **fanatics** who pugnaciously undermined baptism itself.

## **77. John Calvin's final words of opposition to the Anabaptists**

In his *Confession of Faith in the Name of the Reformed Churches of France*,<sup>369</sup> Calvin (according to his successor Beza) insisted that "since baptism is a treasure which God has placed in His Church -- all the members ought to partake of it. Now we doubt not that little children born of Christians are of this number, since God has adopted them -- as He declares.

"Indeed, we would defraud them of their right -- were we to exclude them from the sign which only ratifies the thing contained in the promise.... Children ought no more in the present day to be deprived of the sacrament of their salvation, than the children of the Jews were in ancient times -- seeing that now the manifestation must be larger and clearer than it was under the Law. Therefore, we reprobate all [Anabaptist] fanatics who will not allow little children to be baptized."

More fully, in the *French Confession* of 1559, Calvin (with his pupil Chandieu) rightly declares<sup>370</sup> that "some trace of the Church is left in the Papacy.... The virtue and substance of baptism remain.... The efficacy of baptism does not depend upon the person who administers it. We confess that those baptized in it [*viz.* the Papacy], do not need a second baptism [after becoming Protestants]. But, on account of its corruptions, we cannot present children to be baptized in it [the Papal Church] -- without incurring pollution....

"God receives little children into the Church with their fathers.... We say -- upon the authority of Jesus Christ -- that the children of believing parents should be baptized....

"We believe that God wishes to have the World governed by laws and magistrates.... He has put the sword into the hands of magistrates to suppress crimes against the First as well as against the Second Table of the Commandments of God.

"We must therefore, on His account, not only submit to them as superiors -- but honour and hold them in all reverence as His lieutenants and officers, whom He has commissioned to exercise a legitimate and holy authority.... We detest all those who would like: to reject authority; to establish community and confusion of property; and also [to] overthrow the order of justice."

Indeed, in 1561 Calvin asked:<sup>371</sup> "What affinity with Luther had the Münsterians, the Anabaptists?... Did he ever lend them his support? Did he subscribe their most absurd fictions? Nay, with what vehemence did he oppose them -- in order to prevent the spreading of the contagion! He had the discernment at once to perceive what noxious pests they would prove....

"Are we not, independently of baptism, cleansed by the blood of Christ and regenerated by the Spirit?... Christ is formed in us, like the *foetus* in the **womb** [*cf.* Psalm 22:9-10 and Second Timothy 1:3-5 & 3:14-15]....

"God calls suddenly away from the World many who are children not merely in age but also in faith. Yet, one spark from the Spirit is sufficient to give them a life" immortal unto all eternity, before and without being baptized! Thus Calvin.

## **78. The Early British Anabaptists from 1534 onward**

The Anabaptists infected Britain at an early date, even between the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. According to the Baptist Estep,<sup>372</sup> "it seems...to be fully substantiated that continental Anabaptists [then residing in yet not citizens of England] were numerous and not without influence in England from about 1534.... In 1538 the English authorities learned that the Anabaptists had published and distributed a book on the incarnation [denying it]. For this effrontery, they were asked to leave the country."

Even Poland's Unitarian Anabaptists soon spread their influence among their brethren in Holland, and also into England. There, as G.H. Williams has shown, they were vigorously opposed by the Polish Calvinists in London's Strangers' Church at Austin Friars, "where Laski served as the first superintendent. The king recorded in his journal that the Strangers' Church was organized 'for the avoyding of al sectes of Anabaptistes and such like.'<sup>373</sup>

Also the Swiss Calvinist Heinrich Bullinger had massive influence in England against the Anabaptists. See his *Wholesome Antidote* (London 1548), his *Most Sure and Strong Defence of the Baptism of Children* (Worcester 1551), and his *Most Necessary and Fruitful Dialogue Between the Seditious Libertine or Rebel Anabaptist and the True Obedient Christian* (Worcester 1551).

The followers of "Henry Hart, a leader of a congregation of dissenters in Kent..., were referred to as Anabaptists. They were also accused of Pelagian heresy and libertinism.

"From Hart's own tract, printed in 1548 and reprinted in 1549, it is clear that...his teachings regarding free will, the new birth and discipleship were true to Anabaptist insights." Thus the American Baptist, Professor Estep.<sup>374</sup>

"Anabaptists," Bishop John Hooper complained to Bullinger in 1549, "give me much trouble with their opinions respecting the incarnation of the Lord." For Kent and Sussex were then hotbeds of Anabaptism. Indeed, between 1549 and 1550 there were no less than three editions of Hooper's *Lesson of the Incarnation of Christ* -- against the Anabaptist heresy of the 'celestial flesh' of Jesus even from before His earthly conception onward.<sup>375</sup>

In 1553, Thomas Cole published his *Godly and Fruitful Sermon Against the Anabaptists*. Soon thereafter, also Bishop John Jewel rightly called them "a large and inauspicious crop of Arians, Anabaptists and other pests."<sup>376</sup>

No wonder, then, that the most important creedal formulation of the Church of England -- the *Forty-two Articles* of 1553 -- included no less than seventeen articles against the Anabaptists.<sup>377</sup> That is a 'World Record' -- for any Christian confession, in any age!

### **79. The Anti-Anabaptist Edwardine Articles of 1553**

The above-mentioned (1553) 'Edwardine Articles' of the Church of England were drawn up largely against the Anabaptists. The Presbyterian Rev. Professor Dr. W.A. Curtis of the University of Aberdeen states in his book *History of Creeds and Confessions of Faith* that<sup>378</sup> "the framers of the Forty-Two Articles had not only the earlier English attempts in mind, but also...the medley of eccentric or heretical opinions roughly classed as Anabaptist.... Artt. I-IV, VI-VIII, XIV, XV, XVIII, XIX, XXVII, XXVIII, XXIX, XXXII, XXXIII, XXXVI-XLII explicitly or implicitly condemn the varied opinions classed as Anabaptist."

Those opinions negatively "impugned the Creeds, [the Church Universal's] catholic Christology, faith in the Trinity, rights of individual property, the need of Scriptures, infant baptism, avoidance of excommunicated persons, reverence for traditions and ceremonies, obedience to magistrates, military service, [and the] taking of oaths." Positively, those Anabaptist opinions also "affirmed Christian perfection[ism], inefficacy of services and Sacraments conducted by unworthy Ministers, [and] ultimate universal salvation."

This is quite in agreement with the well-known Anglican scholar Rev. Professor Dr. E.J. Bicknell. He declares<sup>379</sup> "that the *Forty-two Articles*...are a double-edged weapon, designed to smite two opposite enemies.

"On the one hand they [the *Forty-two Articles*] attack mediaeval teaching and abuses [by Romanism].... They oppose even more keenly the teaching of the Anabaptists....

"The name Anabaptists was given to them from their denial of infant baptism and their custom of re-baptizing converts. There is hardly any error of doctrine or morality, that was not proclaimed by some of them. They were a very real danger to all order in Church and State alike....

"The Anabaptists are only mentioned by name twice, but...they had revived all the ancient heresies about the Holy Trinity and the Person of Christ.... Many of them were Pelagians.... Others claimed that, being regenerate, they were unable to commit sin....

"Some depreciated all Scripture and placed themselves above even the Moral Law.... Some denied any need of ordination for Ministers, and claimed that the efficacy of all ministrations depended on the personal holiness of the Minister....

"Infant baptism was denied.... All church discipline was repudiated.... Many held strange views about the descent into hell, the nature of the resurrection -- and the future life, the ultimate salvation of all men, and millenarianism..... The authority of the State was impugned, and Communism demanded." (See our own *Introduction*.)

As also Dr. William Wall has pointed out in his book *The History of Infant Baptism* -- the opinion which the Anabaptists "hold more generally, is the [pre-]millenary opinion." Such is, of course, contrary to Scripture and therefore to the Creeds of the Church Univesal.

"They do, many of them, take that prophesy Revelation 20:4-5 of the 'souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus' &c. 'and which had not worshipped the beast' &c. [and] 'living and reigning with Christ a thousand years' -- in a proper [viz. in too literalistic a] sense. So as to reckon that the saints shall rise from the dead one thousand years before the others shall." All contrary to Revelation 20:5-15 cf. 26:19-21 and Daniel 12:2-13 and Matthew 25:31-46 and John 5:28f and Acts 25:15 and First Corinthians 15:52.

"And they think that Christ will then come down and be here on Earth...for that thousand years.... Though that be not said in the text [Revelation 20:5-15]! And then, Satan being let loose to deceive the nations for some time -- the general resurrection and the end of the World will be [thereafter].

"In the reciting and inculcating [of] this doctrine to other people that are not of their way, many of them [viz. the premillennial Anabaptists] are apt, instead of saying [with Revelation 20:5-15] that the saints shall rise before the wicked -- to say 'we shall rise before you!'" In other words, they say that premillennial Anabaptists shall rise before all others [if any other 'Christians' then rise from the dead unto life at all]!

"Many of them...[further and accommodatingly] hold the opinion which Calvin in a treatise [*Psychopannychia*] confutes, as held by the German Antipaedobaptists, and which is...still held by the Minnists [or Mennonites] of Holland.... [Viz.] that the soul sleeps or is senseless -- from the time of a man's death, till the resurrection of the body." Thus Wall.

## **80. The Anti-Anabaptist *Thirty-nine Articles of 1563f***

The later *Thirty-nine Articles* of 1563 and 1571 are but the revision of the *Forty-two Articles* of 1553. As regards the former, Bicknell has shown<sup>380</sup> specifically that Article I (on "Faith in the Holy Trinity") was indeed "called forth by the teaching of the Anabaptists, who were reviving all the ancient heresies." Bicknell further insists<sup>381</sup> that Article II (on the "Son of God which was made very man") had as its object "to oppose the revival of ancient heresies on the Person of Christ by Anabaptists."

Article IV ("Of the Resurrection of Christ") is worded, explains Bicknell,<sup>382</sup> "so as to assert...also the reality of our Lord's risen and ascended manhood -- in opposition to a form of Docetism revived by the Anabaptists, which regarded our Lord's humanity as absorbed into His divinity after the resurrection." Article V 'Of the Holy Ghost' -- Bicknell maintains<sup>383</sup> -- is "one of the new Articles added in 1563...due to the revival of ancient heresies by the Anabaptists."

Article VI ("Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation") is directed against "certain among the Anabaptists [who] regarded all Scripture as unnecessary," explains Bicknell.<sup>384</sup> "An Article of 1553 describes them as those 'who affirm that Holy Scripture is

given only to 'the weak'; and ['the strong' Anabaptists contrarily] do boast themselves continually of the Spirit -- of Whom (they say) they have learnt such things as they teach, although the same be most evidently repugnant to the Holy Scripture.'

"In other words, if men [spiritualistically] claim to be under the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit and to have received a personal revelation -- does not this supersede Scripture? Such a view ignores the corporate and social nature of all truth."

Article VII ("Of the Old Testament") states *inter alia* that "no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the Commandments which are called Moral." Bicknell has shown<sup>385</sup> that the Article "is directed against...errors...maintained by sections of Anabaptists."

Of those Anabaptists, "some rejected the Old Testament entirely, and claimed -- in virtue of their illumination by the Spirit -- to be superior even to the Moral Law contained in it." Similarly, also Article VIII ("Of the Three Creeds"), explains Bicknell,<sup>386</sup> "was composed as a protest against Anabaptists who rejected all creeds" in general -- and in particular the Nicene, the Athanasian, and the Apostles' Creeds.

Article IX ("Of Original or Birth Sin") -- Bicknell maintains<sup>387</sup> -- is "directed against the Pelagian views of Anabaptists." The 1553 Article, after the words 'as the Pelagians do vainly talk' -- had the further words 'which also the Anabaptists do nowadays renew.' Observes Bicknell: "This sufficiently shows the object of the Article."

Article X ("Of Free Will") -- Bicknell elucidates<sup>388</sup> -- "asserts the need of grace against Pelagian Anabaptists." Article XV ("Of Christ alone without Sin") -- Bicknell has insisted<sup>389</sup> -- "was directed against certain Anabaptists who denied our Lord's sinlessness."

### **81. Continuation of the Anti-Anabaptist *Thirty-nine Articles***

Article XVI ("Of Sin after Baptism") -- thus Bicknell<sup>390</sup> -- "is aimed at Anabaptist errors." The 1553 Article dealt with blasphemy against the Holy Ghost,<sup>391</sup> and dealt with what the Anglican scholars Maclear and Williams have rightly called<sup>392</sup> "erroneous views...reproduced in the sixteenth century by a section of the Anabaptists who appeared in great numbers in Essex and Kent."

