

The Denominations

The following is one of the major reasons I am a Baptist (and not something else) – the first and foremost reason is that I am born-again in Christ Jesus.

Edinburg Cyclopedia (Presbyterian): "It must have already occurred to our readers that the Baptists are the same sect of Christians that were formerly described as Ana-Baptists. Indeed this seems to have been their leading principle from the time of Tertullian to the present time." Tertullian was born just fifty years after the death of the Apostle John. (The Trail of Blood, J. M. Carroll)

The following is excerpted from The Trumpet, a bi-monthly newsletter of Faith Baptist Church, Harrison, AR Three things must be true concerning the beginning of the church in order for it to be a scriptural church. **It must have the right Founder – Jesus Christ (Mt. 16:18); The right place – Palestine (where Christ lived); And the right time – during Christ's personal ministry.** Any church that does not meet these three requirements cannot be the church that the Lord built. When and where did all these other denominations begin?
[Date – Denomination – Founder] 325AD-610AD – Roman Catholic *(date range depends upon who you believe-PWD)* 1054AD – Greek Orthodox 1530AD – Lutheran – Martin Luther 1530AD – Episcopal – Henry VIII 1541AD – Presbyterian – John Calvin 1581AD – Congregational – Robert Browne 1624AD – Friends 1708AD – Church of the Brethren – A.Mack 1727AD – Freewill Baptists – Paul Palmer 1728AD – Seventh Day Baptists – John C. Beissel 1729AD – Methodist – John & Charles Wesley 1800AD – United Brethren in Christ – Otterbein/Boehm 1800AD – Evangelical – Jacob Albright 1810AD – Cumberland Presbyterian – Ewing/King/McAdow 1825AD – Unitarians – W.E.Channing 1825AD – Churches of God in N.A. – Winebrenner 1829AD – Plymouth Brethren – J.N.Darby 1830AD – Mormons (LDS) – Joseph Smith

1831AD – Primitive Baptists – Daniel Parker 1837AD – Christian – Alexander Campbell 1837AD – Church of Christ – Alexander Campbell 1844AD – Christadelphians – John Thomas 1845AD – Seventh Day Adventists – James White 1845AD – Spiritualism – Andrew Davis 1848AD – Church of God (New Dunkards) – G. Patton 1852AD – Advent Christian – Church J. Cummings 1865AD – Salvation Army – William Booth 1872AD – Jehovah’s Witnesses – Charles Taze Russell 1879AD – Church of Christ-Scientist – Mary Eddy Baker 1880AD – Church of God – Daniel S. Warner 1881AD – Christian & Missionary Alliance – Simpson 1882AD – Brethren Church 1885AD – Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant 1888AD – Swedish Evangelical (Free Church) 1894AD – United Evangelical 1894AD – Church of Christ (Holiness) – C.P.Jones 1907AD – Church of the Nazarene – Hoople/Bressee 1907AD – National Council of Churches 1914AD – Churches of God, Holiness – K.H.Burruss 1914AD – Assemblies of God

What is true of the above listed churches is true of all other denominations, as they also would fail to meet these three requirements. Baptists are the only churches that can meet these requirements. No man this side of Christ can be named as the founder of Baptists. Nor can any date this side of His personal ministry be pointed out, nor any location outside of Palestine be set for their beginning period. It is a distinct principle with Baptists that they acknowledge no human Founder, recognize no human authority, and subscribe to no human creed. For all these things, Baptists of every name and order go back to the New Testament. And while no competent Baptist historian assumes to be able to trace a succession of Baptist church through the ages, most of them are of one accord in believing that, if we could secure the records, there would be found heroic groups of believers in every age who upheld with their testimonies and, in many cases, with their lives, the great outstanding and distinctive principles of the Baptist churches of today. *Bureau of Census for 1926 United States Department of Commerce*

Mission Boulevard Baptist Church Covenant

Note to the Reader: This is a modern church covenant from an unaffiliated, local, visible, New Testament church. This covenant is presented for your consideration and comparison to other church covenants. – Paul W. Davis

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour,

And on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,

We do now, in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We therefore engage, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort;

To promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines;

To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances;

To walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment;

To avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; To abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love;

To remember each other in prayer;

to aid each other in sickness and distress;

to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech;

To be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that we will be true to our calling here and will not leave unless called by the Holy Spirit to another ministry where we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Entered into by the charter members of Mission Boulevard Baptist Church during organizational services on October 27, 1975.

Waldensian Statement of Faith

THE CONFESSIONS OF THE WALDENSES, OR THEIR OWN CREEDS

The following Confession of Faith was extracted from the Mennonite book Martyr's Mirror, by Thielemann J. van Braght. The note at the end of this confession is the citation of van Braght's sources. – *Paul W. Davis*

Since the Waldenses were very ancient, and were spread over very many parts of the world, it came that they, from time to time were compelled, by the demand of those with and among whom they lived, to give an account of their faith; hence it is, that different creeds of the Waldenses were made and are still extant. However, it is not our intention, to relate them all, but simply to present to you one or two, which have been celebrated from ancient times, and are judged to be of the best.

Jean Paul Perrin Lionnoys, in his *History of the Waldenses*, translated from the French into Dutch, by J. M. V., *first part, first book, page 43*, makes mention of a certain confession of the Waldenses, in which they speak of various matters of faith, particularly of the holy Scriptures. It reads thus:

Article I. We believe and hold fast all that is contained in the twelve articles of the Apostolic Creed; and regard as error all that differs therefrom, and does not agree with said twelve articles.