Indeed, Maclear and Williams have drawn attention to "a letter from Bishop Hooper to Bullinger, June 25 1549. It describes the appearance of the Anabaptists in England."<sup>393</sup>

Then there is Article XVIII ("Of obtaining eternal Salvation only by the name of Christ"). It too, Bicknell has shown,<sup>394</sup> "is aimed at Anabaptists" -- namely such as "rejected Christ as Saviour and treated any definite Christian belief as unimportant."

Article XIX ("Of the Church") -- thus Bicknell<sup>395</sup> -- "would...exclude various Anabaptist sects." Indeed, the 1553 Article also stated that "all men are bound to keep the Moral Commandments of the Law."

This -- Maclear and Williams have insisted<sup>396</sup> -- "had reference to the teaching of a branch of the Anabaptists who 'by putting forth the plea of preternatural illumination, made themselves superior to the Moral Law, and circulated opinions respecting it most evidently repugnant to the Holy Scripture.'"

Article XXIII ("Of Ministering in the Congregation") -- thus Bicknell<sup>397</sup> -- shows that "the Anglicans wished to oppose Anabaptists who held...to ecclesiastical anarchy." Article XXV ("Of the Sacraments") -- Bicknell elucidates<sup>398</sup> -- has as "its object...to condemn as inadequate, [all] teaching about the sacraments held by Anabaptists."

Similarly, Article XXVI ("Of the Unworthiness of the Ministers which hinder not the Effect of the Sacrament"). For it -- thus Bicknell<sup>399</sup> -- would Neo-Donatistically "condemn the idea of Anabaptists that the personal holiness of the Minister was a necessary condition for any valid preaching of the Word or ministration of the Sacraments."

Article XXVII ("Of Baptism") insists that "the Baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ." Bicknell states<sup>340</sup> that this "is aimed at (i) the inadequate view of Baptism taken by...the Anabaptists; (ii) the denial of Infant Baptism." Similarly, Article XXVIII ("Of the Lord's Supper") according to Bicknell<sup>401</sup> "excludes...Anabaptist views which made the Lord's Supper a mere love feast."

Article XXXVII ("Of the Civil Magistrates"), Bicknell has shown,<sup>402</sup> would "condemn Anabaptist attacks on the authority of the State." Article XXXIX ("Of a Christian man's oath"), says Bicknell,<sup>403</sup> is against "the objection of the Anabaptists...to the use of oaths."

Article XXXVIII -- "Of Christian men's Goods, which are Not Common" -- merits rather more attention. It states that "the riches and goods of Christians are not common as touching the...title and possession of the same, as certain Anabaptists do falsely boast." According to Bicknell,<sup>404</sup> this Article was drawn up because "certain Anabaptists advocated Communism."

Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff has pointed out<sup>405</sup> that "in the *Forty-two Articles* of Edward VI, there are four additional Articles -- on the Resurrection of the Dead, the State of the Souls of the Departed, Millenarians, and the Eternal Damnation of the Wicked." These Articles, Schaff adds,<sup>406</sup> are: "against the Anabaptist notion of the *psychopannychia* (XL)"; and "against the millenarians (XLI)," compare "the *Augsburg Confession* where the Anabaptists and others are condemned." All of these additional Articles, as Maclear and Williams have explained,<sup>407</sup> refer to the heresies of "the Anabaptist sect whose theories had previously been denounced."

## **82. John Knox's writings against the Anabaptists**

Already in 1557, John Calvin's faithful student the great Scottish Presbyterian Reformer John Knox had written some letters to his brethren -- and to 'lords professing the truth' in Scotland. One such letter was recently republished<sup>348</sup> under the title: *A Warning Against the Anabaptists*. There,<sup>409</sup> Knox condemned those who "have separated themselves from the society and communion of their brethren in[to] sects damnable and most pernicious."



Those sectarian Anabaptists, concedes Knox, really do "have a zeal.... But alas, it is not according to knowledge.... This sort of men fall from the society of Christ's little flock, with contempt of His sacraments and holy ordinances by us truly maintained." Indeed, "they require a greater purity than ever was found in any congregation since the beginning."

Knox then immediately goes on to insist that the Anabaptists "shall not escape judgment and condemnation." This is so, declares Knox, "because they do despise Christ Jesus and His[!] holy ordinances."

Indeed, the Anabaptists were not at all like the apostolic-age Christians who had been ejected from Judaism's "synagogue of Satan." Mark 13:9-13 and Revelation 2:9 & 3:9. Nor were the Anabaptists like the Protestants who had just been removed from the Romish Neo-Babylon. Revelation 17:5 and 18:4; compare Second Thessalonians 2:3-17f. Rather were the Anabaptists exactly analogous to the post-ascensional Gnostics, who opposed Christianity and who castigated its infant baptism. Colossians 2:9-23 (*q.v.*).

Just a few paragraphs after penning his above-cited words, Knox writes that even though "the Papists are busy to espy our offences, faults and infirmities..., they are **not** the enemies most to be feared. For...of the other [Anabaptist] sort of whom before we have somewhat spoken, the craft and malice of the devil fighting against Christ is **more** covert and therefore more to be feared."

Think of it -- the Anabaptists more to be feared than the Romanists! For the Anabaptists, insists Knox, were "privy blasphemers of Christ Jesus; supplanters of His dignity; and manifest enemies to the free justification which comes by faith in His blood."

In 1560, Knox himself wrote a considerable treatise with the title *An Answer to a Great Number of Blasphemous Cavillations Written by an Anabaptist and Adversary*. There, he told the Anabaptists that "with the Pelagians and Papists, you have become teachers of free will and defenders of your own justice.... Your poison is more pestilent than that of the Papistry was in the beginning."<sup>410</sup>

To Knox, the "poison" of the Anabaptists was "more pestilent" -- yes, **more** pestilent! -- than that of "the Papistry." Again, just think of it -- Anabaptism more poisonous and more 'pestilent' than the Papacy!

Indeed, Knox adds elsewhere: "We damn the error of the Anabaptists who deny baptism to appertain to children."<sup>411</sup> He **damns** the Anabaptists' error!

In the 1560 *Scots Confession*, Knox and his associates add: "We hold that baptism applies as much to the [infant] children of the faithful as to those who are of age and discretion. And so we condemn the error of the Anabaptists, who deny that [infant] children should be baptized."<sup>412</sup>

Once again, in their *First Book of Discipline*, John Knox and the other five of the 'six Johns' who wrote it draw their conclusion. There, those Knoxians insist: "Anabaptists, Arians, or other such -- [are] enemies of the Christian religion."<sup>413</sup>

### **83. The English Anabaptists called the 'Family of Love'**

So the heresies of the Neo-Marcionitic and Neo-Manichaeic Paulicians and even of the antitrinitarian Servetus himself were already afoot even in Knox's Britain. Indeed, prominent among the British Anabaptists was the so-called 'Family of Love' in England.

As Williams has explained:<sup>414</sup> "The English 'Familists' were communitarian pacifistic Anabaptists." They, just "like the Paulicians and the Servetians, received believers' baptism at the age of thirty." So too, it should never be forgotten, did the Swiss Anabaptist Felix Mantz (or Manz) whom the Baptist Hulse has regarded as a Baptist!

The English 'Familists' were very well-described by John Rogers, in his 1579 *Horrible Sect of Gross and Wicked Heretics naming themselves the 'Family of Love.'* There, explained Rogers, "marriage is made by the brethren.... These had never met before....

"All men not of their congregation, or revolted from them, are as dead.... If they have anything to do touching their temporal things, they must do it...through one of their bishops."<sup>415</sup>

Rome rides again -- toward the sunset of the modern Moonies! Tallyho! Yahoo! Weirdos of the World -- unite!

The *Forty-two Articles* and the writings of John Knox effectively checked the further spread of British Anabaptism. Nevertheless, by 1587 the majority of the population of Norwich alone consisted of refugee Dutch Anabaptists.<sup>416</sup>

They were stoutly opposed by Anglicans and Puritans alike. Compare the English Presbyterian Thomas Cartwright's 1589 book *The Anabaptists' Error Confuted*. Consequently, in 1593 some English 'Barrowists' fled to Holland -- where they soon became Anabaptists.<sup>417</sup>

### **84. The Belgic Confession condemns the various views of the Anabaptists**

To the north of the Province of Holland, especially Friesland had heavily been infected with Anabaptism. Indeed, the whole of the United Netherlands -- almost from Denmark in the north right down to the Belgian border with France in the south -- was then being pestered by that plague.

The Belgian Calvinist Guido de Brés had been a refugee from 1548 till 1554 in England. There, he had greatly been strengthened by the Calvinism of those supporting King Edward VI. He then returned to the Netherlands, where he continued his struggle especially against the Belgian Anabaptists.

This can be seen in his famous 1562 Reformed *Belgic Confession*. For it attacks<sup>418</sup> not so much the Romanist but especially the Anabaptist doctrine of baptism -- and indeed many of the other Anabaptist doctrines too.<sup>419</sup>

Thus, in Article 7, the *Belgic Confession* asserts: "We believe that these Holy Scriptures fully contain the will of God, and that whatsoever man ought to believe unto salvation is sufficiently taught therein.... It is unlawful for anyone, though an Apostle, to teach otherwise than we are now taught in the Holy Scriptures.

"Nay, though it were an angel from Heaven' -- as the Apostle Paul saith. Galatians 1:8f.... We reject with all our hearts whatsoever doth not agree with this infallible rule which the Apostles have taught us, saying: 'Test the spirits, whether they are of God!' First John 4:1.

"Likewise: 'If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine -- receive him not into your house!' Second John 10." This refers to deniers of the incarnation [like the Anabaptists].

In Article 18, the *Belgica* adds: "We confess, in opposition to the heresy of the Anabaptists who deny that Christ assumed human flesh of His mother, that Christ is become 'a partaker of the flesh and blood of the children.' Hebrews 2:14....

"He is: a 'fruit of the loins of David after the flesh' (Acts 2:30); a 'fruit of the womb' of the virgin Mary (Galatians 4:4); a 'branch' of David (Jeremiah 33:15); a shoot of 'the root of Jesse' (Isaiah 11:1); 'sprung from the tribe of Judah' (Hebrews 7:14); 'descended from the Jews according to the flesh' (Romans 9:5); 'of the seed of Abraham, since He took upon Him the seed of Abraham and became like unto His brethren in all things, sin excepted.' So that in truth He is our Immanuel, that is to say, 'God with us.' Genesis 22:8; Second Samuel 7:12; Matthew 1:1; Galatians 3:16; Hebrews 2:15f; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23."

It should be noted that the *Belgica* -- at a time when both Belgium and the Netherlands were infested with Anabaptism -- in its Article 18 here refers to "the heresy of the Anabaptists."

For the anti-incarnational christology it here condemns was successively advocated even during the patristic period by many Neo-Pagan heretics and a whole medley of Syncretists. Such included: Gnostics and Valentinians (thus Irenaeus); Marcion and Apelles (thus Tertullian); the Marcionites (thus Athanasius); Apollinarius (thus Gregory Nazianzen); Marcion and Eutyches (thus Gennadius) -- and later also by the Neo-Manichaean *Cathari* (thus Wall).

In Article 34, the *Belgica* further declares: "We believe and confess that Jesus Christ..., having abolished circumcision which was done with blood -- hath instituted the sacrament of baptism instead thereof. Colossians 2:11; First Peter 3:21; First Corinthians 10:2.... Therefore He has commanded all those who are His, to be baptized with pure water in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Matthew 28:19.

"This signifies to us that as water washes away the filth of the body when poured upon it, and is seen on the body of the baptized when sprinkled upon him, so does the blood of Christ by the power of the Holy Ghost internally sprinkle the soul...by the sprinkling of the precious blood of the Son. First Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 9:14; First John 1:7; Revelation 1:6; John 19:34."

Against submersionism, the *Belgica* here hammers home the Biblical **mode** of **baptism**. Thus it insists that the baptismal water is "**poured** upon" [namely "poured **upon**"] and "**sprinkled** upon" [namely "sprinkled **upon**"] the believer -- to show how the Holy Spirit does "internally **sprinkle**" and save the soul "by the **sprinkling**" of the blood of Jesus *etc.*

Further, continues the *Belgica*: "We believe that every man who is earnestly studious of obtaining life eternal, ought to be **but once baptized** with this only baptism, **without ever repeating the same**. Mark 16:16; Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 4:5; Hebrews 6:2*f.* Since we cannot be born twice!

"Neither does this baptism avail us only at the time when the water is **poured upon** us and received by us -- otherwise we would always have our **head** in the water! -- but also throughout the whole course of our life. Acts 2:38 & 8:16 [*cf.* too Romans 6:3*f.*]

"Therefore **we detest the error of the Anabaptists**, who are not content with the one only baptism they have once received.... The **infants of believers**...we believe **ought to be baptized** and sealed with the sign of the Covenant (Matthew 19:14 & First Corinthians 7:14) -- as the children in Israel formerly were circumcised upon the same promises which are made unto our children. Genesis 17:11*f.*....

"Christ shed His blood no less for...the children of the faithful than for adult persons. Colossians 2:11*f.*.... What **circumcision** was to the Jews -- that, **baptism** is to our children."

Finally, in Article 36, the *Belgica* adds: "We detest the error of the Anabaptists and other seditious people and in general all those who reject the higher powers and magistrates, and would subvert justice. Second Peter 2:10."

Indeed, such Anabaptists would also "introduce a community of goods, and confound that decency and good order which God hath established among men. Jude 8 & 10."

### **85. Guido De Brés's 1570 book against the Anabaptists**

The author of the *Belgica*, Guido de Brés, defended the baptism of covenant children elsewhere too. He did so, and also attacked rebaptism, in his other (1570) work *The Radical Origin and Foundation of the Anabaptists*.

There he stated:<sup>420</sup> "These two things we must observe in baptism. Namely: (1) the sign of water used as a seal, and (2) the body of those who have the truth of baptism [*viz.* the Church].... The truth of baptism is also to be recognized in baptism.... That is the internal washing of souls in the blood of Christ...through the fellowship which we have with Him....

"One should note...to whom the sign of baptism applies. Holy Scripture clearly teaches us that it applies to the entire household of God; to the whole body of His congregation; that is, to all of those who are His people, both small and large.... Little children...[of the Covenant] have the **sproutings** of faith.... One cannot include them among the unbelievers -- until they come to their years of understanding [if they thereafter reject the faith of their fathers]....

"Between these two [believers and unbelievers], there is no intermediate position before God.... God regards them [the little believers] as, and reckons them to be -- of the number of those who believe in the Son.... By grace and through Christ, the little children are regarded and reckoned by God as possessing all the virtues which [believing] adults possess -- by understanding, and through faith in the same Christ."<sup>421</sup>

Covenantal babies, says De Brés,<sup>422</sup> "are without contradiction the people of God.... The little children too are regenerated, by the power of God which is incomprehensible to us." From Luke 1:15 & 1:36 and Jeremiah 1:5 and First Corinthians 7:14 and Matthew 19:14 and Deuteronomy 30:6 and Acts 10:47 and Romans 8:7 -- it can be seen that the Holy Spirit is well able to work in children.

"Although the work of God is hidden to our understanding, yet it is still true. Now it is certain and definite that God regenerates even children, and makes them new creatures -- namely those whom He justifies."<sup>423</sup>

The Anabaptists essentially said<sup>424</sup> that 'the small members of the body [alias the Church] are not enlivened by the Spirit of the body -- because they are small.' Yet De Brés countered that the Apostle says "that those who do not have Christ's Spirit, do not belong to Him [Romans 8:9]. But these little children do belong to Christ. Therefore, they have Christ's Spirit."

All children are indeed under the curse, admitted De Brés -- "except the children of believers who have been redeemed from such perdition by God's gracious acceptance, and through the power of the promise and of the Covenant.... Now, it is certain and sure that God regenerates even the little children. I say He makes those whom He saves, into new creatures.... They possess both rebirth and renewal...through Christ the Second Adam in His Spirit.... Regeneration is nothing other than an internal washing and purification."<sup>425</sup>

Continued De Brés: "According to the testimonies of God's Word, they [covenantal babies] are incorporated and ingrafted into the death of Christ.... Similarly, a cutting is ingrafted into a tree -- and then draws the power and substance of that tree toward itself, and partakes thereof."<sup>426</sup> Romans 11:16.

De Brés concluded:<sup>427</sup> "The tiny little children receive the sign of regeneration and of renewal (*viz.* baptism). They are separated from the World before they come to years.... They are blessed and elect before the Lord, Who regenerates them and renews them through His Spirit. But when they come to a suitable age..., we teach and instruct them in the doctrine of baptism and get them to know that they should think of this Spirit-ual regeneration all the days of their lives -- of which they received the sign in their young days....

"The little children are renewed by God's Spirit according to the measure and comprehension of their age. And this divine power, which is hidden within them, grows and gradually increases [*cf.* Luke 1:15f,41f,80].... They are redeemed, sanctified and regenerated from perdition -- even though natural corruption still remains in them. For they possess such regeneration not through their own goodness, but through the sole goodness and mercy of God in Jesus Christ."

## **86. Bullinger's Anti-Anabaptist Second Swiss Confession**

It will be remembered that Calvin's associate Henry Bullinger himself authored a work on *The Origin, Progress, and Sects of the Anabaptists*. There, he wrote<sup>428</sup> that "they wished to abandon the Papists and the Evangelicals...and live in a new Baptist order."

Indeed, Switzerland's 1536 *First Helvetic Confession* of that very same Bullinger and others -- was expanded considerably in Bullinger's 1566 *Second Swiss Confession*. This too constantly castigates the many heresies of the Anabaptists.

Thus it declares:<sup>429</sup> "We believe and teach that the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, was from all eternity.... He took flesh of the virgin Mary....

"We therefore do abhor the blasphemous doctrine of Arius and all the Arians, uttered against the Son of God. And especially the blasphemies of Michael Servetus" the Anabaptist.

It continues:<sup>430</sup> "Baptism, once received, continues for all of life and is a perpetual sealing of our adoption [Romans 6:3f and Hebrews 6:1-8].... We are baptized, that is, washed or **sprinkled**....

"We condemn the Anabaptists, who deny that new-born infants of the faithful are to be baptized. For, according to evangelical teaching, of such [infants of the faithful] is the Kingdom of God (Luke 18:16), and they are in the Covenant (Acts 3:25)....

"Why, then, should the sign of God's Covenant not be given to them? Why should those who belong to God...and are in God's Church, not be initiated by holy baptism?

"We condemn the Anabaptists also in the rest of those peculiar opinions which they hold against the Word of God. We therefore are not Anabaptists, neither do we agree with them in any point that is theirs.... For wedlock (which is the medicine of incontineny, and continency itself) -- was ordained by the Lord God Himself.... We therefore condemn polygamy.... We do detest unclean single life, licentious lusts and fornications.... We do not disallow riches, nor contemn rich men if they be godly and use their riches well. But we reprove the sect of the Apostolicals, *etc.*"<sup>431</sup>

Finally: "We condemn the Anabaptists who -- as they deny that a Christian man should bear the office of a magistrate -- deny also that any man can justly be put to death by the magistrate; or that the magistrate may make war; or that oaths should be administered by the magistrate; and suchlike things.... For he that opposes himself against the magistrate, does provoke the wrath of God. We condemn therefore all contemnners of magistrates, rebels, enemies of the commonwealth, seditious villains -- and, in a word, all such as do either openly or closely refuse to perform those duties which they owe."<sup>432</sup>

We should perhaps also mention the *Rhaetian Confession*. According to Rev. Professor Dr. Curtis,<sup>433</sup> "at a Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Rhaetian Alps, approval was given

in 1552 to a Confession -- the *Confessio Rhaetica* -- drawn up by Saluz Gallicus, and intended to establish a uniform system of doctrine in place of the existing theological chaos in which Anabaptist...and pantheistic teachings mingled. In 1553 it was submitted to Bullinger, who cordially approved of it.... Thereafter for centuries, in spite of the subsequent local recognition of the *Second Helvetic Confession*, it remained the authoritative Rhaetian formula."

## **87. Monolithic opposition of all the Protestant Reformers to Anabaptism**

Quite the entirety of the first generation, and perhaps also the majority of the second generation of Protestant Reformers -- were all infantly-baptized in the Roman Catholic Church. Not one of them was ever subsequently (re)baptized in any Protestant Church. Nor was any ever 'rebaptized' by the Anabaptists.

Yet many of them accurately and aggressively assailed both the Anabaptist and the Romish doctrines. As we have already seen, this was the case with: Martin Luther;<sup>434</sup> Ulrich Zwingli;<sup>435</sup> John Oecolampadius;<sup>436</sup> John Calvin;<sup>437</sup> Henry Bullinger;<sup>438</sup> John Knox;<sup>439</sup> and Guido de Brés.<sup>440</sup>

Indeed, it was also the case with 'second generation' Calvinist Reformers. Those would include: Peter Datheen;<sup>441</sup> Menzo Alting;<sup>442</sup> Jean Taffin;<sup>443</sup> Francis Junius;<sup>444</sup> Lucas Trelocatius Sr.;<sup>444</sup> Lucas Trelocatius Jr.;<sup>446</sup> Gellius Sneedanus;<sup>447</sup> James Kimedoncius;<sup>448</sup> Peter Bontemps;<sup>449</sup> and many others.<sup>450</sup> All of them were baptized only once; and, indeed, precisely during their infancy -- some in the Romish Church prior to their conversion, but the others in the Protestant Church into which they had been born. Some also went and converted Anabaptists -- as did Calvin himself (who thereafter even married such a convert).

These Anti-Anabaptist Calvinists strongly opposed also Romanism's false doctrine of baptismal regenerationism -- and Gnesio-Lutheranism's teaching as to the almost absolute necessity for baptism. Thus Calvin, Beza and Alsted -- as well as the German Reformed *Brandenburg Confessions* from 1614 onward.<sup>451</sup>

## **88. Mutual influence of Continental and British Anti-Anabaptists**

The above sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century Calvinists in Europe strongly affected not only the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, but also the Anglican Church in England. Both sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century British Puritans were massively influenced by, and in turn themselves massively influenced, the paedobaptist and anti-anabaptistic Reformed theology of the Continent.

Thus, the Scots Wishart and Knox both studied in Switzerland. Wishart was deeply impressed by the anti-anabaptistic *First Helvetic Confession* of 1536. And John Knox not only frequently consulted with John Calvin, but himself wrote at least two works against the Anabaptists.

According to Rev. Dr. William McMillan in his book *The Worship of the Scottish Reformed Church 1550-1638*, the conviction of the writers of the *Book of Common Order* is the Biblical view that the babies of believers are themselves Christians and federally holy before baptism.<sup>452</sup> Indeed, this view was later reflected in the 1645 Westminster Assembly's *Directory for the Publick Worship of God*.<sup>453</sup>

Not just Guido de Brés from Belgium had lived in Britain. Indeed, also Peter Martyr Vermigli from Italy and Jan Laski from Poland and Maarten Micron and Franciscus Gomarus from the Netherlands had all studied and had thereafter worked in England.

Martin Butzer from Germany even became a Professor at Cambridge University. And John Calvin helped the exiled Scot John Knox to get clerical appointments first in Germany and later in Switzerland.

Indeed, Calvin himself later wrote even to King Edward VI and Good Queen Bess in England. Heinrich Bullinger too took a lively interest in Britain, and helped many British Christians while they were exiled in his own Switzerland during the persecution of English Protestants under the Romish Queen Mary.

Moreover, there was a constant stream of heavy correspondence between the Reformed Churches in Switzerland and both the Anglicans and the Presbyterians in Britain. This was especially the case in respect of Butzer and Calvin and Bullinger and Peter Martyr on the one hand. It was also the case as regards Knox and Hooper and Jewel and Cranmer and Somerset (*etc.*) on the other.

Also of significance is what certain Superintendents and Ministers in the Church of Scotland wrote to John Calvin's successor Theodore Beza. They wrote that the doctrine of the anti-anabaptistic *Second Helvetic Confession* of 1566 is precisely "what we have been teaching constantly these eight years [1558-66], and still by the grace of God continue to teach in our churches."<sup>454</sup>

The General Assembly gave official approval to the *Helvetica* on 25th December 1566, when it "ordained the same to be printed, together with an epistle sent by the Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland approving the same." Too, *Calvin's Catechism* was approved by the Church of Scotland -- and was usually adjoined to its *Book of Common Order*.<sup>455</sup>

## **89. The Anti-Anabaptist and Anti-Romish 1615 Irish Articles**

Very important too are the 1615 *Irish Articles*. For, as Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff<sup>456</sup> and Rev. Professor Dr. Benjamin B. Warfield<sup>457</sup> both rightly claimed, the *Westminster Confession of Faith* itself was influenced chiefly by those *Irish Articles*.

Already in 1566, the Protestant Episcopal Church of Ireland had drawn up twelve short articles. After the founding of Dublin University by pious Protestant Bishops in 1591, the Protestant Irish Church convoked in 1613. It then drew up one hundred and four new articles -- largely under the leadership of the godly Puritan Archbishop Rev. Dr. James Ussher.



The *Irish Articles* are anti-anabaptistic. They say<sup>458</sup> "the laws of the realm may punish Christian men with death for heinous and grievous offences.... It is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the magistrate, to bear arms and to serve in just wars...."

"For the preservation of the chastity of men's persons, wedlock is commanded unto all men that stand in need thereof.... The riches and goods of Christians are not common -- as touching the right, title and possession of the same -- as certain Anabaptists falsely affirm...."

"In the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the ministration of the Word and Sacraments. Yet, forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name but in Christ's, and minister by His commission and authority -- we may use their ministry both in hearing the Word and in receiving the Sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness...."

"It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching or ministering the Sacraments in the Church. Unless he first lawfully be called and sent to execute the same."

These *Irish Articles* are also very strongly Calvinistic, and reflect the Puritanism then prevalent in Trinity College Dublin. They are rather 'Presbyterian' in character, and are very strong on predestination and reprobation. Indeed, they apparently presuppose regeneration even before infant baptism.

They insist<sup>459</sup> that "baptism is not only an outward sign of our profession and a note of difference whereby Christians are discerned from such as are not Christians -- but much more a Sacrament of our admission into the Church, sealing unto us our new birth by the communion which we have in Jesus Christ. The baptism of infants is to be retained in the Church, as agreeable to the Word of God."

## **90. The Anti-Anabaptist 'T-U-L-I-P' Decrees of the Synod of Dordt**

Hot on the heels of the 1615 *Irish Articles*, followed the 1618f 'Five Point of Calvinism' alias the *Decrees of Dordt*. Also acronymed as 'T-U-L-I-P' (see the next paragraph), the 'Five Points' were formulated at an international Synod -- attended by delegates from England, Friesland, Germany, Holland, Scotland, Switzerland, and Wales.

Dordt's famous predestinarian "T-U-L-I-P" itself, is implicitly paedobaptistic and anti-anabaptistic. For that 'T-U-L-I-P' -- viz. 'Total Depravity' and 'Unconditional Election' and 'Limited Atonement' and 'Irresistible Grace' and the 'Perseverance of the Saints' -- also in Holy Scripture itself applies not just to believing adults but also to their covenantal babies.

Thus, God's elect also include many babies. For Dordt insists that "the children of believers are holy not by nature -- but by virtue of the Covenant of grace in which they, together with the parents, are comprehended. Godly parents [as distinct from those who merely profess to be Christians] have no reason to doubt the election and salvation of those of their children whom it pleases God to call out of this life in their infancy."<sup>460</sup>

Again, Dordt reminds us of Christ's own words in Holy Scripture about God's revelations to 'tiny tots' within the Covenant of grace. For it cites the Saviour's great statement: "I praise You, Father..., that You have **revealed** these things...**to the little children**."<sup>461</sup> Cf. Matthew 11:25f.

Lastly, one of Dordt's articles<sup>462</sup> against the Remonstrants (or Arminians) ascribes both the commencement and the preservation of grace in the elect to the Word alone. It ascribes to the Sacraments not the beginning or the inauguration but only the conservation, continuation and perfection of previously-begun saving grace.<sup>463</sup> Thus, faith before baptism!

It should also be pointed out that some of the Arminians or 'Remonstrants' condemned by the Synod of Dordt were themselves tainted with Unitarian Anabaptism. This the Synod's *Acts* at its Session 138 record "the profession of the two brothers Jan and Pieter Geysteran, Remonstrant Ministers" – which in the Synod of Dordt "was rejected by all, with detestation. For it appeared that they, under the name of Remonstrants and under pretence of the Five Articles, "did maintain the horrid and execrable blasphemies of Socinus and the Anabaptists."

## **91. The influence of the 1618f Synod of Dordt upon Britain**

The Stated Clerk of the Synod of Dordt later had a considerable influence upon the leading Westminster Assembly Theologian, Rev. Dr. George Gillespie. Indeed, King James the First of Great Britain -- who authorized the translation of the King James Bible in 1611 -- himself sent British Delegates to the Synod of Dordt in 1618.

At least five Britons are known to have attended the Synod of Dordt. Indeed, they saw to it that its doctrine thereafter got circulated in Britain.

Those five are: Bishop George Landaff of Wales; Rev. Professor Dr. John Davenant and Rev. Professor Dr. Samuel Ward, both of Cambridge; Rev. Dr. Thomas Goad of London; and Rev. Dr. Walter Balcanqual of Scotland.<sup>464</sup> Indeed, there is some evidence that the Synod was attended in addition -- even by the great British Puritan Rev. Dr. William Ames (who soon thereafter became Professor of Theology at Franeker in Friesland).

'Mr. T-U-L-I-P' himself, the great Rev. Professor Dr. Francis Gomarus, had attended the 1618f Synod of Dordt. So too had his even more famous student, Gisbert Voetius. Gomarus had taught in Britain toward the end of the previous century. He clearly asserted an infant faith within covenantal babies.<sup>465</sup>

Voetius would soon become the greatest Theologian in seventeenth-century Holland. Rev. Dr. Kaajan rightly represents Voetius as being "kindred in spirit to the Scottish and English Puritans."<sup>466</sup> Voetius's own doctrine of the prebaptismal (rebuttably) presumed regeneration of covenant infants, was itself strongly influenced by that of the very famous Englishman Rev. Dr. Cornelius Burgess.

Perhaps most significantly of all, Voetius later publically expressed his own agreement with the 'infant faith' views of Dr. Burgess (the Assessor and Acting Moderator of the

Westminster Assembly itself). Burgess had published his own views in his 1629 *Treatise on the...Regeneration of Elect Infants*. Compare the *Westminster Confession* 10:4, and the Westminster Assembly's *Directory for the Publick Worship of God* (on baptism).

Thereafter, Voetius commented on that writing of Burgess:<sup>406</sup> "The opinion of the author pleases me.... He insists that in the elect and covenanted infants, there is room for the initial regeneration of the Holy Spirit -- by which is impressed the beginning and seed of actual conversion or renovation which is to follow in its own time."

Also Voetius's friend, Rev. Dr. Jan Cloppenburgh of Amsterdam, rightly refuted both Arminians and Anabaptists. Cloppenburgh later became Professor of Theology in Hardewyk, and later in Franeker. In his work *The Gangrene of Anabaptist Theology*, Cloppenburgh insists<sup>468</sup> that covenantal children "possess the seed of faith within them....

"It [faith] not merely follows but also precedes [baptism] -- and is accompanied by the fulfilments of the promises." Thus Cloppenburgh. Compare too the views of the earlier British Puritan William Perkins -- in his *Golden Chain*.<sup>469</sup>

## **92. The Anti-Anabaptist background of Britain's Westminster Assembly**

Rev. Professor Dr. Mitchell of St. Andrews University is perhaps the greatest authority on the theology and literature of the Westminster period. He has demonstrated quite conclusively<sup>470</sup> that the order followed by the Puritan Westminster divines in their *Westminster Confession of Faith*, is that of Archbishop Ussher's *Irish Articles*. Indeed, Ussher himself had been nominated as a delegate to the Westminster Assembly.

By 1643, the influence of Calvinism was dominant throughout the British Isles (England, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands). Britain was already exporting Calvinism -- to Holland, Germany, North America, and elsewhere. Indeed, also from Continental Europe -- the ongoing influence of Post-Calvinian Calvinism further strengthened the already strong native Calvinism of Great Britain herself.

Yet not just the 1615 *Irish Articles* but also the 1618f Synod of Dordt and its 'T-U-L-I-P' *Decrees of Dordt* (alias the 'Five Points of Calvinism') had a massive influence on the 1643f Westminster Assembly. And the latter, in turn, would soon greatly impact on the whole of British North America and later also on other English-speaking lands.

Indeed, as the American Presbyterian Rev. Professor Dr. L.B. Schenck has rightly remarked,<sup>471</sup> the whole gamut of Calvinist Confessions, as well as the best Reformed Theologians, were drawn upon by the Westminster Assembly. Such was the interaction between Northern Europe and the whole of the British Isles in the maturing of Calvinism, that there was little room for independent development.

Mercifully, Britain in general steered itself firmly away from heterodox Continental Anabaptism. Indeed, this was done particularly by the 1643f Westminster Assembly.

It is true that even the belated 'English Baptists' (from 1611 onward) did derive largely from the Anabaptists. However, even the English Baptists then had but very little theological influence.

Provisionally, they had remained only on the fringes of British Puritanism -- and still had but little impact on the national psyche. Indeed, after the Westminster Assembly, many English Baptists blessedly adopted even much of its Calvinism.

### **93. Baptist Professors on the origin and development of the (Ana)Baptists**

The American Rev. Dr. Robert G. Torbet was Professor of Church History at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary (from 1934-51). In 1950, he made some very important statements in his book *A History of the Baptists*.

According to Torbet,<sup>472</sup> Rev. Professor Dr. "Walter Rauschenbusch, of [Colgate] Rochester Baptist Theological Seminary" in New York State, exhibited a "willingness to identify Baptists with the socially-radical Anabaptists." Similarly, even Rev. Professor Henry C. Vedder, the well-known Baptist and Church Historian at Crozer Theological Seminary from 1894 to 1927, noted the Anabaptists' "aversion to oath-taking and holding public office."

Torbet affirmed the view of "Ernest A. Payne, British Baptist Church Historian, that the Anabaptists were in all likelihood an influence in England which affected...Baptist development. Thus we are obliged to consider the influence of Anabaptist spiritualism upon early Baptists."

Wrote Payne in the *Baptist Quarterly*: "Baptists cannot be separated from...other...groups of the sixteenth century." For there is indeed a "relationship between the early English Baptists and the Continental Anabaptists.... The Mennonite influence was responsible in part for the first Baptist witness."

Torbet himself admitted that "the false claims made by Thomas M $\ddot{u}$ nzer (1490-1525), a Socialist and Leader in the Peasants' War of 1525 -- and the horrors of the M $\ddot{u}$ nster Rebellion ten years later under...Melchior Hofmann and Jan Matthys -- combined to bring the Anabaptists into complete disrepute.... The extravagant cruelty and wanton destruction of the visionaries who sought to establish the millennial kingdom in M $\ddot{u}$ nster, made an indelible impression.... The fanatics of M $\ddot{u}$ nster were a potent menace to law and order" -- and "taught resistance, against government, by the sword...."

"Anabaptist teaching was to be found in England quite early in the sixteenth century. Large numbers of this sect came in 1528...until 1573, when...some fifty thousand were in the country.... The earlier Anabaptist refugees were disciples of Melchior Hofmann's fanatical teaching...."

"In 1530...Archbishop Warham at the command of Henry VIII condemned an Anabaptist book.... In 1549, during the reign of Henry's son Edward VI, Bishop Latimer's sermons contained warnings against this 'sect of hereticks.' He accused them of being anarchistic."

With commendable candour, the Baptist Torbet then went on to provide further alarming details: "English Anabaptists known as the 'Family of Love'...were present in the country during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, who came to the throne in 1558.

"This sect had its origin on the continent with Henry Nicholas (Niklaes), a native of Münster, who migrated to Amsterdam in 1530.... [In 1546,] he wrote a little book still to be found in the Mennonite library at Amsterdam, entitled *Of the Spiritual Land of Promise*....

"In this work he advocated and defended 'spiritual marriage' -- somewhat akin to Mormon teaching.... On the European Continent 'naked-runners' -- as they were called -- appeared in many cities.

"These 'naked-runners' -- who reputedly were Anabaptist fanatics -- seem to have been Nicholas's disciples. The sect, as transplanted to England, was known as 'Familists' -- and gained an unsavory reputation for immorality....

"Christopher Vitell, a Southwark joiner..., translated many of Nicholas' writings from the Dutch into English.... Bax, an able historian of the Anabaptist movement, admits...the historical connection between the 'Family of Love' and Anabaptists generally."

Fifty years later -- the eccentric English (Ana)Baptist Smyth migrated to Holland. Torbet concludes: "Smyth's congregation of some eighty persons seems to have had a separate existence [from Robinson's "Pilgrim Father" Congregationalists] in Amsterdam.... He [John Smyth] felt that a minister should not preach with any manuscript before him; not even a translation of the Scriptures....

"Smyth finished a tract against infant baptism, *The Character of the Beast* ['666'], on March 24th 1609.... Smyth, undoubtedly under the influence of the Waterlander Mennonites, became an Anabaptist....

"He baptized himself.... Since they worshiped in a block of buildings belonging to a Mennonite merchant..., Smyth came increasingly under Mennonite influence."

After Smyth's death in Amsterdam in 1610, his colleague and successor Thomas Helwys issued a *Declaration of Faith*, denying that baptism "appertaineth to infants." Then, with his flock, he returned to England -- to establish its first Baptist Church in 1611.

#### **94. Many modern Baptists say their pioneers derive from the Anabaptists**

Were we to wish, we could long dwell on some of the quainter views of many of the more sectarian Anabaptists. We could also point to the naked submersions of some, and the forward-leaning triple immersions of others, within groups of German Baptists.<sup>473</sup>

However, instead of examining those extraordinary eccentricities, we rather proceed straight to the British and Anglo-American Baptists. Uniquely, they finally adopted the baptismal mode of backward-leaning and fully-clothed onefold submersion.

In light of all the foregoing, the esteem of certain modern Baptists for the apostate Anabaptists -- is absolutely appalling. We have already seen<sup>474</sup> claims to this effect in the writings of the Baptists Torbet, Rauschenbusch and Payne.<sup>475</sup> Other specialists in the history of the Baptists agree.<sup>476</sup> Indeed, weirdly and woefully, even the modern British Particular Baptist Erroll Hulse has insisted<sup>477</sup> that "we should call the orthodox evangelical Anabaptists of the Reformation 'Baptists' -- and not 'Anabaptists.'"

Speaking specifically of the situation in England and America, Hulse has continued: "The General Baptists...had their origin in John Smyth (d. 1612)... His study of the Scriptures brought him to practise believers' baptism.... In March 1639, [Roger] Williams and eleven others were baptized, and the first Baptist Church in America was constituted."

Yet it should be observed that **after** Smyth had 'baptized' himself, or rather '**re-baptized**' himself -- yes, rebaptized **himself!** -- he was '**re-re-baptized**' by the Dutch Mennonite Anabaptists (by way of **pouring**). It should also be noted that after Williams was **submersed**, he later renounced **that particular submersion as being invalid** -- because administered by someone as then not yet himself submersed.

As the Scottish Baptist J.G.G. Norman has reminded us,<sup>478</sup> John Smyth, "father of English General Baptists..., baptized himself!" This he did in 1609; by affusion; and in the Netherlands.

Worse yet. After thus becoming a Mennonite, Smyth personally embraced their **heretical christology**.<sup>479</sup>

Even more startlingly, the English Baptist Rev. Professor Dr. West has drawn attention to what he regards<sup>480</sup> as "the first statement by an Englishman arguing for believers' baptism. It is Smyth's pamphlet *Character of the Beast*."

That is a diatribe -- "**666**"(!) -- against the historic Christian Church's apostolic practice of infant baptism. The latter must be renounced, held Smyth, as "profanation" and as the baptism of "Antichrist."<sup>481</sup> Apparently, because regarded as "the mark of the beast" -- viz. "in their foreheads." Revelation 13:16f!

After Smyth's death while a Mennonite, his former colleague and successor Thomas Helwys in 1611 drew up the first English *Baptist Confession*. At first, he denied original sin. Always, he maintained an Arminian soteriology.<sup>482</sup>

Indeed, Helwys's *Baptist Confession* -- while indeed confining baptism only to those who have professed Christ -- still says nothing about submersion.<sup>483</sup> However, he not only identified Romanism with the first beast but the Church of England as the second beast of Revelation thirteen!<sup>484</sup>

Smyth and Helwys were both Arminian (Ana)Baptists. The first so-called 'Calvinistic' or rather 'Particular Baptist' congregation was formed, in England, only in the 1630s. Yet by 1638, this new faction had rejected Scriptural sprinkling and had lapsed into sacramentalistic submersionism.

Then, following that declension -- in 1641, Edward Barber was the first English Arminian or General Baptist to advocate dipping.<sup>485</sup> Only from then onward did all Baptists exchanged their erstwhile (re-)baptism by pouring for (re-)baptism by submersing.

Yet Harvard's Pro-Anabaptist Professor Williams has made an honest admission. For even he acknowledges<sup>486</sup> that "the adoption by English Baptists of the practice of immersion [meaning submersion] -- ultimately derived from the Minor Church of Poland...introduced into Holland by the Socinians" alias the Unitarian Anabaptists.

## **95. The arrival and expansion of (Ana)Baptists in North America**

The famous American-Swiss Church Historian Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff has informed us<sup>487</sup> that "in America the Baptists trace their origin chiefly...to Roger Williams.... He was charged with advocating certain opinions supposed to be dangerous."

These included at least three distressing deviations. First, "that the magistrate ought not to punish offences against the First Table" of God's Law. Second, "that an oath ought not to be tendered to an unregenerate man." And third, "that a regenerate man ought not to pray with the unregenerate -- though it be his wife or child...."

"He [Roger Williams] was immersed [or rather submersed] by Ezekiel Hollyman [during 1639] -- and, in turn, [then] immersed Hollyman and ten others. This was the first Baptist church on the American Continent.

"But a few months afterwards, he [Roger Williams] renounced his [own (re-)]baptism. On the ground that Hollyman was unbaptized [meaning unsubmersed] -- and therefore unauthorized to administer the rite to him" at that former time.

Clearly, it never dawned on Roger Williams that nobody had baptized John the baptizer Nor, earlier, had anyone circumcised Abraham -- before he started circumcizing others. Nor are we told who then (validly) circumcised Abraham on that same day.

Yet it was the unbaptized John (and apparently by pouring or sprinkling) who baptized Jesus. And it is the Latter's baptism alone which gives validity to **all Christian baptisms!**

Roger Williams's vacillation on the validity even of his (re-)baptism, was bad enough. Yet far worse! Incredibly, Williams also pleaded<sup>488</sup> even for the complete toleration everywhere on Earth even of Islam, Judaism and Paganism! Thus he was an apostate from the strictly-exclusive and Biblical view of Christianity.

He read Dutch well; he knew of the neutralistic political concepts of the Dutch Anabaptists; and he accordingly rejected the British and American Puritans and their Christonomic Theocracy.<sup>489</sup> Indeed, and far more unfortunately -- from his own Rhode Island, the Dutch and English (Ana)Baptist heresies of Williams have now massively corrupted especially the United States, and thence also most of the rest of the Anglo-Saxon World.

To a rather lesser extent, this occurred also through the Amish and the Mennonite Anabaptists -- some of whom settled in Pennsylvania and its surrounds even from colonial times. Back in Europe around 1693<sup>f</sup>, the stricter 'Upper-Mennonites' under Jakob Ammann split from the milder 'Lower-Mennonites' under Hans Reist -- on the questions of the ban, beards, buttons, footwashings, and (later) even the use of electricity and gasoline.

Chiefly from Europe *via* Russia (till persecuted there), many more such Anabaptists moved to the New World. That was after the Tsarist and Communist persecutions of 1873-82 and 1923-30.

Their tenets still include antipaedobaptism, distinctive dress, non-oathing, separation between church and state, perfectionism, and pacifism. Yet especially since the First World War, in the U.S.A. many Mennonites either left their sect -- or got caught up in materialism and secularism, and repudiated pacifism.

It is, however, chiefly the Baptist stepchildren of the Anabaptists who have influenced the U.S.A. Such arose from seventeenth-century English Separatism -- though more remotely also from Continental Anabaptism. As even the Baptist Hulse has indicated,<sup>490</sup> "the Baptist World Alliance has published the statement that in 1975 there were 33,800,000 adherents throughout the World. Over 29,600,000 of these are in North America."

Well could Hulse have added that most of the latter are from Dixie: the Deep South of the U.S.A. There, Baptists themselves often boast, reside almost "more Baptists than people." Indeed, the Baptists Harry Truman, Jimmy Carter, and Bill Clinton -- the former U.S. Presidents -- are here "Exhibits A & B & C."

What Hulse indeed did add,<sup>491</sup> is that "the statistics might represent nominal Baptists only -- that is people who have little if any religious conviction; but when asked what religion they profess, will say 'Baptist.' This is especially so in areas where there is little cost to discipleship...."

"In some areas, such as the Southern States of America, membership may be almost as nominal as it is in State Churches of other countries. The great majority may have recorded a decision for Christ, but show no evidence of a saving change." What an admission, made by a Baptist, about Baptists!

## **96. British (Ana)Baptist Confessions of the seventeenth century**

Clearly, Pro-Mennonite Verduin was wrong to regard the Anabaptists as the stepchildren of the Reformers. The truth is, the Anabaptists were the stepchildren of the **Romanists** -- and they were even **more** heretical than their papal stepmother!

Yet Baptists like Torbet and Hulse have nevertheless regarded the Anabaptists as the ancestors of the Baptists. From this it would follow that Baptists are the stepchildren of the Anabaptists (and therefore also the great-stepchildren of the mediaeval **Romanists**).



Baptist Estep has alleged<sup>492</sup> that "baptism by immersion was inaugurated by 1641." Yet he should more accurately have conceded that this so-called immersion (or rather submersion) was not at all being "**inaugurated**" by the Baptists in 1641 -- but was **then** merely a **restoration** of the practice **inaugurated** by Ancient Paganism and borrowed therefrom post-midpatristically by neo-paganizing baptismally-regenerationistic and sacramentalistic **Romanism** -- in rejection of the Holy Bible's own baptism by way of **sprinkling!** Such, indeed, is the ancestry of the submersionism only re-discovered by the 1641 Baptists!

In 1643, the National Assembly of infant-sprinkling Bible-believing British Puritans had convened at Westminster. Swiftly, the (Ana)Baptists reacted. Arising out of their disputation against the leading Anglican Puritan Rev. Dr. Daniel Featley, they quickly produced their 1644 *Confession of the Seven Churches of London* -- alias their *London Confession*.<sup>493</sup>

Thus did they issue their own 1644 symbol. Intriguingly, it was subtitled: *Confession of Faith of those churches which are commonly...called 'Anabaptist'*<sup>494</sup> (emphasis of F.N. Lee). This novelly alleged a single submersion to be the only **valid** form of baptism. Therein, it alleged that the candidate's total submersion (alias his being dunked or **dipped under** the water) -- is indeed necessary for implantation into membership with them.

This *London Confession* was, of course, intended purely as a neo-anabaptistic declaration of faith. For it possessed no binding power over British Anabaptists in general -- and not even over those seven submersing congregationalistic congregations in London which framed that document. Yet, after the appearing of the sacramental parts of the British Puritans' *Westminster Confession* -- the *London Confession* of the 'Anabaptists' re-appeared again in 1646. But this time, with several additions and alterations!

Held that antipaedobaptistic and submersionistic document: "Baptism is an Ordinance of the New Testament...to be dispensed **only upon persons professing faith**.... The way and manner of the dispensing of this ordinance, the Scripture holds out to be **dipping or plunging the whole body under water**.... The word *baptizo*, signifying to dip under water -- yet so as with convenient **garments** both upon the administrator and subject, with all modesty."<sup>495</sup>

Comment is redundant. For in Biblical and Patristic baptism, the baptizees were not submersed but **sprinkled**. And the body-part baptized -- the face -- was then never clothed 'with convenient garments' (*sic!*), but was always **naked** (as too with Protestants today).

Only in the *London Baptist Confession of 1677* (further to be reprinted in 1688 & 1689), was a general declaration with an **abiding authority** among Baptists made in this regard. Its full title was *A Confession of Faith put forth by the Elders and Brethren of many congregations of Christians baptized upon Profession of their Faith*.<sup>496</sup> It contains the statement that "immersion or **dipping** of the person **in water**" was "**necessary** to the due administration of this ordinance."<sup>497</sup>

For the rest, this whole *London Confession of 1677* was plagiarized from the paedobaptist Puritans' *Westminster Confession of 1645!* From the latter, fortunately only the articles on Church Government and the Sacraments were perverted by the 1677 *London Confession* -- which, from 1742 onward, was in North America also known as the

*Philadelphia Confession*. For the rest -- this Baptist borrowing from the *Westminster Confession*<sup>498</sup> is indeed quite the sincerest form of flattery.

The Particular Baptists and the General Baptists separated from one another from 1691 until 1891. Based upon the *London Confession of 1677*, the 1693 London General Assembly of the Particular Baptists adopted their *Baptist Catechism*.<sup>499</sup>

## **97. The reply to the (Ana)Baptists of the Calvinistic Westminster Assembly**

Now the Protestant views of Luther and Zwingli and Calvin against both the Romanists and the (Ana)Baptists, were distilled and excellently summarized in the seventeenth-century *Westminster Standards*. These were drawn up by the greatest (and decade-long) assembly of international Bible Scholars the World has ever seen. To these, in conclusion, we now turn.

The absurd allegations contained in the 1644 *Baptist Confession* of the seven congregations in London "called Anabaptist" -- soon became apparent upon the 1646 publication of the *Westminster Confession* -- of the British Puritans which refuted them. See Francis Nigel Lee's *I Confess!* (subtitled *Holy Scripture, the Westminster Confession, and the Declaratory Statement (their Relationship to One Another in the Presbyterian Church of Australia)*).<sup>500</sup>

Of the various Westminster Standards, the *Westminster Directory for the Publick Worship of God* had appeared already in February 1645. "Baptism," it clearly declared,<sup>501</sup> "is not unnecessarily to be delayed.... The **child to be baptized**...is to be presented by the father....

"Before baptism, the Minister is to use some words of instruction...shewing that...**the seed and posterity of the faithful, born within the Church, have by their birth interest in the covenant** and right to the seal of it.... **They are Christians and federally holy before baptism**, and **therefore are they baptized**....

"He [the Minister] is to **baptize the child with water** which, for the manner of doing it, is not only lawful but sufficient and most expedient to be **by pouring or sprinkling of the water on the face of the child** -- without adding any other ceremony." By the latter is meant the Romish 'salt and spittle' -- as well as the submersions of post-midpatristic Romanism (and also of post-reformational Baptists).

In the above *Directory*, especially the expression "**baptize the child with water**" should be noted. Not "under water" but "with water."

The *Westminster Confession* was finalized. It states<sup>502</sup> that "**the first Covenant** made with man was a Covenant of works wherein life was promised to Adam and in him **to his posterity**. [Hosea 6:7 & First Corinthians 15:22 & 15:45f &] Romans 10:5 & 5:12-20.... God gave to Adam a Law -- as a Covenant of works by which **He bound him and all his posterity** to...perpetual obedience. Genesis 1:26f & 2:17; Romans 2:14f."

The mediaeval Petrobrusians had denied infants could demonstrate their worthiness and thus be saved. Accordingly, they rejected the baptism of babies. Also their descendants, the Anabaptists, rejected the baptism of infants -- and equivocated on their salvation. So too do **their** stepchildren, the Baptists.

But the Calvinistic *Westminster Confession* summarily declares<sup>503</sup> that "elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, Who worketh when and where and how He pleaseth. Luke 18:15f; Acts 2:38f; John 3:3,5; First John 5:12; Romans 8:9; John 3:8."

At man's creation, the 1647 *Westminster Confession* continues,<sup>504</sup> "**marriage was ordained...for the increase** of mankind with a legitimate issue and **of the Church with an holy seed**. Malachi 2:15 [*cf.* Hosea 6:7-10]....

"The catholick or Universal Church which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect.... **The Visible Church** which is also catholick or universal...consists of all those throughout the World that **profess the true religion -- together with their children** -- and is **the family of God**. First Corinthians 7:14; Acts 2:39; Ezekiel 16:20f; Romans 11:16; Genesis 3:15 & 17:7.... Unto this catholick Visible Church -- Christ hath given the Ministry, Oracles and **Ordinances of God**.... Matthew 28:19 & Isaiah 59:21." In the last two prooftexts, taken together, also **infant baptism** is indicated.

Specifically, the *Confession* goes on,<sup>505</sup> "baptism is a sacrament...and **seal** of the covenant of grace.... **Dipping** of the person into the water is **not** necessary; but **baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person**. Hebrews 9:10-22; Acts 2:41 [also vv. 14-18 & 33] & 16:33; Mark 7:4." See too Psalms 77:15-20 & 78:12-16; Joel 2:16,23,28f; First Corinthians 10:1-2; and First Peter 1:2 & 3:20f.

This means not only that "dipping" (though valid) -- and, *a fortiori*, even submersion -- is "unnecessary" for baptism. It also means that **baptism** is "**rightly**" administered by "pouring or **sprinkling**" and **not** by **submersion**.

Thus, one already baptized by the faulty mode of submersion, in the Name of the Trinity, should be deemed to have been baptized validly. Even though the correct method was not followed "**rightly**" or properly.

Indeed, although the mode of the baptism so such a one was **irregular** -- he or she should never again be re-baptized "rightly" (*viz.* by way of the **Biblical** mode of **sprinkling**). For his or her baptism, though certainly de-ficient, was still adequately ef-ficient.

"**Also the infants of one or both believing parents, are to be baptized**. Genesis 17:7-9; Galatians 3:9,14 [and vv. 27f]; Colossians 2:11f; Acts 2:38f; Romans 4:11f; Mark 10:13f; Luke 18:15f....

"**It be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance**. Luke 7:30 & Exodus 4:24-26.... **Baptism is but once to be administered to any person**. Titus 3:5."

The *Westminster Larger Catechism* was adopted in October 1647. It states:<sup>506</sup> "God doth not leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery, but...bringeth them into an estate of salvation by the second Covenant...of grace.... Under the New Testament...the same Covenant of grace was and still is to be administered in...the administration...of baptism. Matthew 28:19f....."

"Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water...to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into Himself.... Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out[side] of the Visible Church...."

"Infants descending from parents either both or but one of them professing faith in Christ and obedience to Him, are in that respect within the Covenant -- and to be baptized. Genesis 17:7f; Colossians 2:11f; Acts 2:38f; Romans 4:11f; First Corinthians 7:14; Matthew 28:19; Luke 18:15f; Romans 11:16.... Baptism is to be administered **but once**...., and that even to **infants**."<sup>507</sup>

Finally, the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* was adopted in November 1647. It insists<sup>508</sup> that "baptism is a sacrament wherein the washing with water in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ and partaking of the benefits of the Covenant of grace and our engagement to be the Lord's. Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:4; Galatians 3:27.

"Infants of such as are members of the visible church, are to be baptized. Acts 2:38f; Genesis 17:10; Colossians 2:11f; First Corinthians 7:14."

It was hardly necessary for any of the Westminster Standards to condemn the Anabaptists by name. For earlier, the *Westminster Confession* had already condemned their distinctive doctrines -- of revolutionism,<sup>509</sup> of quasi-pentecostalism,<sup>510</sup> of opposition to oath-taking,<sup>511</sup> of anarchy,<sup>512</sup> of polygamy,<sup>513</sup> of adultery,<sup>514</sup> and of their communistic redistribution of private property.<sup>515</sup> From all such -- turn away!

## **98. How to "crucify the Son of God afresh" by the sin of rebaptism**

Both Holy Scripture and the *Westminster Standards* thus see rebaptism as a sin. It is a transgression of the Law of God. For the Decalogue commands that God be worshipped only in the authorized way -- and not be worshipped through any 'graven images' (or idols such as rebaptism) contrary to His revealed will.

In Old Testament times, bodily circumcision is unrepeatable -- and recircumcision was and is impossible. Deuteronomy 10:16 & 30:6 and Jeremiah 4:4 & 9:25-26.

Circumcision has now been replaced by baptism. So baptism too is unrepeatable -- and rebaptism impossible. Romans 4:11-25 & 6:1-5; Galatians 3:6-29; Colossians 2:11-13.

Only Unitarians and Heretics practised 'rebaptism' in the apostolic and post-apostolic ages. Mark 7:3-8; First Corinthians 11:18f & 15:29. To the True Visible Church of the

Triune God, there was only one baptism -- trinitarian, life-long, and unrepeatable. Matthew 28:19f; Mark 16:15f; Romans 6:3-23; Ephesians 4:4-6; Colossians 2:6-16.

Hebrews 6:1-6 implies that those who get themselves rebaptized, recrucify Christ. Thus Ambrose, Chrysostom, John of Damascus, and Zwingli.

For it commands: "Do not again lay down...the doctrine of baptisms!" Indeed, such who do so, thereby "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh." See Francis Nigel Lee's *Rebaptism Impossible*.

The *Westminster Confession of Faith*<sup>516</sup> declares that "the sacrament of baptism is **but once** to be administered to any person. Titus 3:5."

The *Westminster Larger Catechism*<sup>517</sup> rightly insists that the Second Commandment requires the proper "receiving" of the sacraments. Matthew 28:19." Indeed, the Third Commandment requires that the "sacraments...be holily and reverently used...by an holy profession."

"**Holily and reverently used!**" This means that all the baptized Orthodox and Protestants and Romanists and their children, and also all (Ana)Baptists constantly need to "improve their baptism" -- by living the way all the baptized should. Romans 6:1-13, and especially its discussion in the *Westminster Larger Catechism* 167.

Too, the *Westminster Larger Catechism*<sup>518</sup> requires "that baptism is to be administered **but once** with water -- to be a sign and **seal of our regeneration and ingrafting into Christ**. Matthew 3:11 & Galatians 3:27."

**But once!** Anabaptists and Baptists -- note well! For the sin of rebaptism denies Christ's work, for us, but once, and once-and-for-all. Hebrews 6:1-6. So **too** does the sin of leaving one's babies unbaptized. Exodus 4:23-26 and Colossians 2:11-12, and the *Westminster Confession of Faith* 28:5n.

There is indeed some good -- in Anabaptists, Baptists, the Eastern-Orthodox, inconsistent Protestants, and even Romanists. But what is good in them, is not original; and what is original in them, is not good. All the baptized must be faithful to the Triune God in Whose Name they have been baptized.

Therefore too, repent of your rebaptisms -- all you rebaptized (Ana)Baptists! Arise, and bring also your unbaptized babies into fellowship with the Christian Church!

## **99. The great sin of leaving one's own babies unbaptized**

According to both Holy Scripture and the *Westminster Standards*, being unbaptized is a sin. Omitting to have also one's own baby baptized, is sinfully to break the Law of God. Indeed, the *Westminster Confession* (28:5) calls this not just a minor aberration. It does in fact call it "a great sin."

God solemnly warns us not to neglect getting the sacrament of initiation administered to our own babies. See Francis Nigel Lee's *Have You Been Neglecting Your Baby? On the Serious Consequences of Withholding Baptism from the Infants of Christians*.<sup>519</sup>

In Genesis 17:10-14 God demands that all covenantal babies concerned, "**must needs**" receive the sign of the Covenant. If they do not, those babies thereby get "**cut off**" from the people of God. This then occurs because of the "breach" of the covenant -- through their wayward parents' sinful omission of getting the sacrament affixed to their infants.

Comments Calvin:<sup>520</sup> "As God adopts the infant son in the person of his father, so when the father repudiates such a benefit -- the infant is said to [get] cut...off from the Church... God indeed will not acknowledge those as among His people who...[do] not bear the mark and token of adoption.... **God will take vengeance on every one who despises to impress the symbol of the Covenant on his child** (Genesis 17) -- such contempt being a rejection and as it were abjuration of the offered grace."

In Exodus 4:24-26, God sought to kill even Moses -- for neglecting to give the sign of the Covenant to his second-born infant child. Significantly, God then threatened with death not the infant but his wayward father Moses. For "the Lord met him, and sought to kill him."

So, to prevent the death of her husband, Moses' unordained wife Zipporah herself then (very understandably yet highly irregularly) circumcised their tiny son, and threw his foreskin at Moses' feet. "Then she said: 'You are surely a husband-of-blood to me!'

"Then He [God] let him [Moses] go. Thus she said: 'You are a husband-of-blood!' -- because of the circumcising."

To put this in church-historical terms, we may say that the backslidden Presbyterian Rev. Moses had temporarily lapsed from strict obedience to God. This he had done -- by for a short while becoming a *de facto* antipaedocircumcisional or 'antipaedobaptistic' Baptist.

Yet fortuitously, earlier, Moses had gone and married what seems to have been a previously-baptistic wife -- just as Calvin later did. But by the grace of God, she (Zipporah) had in some respects now become a better Presbyterian than even Moses himself.

For he, as a Minister of the Word and Sacraments, had neglected himself to circumcise his second-born infant son! His presbyterianized wife Zipporah, however -- though overenthusiastically herself administering the sacrament to that son, and it seems principally to save the life of her then-wayward husband -- had commendably remained a loyal paedocircumcisional or 'paedobaptistic' Presbyterian.

Comments Calvin:<sup>521</sup> "Why should Zipporah have taken a sharp stone or knife, and circumcised her son -- had she not known that God was offended at his uncircumcision?... Moses had provoked God's vengeance....

"He [Moses] was terrified by the approach of certain destruction.... The cause of His affliction was shewn him....

"It would otherwise never have occurred to himself or his wife to circumcise the child to appease God's wrath.... Let us then learn from hence, to use reverently the sacraments which are the seals of God's grace -- lest He should severely avenge our despicability of them!"

In Exodus 12:24-43f, **God debars from the second sacrament all adults whose infants still lack the first sacrament.** Frankly, it is amazing that *Quasi*-Calvinists reject this!

Comments Calvin:<sup>522</sup> "They should also teach their children.... For doctrine may justly be called the life of sacraments.... The Paschal Lamb corresponds to the Holy Supper.... None but the initiated were admitted.... From the analogy between the Holy Supper and the Passover, this Law remains in force now!"

In Joshua 5:2-8, at God's command, Moses' successor Joshua circumcised the people of Israel. For they had lapsed into uncircumcision, while on their way forty-years-long journey through the wilderness.

That widespread Baptist-like delinquency was apparent. In protest thereagainst, Joshua soon thereafter told the Israelites: 'As for me and my household -- we will serve the Lord!' Joshua 24:15.

For he would not only preach paedocircumcision, but -- by his personal example and that of his family -- also practise it 'puritanically' and precisely. Indeed, he would do so especially by then and thereafter training his covenantal children to serve the Lord lifelong -- and thus to 'improve' the sacrament they had received in infancy.

As Rev. Professor Dr. John Calvin explained of the soon-backsliding and indeed then-anabaptizing and de-presbyterianizing antipaedocircumcisional Israelites:<sup>523</sup> "They did not desist from circumcising their children the very first day after their departure [from Egypt], but only after they had been obliged to retrace their steps through their own perverseness....

"None were circumcised on the way, after they had set out.... For it is said that their sons...were circumcised by Joshua....

"The real object of Joshua was...to renew and confirm the Covenant which God had already made.... To impress them [the 'anabaptized' people] with a feeling of shame -- he declares that he **and his house** will persevere in the worship of God." For Joshua the Presbyterian would presbyterianize those antipaedocircumcisionalized backslidden 'Baptists.'

Let us put the above in church-historical terms easily understandable in Bill Clinton's now-rather-anabaptized U.S.A. today. For America today has almost totally fallen away from its colonial heritage of paedobaptistic Puritanism.

After the exodus, the previously-presbyterian people of God had lapsed into an 'anabaptistic' antipaedocircumcisionalism (or 'antipaedobaptism'). **Thus the Israelites had become *de facto* Baptists.** But the faithful and paedocircumcisional or 'paedobaptistic' Joshua now presbyterianized them -- even as paedobaptist Presbyterians must now repuritanize Clinton the Baptist's U.S.A.

Indeed, Joshua did this not by impossibly attempting to recircumcise the circumcised. He did it, by circumcising all of those of them who were uncircumcised, and all of their infants who had grown up uncircumcised.

He also did so -- by declaring that at least he and his household would paedocircumcisionally and presbyterianly serve the Lord. Whatever the people themselves would thenceforth do.

In Ezekiel 44:7, depicting the later Church, God rebukes those who had received the initiatory sacrament -- for bringing those who had not, to public worship! Says God: "You have brought into My sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to pollute it.... They have broken My Covenant!"

What application does this have to baptized Baptists? For such usually regard their own babies as strangers to God -- but yet bring them into the sanctuary, to worship Him!

In Luke 7:29f, God declares that "the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves -- being not baptized." There, Calvin comments <sup>524</sup> about the **godly** who were then there: "It was already an evidence of their piety, that they presented themselves to be **baptized**...."

"The **scribes** [and Pharisees, however], in **despising** the **baptism** of John, **shut against themselves** -- through their pride -- **the gate of faith**.... Let us first guard against despising the very least of God's invitations, and be prepared in humility to commence with small and elementary instructions!"

In Acts 2:38f, God commands the penitent: "Be baptized every one of you!... For the promise is unto you **and to your children**!"

Comments Calvin:<sup>525</sup> "This passage therefore sufficiently refutes the Anabaptists, who deny baptism to the children of the faithful while they are still infants, as though they were not members of the Church.... This gross presumption is of no profit to them."

In Acts 11:16f, Peter saw his **baptizing** of the **entire family** of Cornelius as a fulfilment of Christ's prediction that people would be baptized with the Holy Spirit at and after His **outpouring**. Peter added: "Who was I, that I could withstand God?" Comments Calvin:<sup>526</sup> "Those who are **opposing infant baptism**, are **waging war against God**!"

According to the *Westminster Larger Catechism*,<sup>527</sup> the Fifth Commandment requires fathers and mothers not to commit "sins" by "the neglect of the duties required of them" -- such as that of bringing their children to be baptized, and thereafter raising them as Christians. "Second Kings 5:13; Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:6f; Ezekiel 34:2-4."

Indeed, the *Westminster Larger Catechism*<sup>528</sup> requires that "infants descending from parents either both or but one of them professing faith in Christ..., are...to be baptized. Genesis 17:7f; Galatians 3:9f; Colossians 2:11f; Acts 2:38f; Romans 4:11f; First Corinthians 7:14; Matthew 28:19; Luke 18:15f; Romans 11:16."



Rightly does the *Westminster Confession*<sup>529</sup> therefore conclude that "also the infants of one or both believing parents, are to be baptized.... It be a **great sin** to contemn or neglect this ordinance! Luke 7:30 & Exodus 4:24-26."

### **100. Godly methods for overcoming Anabaptist influences**

God has not left us in the dark as to how to overcome Anabaptist (and all other deleterious) influences even in our modern World! Those methods are: firstly, the powerful preaching of the Gospel; secondly, the 'improving' (or daily living-out) of one's own baptism; thirdly, the joyful outworking of the preached Word of God; fourthly, the State's punishment of criminals. Thus, fifthly, we confidently approach the future millennium -- when, predestinatedly, Consistent Christianity (alias Calvinism) will triumph **internationally**. We now examine these methods, *seriatim*.

First. There needs to be the powerful preaching of the Gospel. States the *Westminster Larger Catechism*: "The Spirit of God maketh the reading but **especially the preaching of the Word** an effectual means of enlightening, convincing and humbling sinners...and drawing them unto Christ...; of strengthening them against temptations and corruptions...and establishing their hearts in holiness. Nehemiah 8:8; Acts 2:37-41; 8:27-38; 26:18; Psalm 19:8; Matthew 4:4-10; Ephesians 6:16f..... They that are called to labour in the Ministry of the Word, are to preach sound doctrine...in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Titus 2:1-8 & First Corinthians 2:4."<sup>530</sup> How little preaching today is like that!

Second. Christians are to 'improve' their own baptism. States the *Westminster Larger Catechism*:<sup>531</sup> "**The needful but much neglected duty of improving our baptism** is to be performed by us all our life long..., by serious and thankful consideration of the nature of it and...the privileges and benefits conferred and sealed thereby and our solemn vow made therein; by...growing up to assurance of pardon of sin and of all other blessings sealed to us in that sacrament; by drawing strength from the death and resurrection of Christ into Whom we are baptized...; and by endeavouring to live by faith...in holiness and righteousness. Colossians 2:11f; Romans 6:4-11; Galatians 3:26f; Romans 6:22." In other words, baptized people should live the way all baptized Christians should!

Third -- and proceeding from the foregoing -- there is to be a joyful outworking of the Word of God in our lives. States the *Westminster Confession of Faith*:<sup>532</sup> "They who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are farther sanctified really and personally through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by His Word and Spirit dwelling in them. John 17:17; Second Thessalonians 2:13.... Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ. John 15:4f; Ezekiel 36:26f." God's Word is to be lived out, every day!

"There is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of His good pleasure. Philippians 2:12f & 4:13; Second Corinthians 3:5. Yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit! But they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them..., **the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely**

**and cheerfully which the will of God revealed in the Law requireth to be done.** Hebrews 6:11f; Second Peter 1:3-11; Isaiah 64:7; Second Timothy 1:6; Acts 26:6f; Jude 20f; Ezekiel 36:27; Hebrews 8:10; Jeremiah 31:33." Come, O Spirit, and keep on stirring us up!

Fourth. The State, as God's servant, is to **punish all criminals**. Explains the *Westminster Confession of Faith*:<sup>533</sup> "They who, upon pretence of Christian liberty, shall oppose any lawful power or the lawful exercise of it..., resist the ordinance of God. Matthew 12:35; First Peter 2:13-16; Romans 13:1-8." Antinomianism is anarchy!

"For their publishing of such opinions or maintaining of such practices as are contrary to the light of nature or to the known principles of Christianity..., they may **lawfully be called to account and proceeded against...by the power of the civil magistrate**. Romans 1:32; Deuteronomy 13:6-12; Ezra 7:23-28; Nehemiah 13:5-30; Second Kings 23:5-21; Second Chronicles 34:33 & 15:12-16; Daniel 3:29; First Timothy 2:2; Isaiah 49:23; Zechariah 12:2f... God the supreme Lord and King of all the World hath ordained civil magistrates to be under Him over the people...for the defence and encouragement of them that are good and for the punishment of evil-doers. Romans 13:1-4; First Peter 2:13f." Christonomic ethics!

Fifth. We are to be **confident of the Church's future!** Matthew 28:19; Psalms 2:8 & 22:27-31 & 72:6-17; Isaiah 49:18-23 & 50:3-9; First Corinthians 15:24-28; Revelation 11:15 & 15:4 & 21:24-26 & 22:2-4.

States the *Westminster Larger Catechism*:<sup>534</sup> "Christ was exalted in His ascension..., triumphing over enemies. Ephesians 4:8." He "visibly went up into the highest heavens, there to receive gifts for men. Acts 1:9-11; Ephesians 4:10; Psalm 68:18.... As God-man, He is advanced to the highest favour with God the Father...and power over all things in Heaven and Earth; and **doth gather and defend His Church and subdue their enemies**. Philippians 2:9; Ephesians 1:22; First Peter 3:22; Romans 8:34."

This means eschatological optimism! And such **confidence** is rooted in the Lord's Prayer (*q.v.* below).

### **101. Inevitable conversion of (Ana)Baptists and their (step)children to Calvinism**

Predestinatedly, it is quite inevitable that of all our planet's nations (obviously including also their babies) will yet be brought into baptismal subjection to the Triune God. For Jesus urges and promises this, in the "Lord's prayer" for His disciples.

There, Christ enjoins us prayerfully to petition God each day: "Thy Kingdom come!" Matthew 6:10 & Luke 11:2. God commands this; and God Himself shall execute it. Not just throughout World History -- but also within World history, throughout our own lives!

Here, explains the *Westminster Larger Catechism*,<sup>535</sup> "we pray: that the kingdom of sin and **Satan may be destroyed**; the **Gospel propagated throughout the World**; **the Jews called**; **the fulness of the Gentiles brought in**." And it is especially the people of God who are to be involved in such destruction, propagation, and ingathering.

This is then a prayer that "the Church [be] furnished with all Gospel-Offices and **Ordinances**" such as infant baptism. It is an earnest petition that the Church be "purged from corruption" such as Anabaptism, and be "countenanced and maintained by the Civil Magistrate" against all ungodliness -- so "that the **Ordinances** of Christ may be purely dispensed." Romans 10:1f & 11:25f. This is a petition that baptism no longer be limited by some to adults alone -- nor repeated in adulthood to those already baptized in infancy.

The Westminster Assembly's *Directory for the Publick Worship of God* rightly understands the above petition to be a promise that the Church will ultimately calvinize all the World. That includes de-brainwashing heretics -- and redirecting them toward the untruncated Word of God.

For in its 'Publick Prayer before the Sermon'<sup>536</sup> the Minister is "**to pray for the propagation of the Gospel** and Kingdom of Christ **to all nations** -- for the conversion of the Jews; the fulness of the Gentiles; the fall of Antichrist." He is also to pray: "for the deliverance of the distressed churches abroad from the tyranny of the antichristian faction and from the cruel oppressions and blasphemies of the Turks [alias the Muslims]; **for the blessing of God upon the Reformed Churches**"; and **for God to "establish...the purity of all His ordinances, and...remove heresy."**

This is to be effected even in "the universities and all schools and religious seminaries of Church and **Commonwealth**, [so] that they may flourish more and more in learning and piety." For we are to pray "that God would **pour out a blessing** upon the Ministry of the Word, **sacraments** and discipline; upon the **civil government**; and all the several **families** and persons therein." This is to be done "with **confidence** of His mercy to His whole Church" -- thus giving "evidence and demonstration of the Spirit and power."

The above *Westminster Directory for the Publick Worship of God* was intended to provide one uniform international religion for the United Kingdom of England and Wales, the Kingdom of Ireland, and the Kingdom of Scotland. On 3rd February 1645, it was put into execution by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.<sup>537</sup> Its relevant Act declared:

"Whereas an happy unity and uniformity in religion amongst the kirks of Christ in these three kingdoms...having been long and earnestly wished for by the godly and well-affected amongst us..., these kingdoms...are now by the blessing of God brought to a nearer uniformity than any other Reformed Kirk." This is for us "the return of our prayers, and a lightening of our eyes, and **reviving** of our hearts..., and an opening unto us a door of **hope**...in the **expectation** and **confidence** whereof we do **rejoice**."

Thus we are to be confident about the future of Christ's Church also here on Earth. Even as it always shall be in Heaven. This we must promote by "beseeching the Lord to preserve these kingdoms from **heresies**..., and to continue with us and the generations following these His pure and purged **Ordinances**, together with an increase of the power and life thereof -- to the glory of His great Name, **the enlargement of the Kingdom** of His Son, and the...unity and comfort of all His people."

In 1648, both the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and the Parliament of the Committee of Estates of Scotland approved the *Solemn Acknowledgement of Publick Sins and Breaches of the Covenant*. That declared:<sup>538</sup> "Because religion is of all things the most excellent and precious -- the advancing and promoting the power thereof (**against** all...**Anabaptism**, Antinomianism, Arminianism, and Socinianism, **Familism**, Libertinism, Scepticism, and Erastianism)...shall be studied and endeavoured by us -- before all worldly interests."

Similarly, on 31st May 1851, the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland declared<sup>533</sup> that "it pleased Almighty God in His great and undeserved mercy to reform this Church from Popery -- by Presbyters.... Nations and their rulers are bound to own the truth of God, and to **advance** the Kingdom of His Son.... How signally God opened for her...a door of utterance and a door of entrance not only in this but **in other countries also**..., this Church cannot but most devoutly acknowledge....

"In the **holy boldness** of faith unfeigned, she would still seek...to prosecute the ends contemplated from the beginning in all the acts and deeds of her reforming fathers. **Until the errors which they renounced shall have disappeared from the land, and the true system** which they upheld shall be so **universally received** -- that the whole people, rightly instructed in the faith, shall unite to glorify God the Father in the full acknowledgment of the Kingdom of His Son our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to Whose Name be praise for ever and ever." And let all of God's people, in the power of His Spirit, say: Amen!

## **102. (Ana)Baptists of all countries -- repent!**

So much, then, for *Anabaptists, Baptists, and their Stepchildren*. Frankly, their antipaedobaptism presupposes their freewill Arminianism if not their Semi-Pelagianism and even their Pelagianism. For whether they pour (as do some) or submerge (as do most), they all make the validity of baptism for them depend upon the totally-depraved would-be baptizee's 'free-will' conscious choosing of Christ -- if not also upon a credible evangelical profession by the baptizer. To them, all baptized in infancy or even in adulthood by a Judas Iscariot -- need to be rebaptized.

But in Holy Scripture, the Apostolic and Early-Patristic Church baptized also covenantal babies -- and, indeed, by way of pouring or sprinkling into His Triune or Unitrine Name. Not man's free will, but God's prebaptismal free grace -- validates baptism. Indeed, that then actually seals His elect.

Thus the Protestant Reformation -- whether Calvinistic, Lutheran, or Zwinglian -- antirebaptistically discards the mediaeval errors of Adoptionism and Paulicianism and Petrobusianism as well as Romanism -- and links up with the sealing (paedo)baptisms of Holy Writ. Genesis 17:6-14; Second Kings 18:31-34 & 18:45; Isaiah 44:1-5 & 52:15f; Ezekiel 36:24-28; Joel 2:16 & 2:23 & 2:28f; Matthew 28:19; John 1:23-22; Romans 4:11 & 6:1-4; Colossians 2:11-13; Hebrews 9:13f & 10:22; First Peter 1:2 & 1:25 to 2:2 & 3:18-21; and Revelation 7:2f & 14:1 & 21:24 & 22:4.

For, after a promising start, since the errors of Cyprian and Donatism in A.D. 250-300f -- the Post-Nicene Church declined toward a neo-paganizing baptismal regenerationism. It accordingly introduced unbiblical 'total submersionism' -- under the pretext that the more water used, the more sins would be washed away.

Yet even the submersing mediaeval Church (Eastern and Western) never abandoned the biblical baptizing of covenantal infants. For that remained in Eastern Orthodoxy, and even in the Papacy.

Yet not so the sects! For seventh-century Neo-Marcionite and Neo-Manichaeic 'Adoptionists' in Armenia rejected original sin and infant baptism.

Too, the later Paulicians or *Cathari* substituted their own new rite (the *consolamentum*) in the place of baptism. And the twelfth-century Petrobrusians held infants to be unsaveable and accordingly unbaptizable -- while themselves practising rebaptism and also advocating a postmortal soul-sleep.

The reformist Waldensians maintained infant baptism. Furthermore, even after the reactionary Romanist Thomas Aquinas advocated fullblown baptismal regenerationism -- both of the two top Pre-Reformers Wycliffe and Huss still maintained paedobaptism.

Only the 'Minority Party' of the ex-priest Michael within the Bohemian Brethren practised the rebaptism of converted Romanists. Indeed, even they resiled from such Catabaptism -- at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

All of the Protestant Reformers -- Luther, Zwingli, Calvin (and all of their many associates) -- were solidly paedobaptist. They antirebaptistically regarded covenantal infants as believers before their baptism, and therefore entitled to be baptized as babies.

Yet the reactionary Non-Protestant Anabaptists -- who were essentially non-trinitarian, communistic, revolutionary, polygamous, and annihilationistic -- vehemently rejected infant baptism. However, even they practised their purported baptisms by way of pouring -- rather than by way of submersion.

The later Baptists maintained the Anabaptists' antipaedobaptism. But they resurrected, in addition, the submersionism of mediaeval Romanism -- against Biblical sprinkling. Mercifully, however, they also soon adopted at least some of the soteriology of Calvinism.

However, yet-later heretical stepchildren of the Anabaptists -- such as Christadelphians, Mormons, Seventh-day Adventists, Jehovah's witnesses, and Pentecostals -- absolutized submersionism. Even the Amish and the Mennonites, despite their general avoidance of submersionism, nevertheless remained strongly antipaedobaptistic. Indeed, also revolutionary Anabaptism now rides again -- especially in modern left-wing Liberation Theology!

Karl Marx, himself a stepchild of the communistic Anabaptists, loved to enjoin: "Workers of the World -- unite!"<sup>540</sup> But, standing upon Scripture, Christian Calvinists now say to all such stepchildren: "Anabaptists of all countries -- repent!"

We therefore call out to **all** of the **various** stepchildren of the Anabaptists. We call upon all of them -- justified Baptists; heretical Seventh-day Adventists; apostate "Jehovah witnesses"; 'polytheistic' Mormons; and atheistic Communists -- to repent of their **great sin** of antipaedobaptism (and of all their other sins).

Standing upon Scripture -- Matthew 28:18*f* and Revelation 7:2*f* & 9:4 & 12:17 & 14:1 & 21:2,24 & 22:3*f* -- we now call upon them all to repent of their antipaedobaptism. We call upon them: to bring their babies and their other children to that great King of men and divine Leader of angels, the mighty Archangel Jesus; to get all their children baptized on their foreheads with the seal of the Triune God; and then to urge them, life-long, to **improve** that baptism.

To His Ministers of the Word and Sacraments, "Jesus came and spake...saying, 'All power in Heaven and on Earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go and make all **nations** into disciples, baptizing **them** into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, continuing to teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded!'" For Atheism, Judaism, Heresies, Hinduism, Islam, and Paganism -- are all destined yet to yield their captives to Christ-ianity.

In the last book of the Bible, the Apostle John declares: "Elders fell down before the lamb...saying, 'You are worthy...and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation'.... I saw an...Angel [apparently the risen Christ Himself] ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And He cried out with a loud voice...saying [to His angels], 'Do not hurt the land nor the sea nor the trees -- till **We** [the Three Persons of the Triune God through His Ministers of the Word and Sacraments] have **sealed** the servants of our God upon their **foreheads**!'....

"I beheld [or kept on beholding]," continues John. "Then look, a great multitude which no man could number -- of **all nations** and **kindreds**...stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes.... They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

John also heard God's Spirit say: "Do not hurt the grass of the earth nor any green thing nor any tree; but only those men who do not have the **seal** of God upon their **foreheads**!... But the dragon was angry with the woman, and went to make war against **the rest of her seed** who keep the Commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Finally, John observes with joy: "I looked, and behold -- a Lamb stood upon Mount Zion [the Christian Church]! And those with Him have **His Father's Name written upon their foreheads**.... **All nations** shall come and worship before You!...

"I, John, saw the holy city New Jerusalem coming down from God.... The **nations** of those who are saved, shall walk in the light of it.... There shall be no more curse. But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. Then they shall see His face; and **His Name** shall be **upon** their **foreheads**." Revelation 5:8*f* & 7:2*f* & 7:9*f* & 9:4 & 12:17 & 14:1 & 15:4 & 21:2 & 21:24 & 22:3*f*.

Dear reader, in glory, shall the Name of the Lamb be upon **your** forehead -- and upon that of your **child**? Is that Name **now** upon your **forehead**, and all of your **household**?

Have you and your baby been **baptized** unto the Name of the Triune God? Has that Name been **sealed** upon your forehead -- and also that of your **baby**? Revelation 7:2f & 14:1 & 21:24-26.

If not, rectify this neglect forthwith! For, as Jesus insists (in Mark 16:16): "He who believes and is baptized, shall be saved; but he who does not believe, shall be damned."

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Paternoster Press, 296 pp.

<sup>2</sup> Thus G.H. Williams's *The Radical Reformation*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1975.

<sup>3</sup> G.H. Williams & A.M. Mergal: *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1957, p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> Williams: *Rad. Ref.*, p. XX.

<sup>5</sup> *Ib.* pp. 825 & 862f.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* p. 302.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Tertullian's *On Baptism* ch. 3 ("The Spirit...was hovering over the waters"); Jerome's *Letter 69:6* (to Oceanus) and also his *Dialogue against the Luciferians* 6 ("The Spirit of God moved **above**...[and] over the **face** of the water, and produced from them the **infant** World -- a type of the Christian **child** that is drawn from the laver of **baptism**.... 'The Spirit of the Lord,' says Moses, 'moved upon the face of the waters' -- from which it appears that there is no **baptism**, without the Holy Ghost."); and O. Cullmann's *Baptism in the New Testament*, SCM Press, London, 1956 ed., p. 13 ("Tertullian...was at pains to demonstrate the essential relation between the Holy Spirit and water, referring to Gen. 1:1[f] where it is said that...the Spirit of God hovered over the waters. This is why the Spirit from then on is bound up with water; and hence Baptism...has to do with water").

<sup>8</sup> Dan. 4:22-23 (Aramaic *mittal* and Greek Septuagint *drosou* alias "lie wet under the dew-drops"); and Dan. 5:21 (Aramaic *mittal...yitstabba*'...and Greek Septuagint *drosou...ebaphee* alias "moistened under the dew").

<sup>9</sup> Orig. IV:241 in R.W. Dale's 1871 *Judaic Baptism*, Loewe Belfort, Toney Ala., 1991, p. 328f (Orig. says on I Kgs. 18:33f and Mal. 4:4-6 and John 1:19-33: "Why do you [Pharisees] believe that Elijah to come, will baptize?... He [Elijah]...in the time of Ahab...commands the priests to do this!"); Basil III:428 in Dale's *Jud. Bap.* 329 ("Elijah has shown the power of baptism...by means of water.... The water is mystically poured thrice [I Kgs. 18:33f]"); Greg. Naz. II:421 in Dale's *Jud. Bap.* 329 ("I have three overpourings...with which I will hallow the sacrifice [I Kgs. 18:33f]"); Amb. I:727f in Dale's *Jud. Bap.* 329f and also in his 1874 *Christic Baptism and Patristic Baptism*, Loewe Belfort: Toney Ala., 1995, p. 537 ("Christ baptizes by fire [says the 'Second Elijah' John the baptizer (John 1:19-33)].... In the Books of the Kings [I Kgs. 18:34]..., Elijah placed wood upon the altar and said they should throw water over it from water-pots.... The water flowed.... John baptized unto repentance.... Elijah showed...a type of baptism.... The water poured on the sacrifice by Elijah...is said to be a type of Christian baptism" [Amb. III:173-75 in Dale's *Pat. Bap.* 521]).

<sup>10</sup> Justin Martyr's *Fragment X* (in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* VI:1696); Irenaeus's *Fragment from the Codex of St. Mark*, Ven. 534, fol. 220 (*viz.* *Codex Coislin*); Tertullian's *Against Marcion* 4:9;