Article II. We believe that there is one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Article III. We confess and hold as holy canonical Scriptures, the books of the Holy Bible, namely these: The five books of

Moses, called Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. The books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, The historical books, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther. The didactic books, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon. The greater prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel. The lesser prophets, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

Then follow the books of the Apocrypha, which were not received by the Hebrews; hence we read them, as Jerome says, in the preface to the Proverbs, for the edification of the people, but not for the purpose of confirming church doctrines. They are: I Esdras, II Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Wisdom; Ecclesiasticus, or Jesus Sirach; Baruch, with the letter of Jeremiah; the additions to the book of Esther, from the tenth chapter to the end; the Song of the Three Men in the Fiery Furnace; the History of Susanna; of the Dragon at Babel; the three books of the Maccabees.

Then follow the books of the New Testament. The Gospels, by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John. The Acts of the Apostles. The epistles of Paul, Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, I Peter, II Peter, I John, II John. (How it comes that III John is not mentioned, we do not know). The epistle of Jude, the Revelation of John.

Article IV. The afore-mentioned books teach this: That there is one God, who is omnipotent, allwise, and alone good, who created all things according to His goodness; for He created Adam after His image and likeness; but that, through the envy of the devil and the disobedience of Adam, sin came into the world, and that we are sinners in and through Adam.

Article V. That Christ was promised to the fathers, who received the law, that by it they might know their sin,

unrighteousness and unfitness, and long for the coming of Christ; to which end He atoned for sin and Himself fulfilled the law.

Article VI. That Christ was born at the time appointed by His Father; namely, when all manner of wickedness abounded; and this not for the good works' sake, for they were all sinners; but to show us grace and mercy, as being the true and faithful one.

Article VII. That Christ is our Way, Truth, Peace, Righteousness, Shepherd, Advocate, Sacrifice, and High Priest; who died for the salvation of them that believe, and was raised for our justification.

Article VIII. And, consequently, we maintain, that there is no other mediator and advocate with God the Father, than Jesus Christ. But as regards the virgin Mary, we hold, that she was holy, humble, and full of grace; likewise we believe of all the other saints, that they . . . wait for the resurrection of their bodies in the day of judgment.

Article IX. We believe that after this life there are but two places; the one for the blessed, the other for the damned; and utterly deny purgatory, which is a dream and invention of antichrist against truth.

Article X. We have likewise always believed, that all human inventions are an unspeakable abomination before God; such as feast days, vigils of the saints, the so-called holy water, abstaining from flesh on certain days, and like things, especially masses.

Article XI. We abhor all human inventions, as proceeding from antichrist, and which carry with them destruction, and prevent the freedom of the spirit.

Article XII. We believe that the sacraments are signs of holy things, or visible representations of invisible grace; and

deem it well, that believers should from time to time use these visible signs or representations, when it is possible for them to do so; nevertheless we also believe and hold, that said believers can be saved, though they do not receive these signs; that is, when they have no place or opportunity where to receive or use them.

Article XIII. We have never confessed that there is any other sacrament than baptism and the Supper.

Article XIV. We must honor the secular authorities with subjection, obedience, willingness, and taxes.

The above fourteen articles are extracted from the book called by the Waldenses, "The Spiritual Almanac," and from the "Memoirs of George Morel." Also 3 "Hist. of the Waldens.," 1st part, 1st book, cap. 12, pages 43-48.

Anti-Christ

Throughout most of the last 20 centuries, separate, independent, groups of Christians, generally labeled "anabaptist" and specifically called Paulicans, Novatians, Donatists, Henricans, Waldenses, Albigenses, Bogomils, Lollards, and many other less complimentary names, have been persecuted for holding fast the specific teachings of the New Testament. They consistently held the New Testament church to be a local, visible, autonomous body of believers covenanted together to serve their Lord and Savior. For this, they were

horribly persecuted by their opponents. The fiercest of these opponents was not the pagans that they invariably lived among. Rather, it was a church that called itself "Christian" – the Catholic Church. Its head, the Pope, was declared to be the vicar of Christ by their own councils. In so doing, he became Anti-Christ. They shut up the Bible to the "common" man declaring that it would "only cause confusion," and then proceeded to warp and twist the doctrines to insure that their followers have no chance for salvation. The list of the sins of this horrid institution are so numerous as to almost defy cataloging. Yet, the Pope is honored by the governments of today.

My how we have forgotten history!

So we will remember, the following is from J.M. Carroll's Trail of Blood. This excerpt briefly details the falling away that led to the formation of the Catholic Church and its ungodly head. Many more works, such as The Martyrs Mirror, and A History of the Baptists detail it more completely.

From The Trail of Blood . . .

"During the first three centuries, congregations all over the East subsisted in separate independent bodies, unsupported by government and consequently without any secular power over one another. All this time they were baptized churches, and though all the fathers of the first four ages, down to Jerome (A.D. 370), were of Greece, Syria and Africa, and though they give great numbers of histories of the baptism of adults, **yet there is not one of the baptism of a child till the year 370.**" (Compendium of Baptist History, Shackelford, p. 43; Vedder, p. 50; Christian, p. 31; Orchard, p. 50, etc.)

7. Let it be remembered that changes like these here mentioned were not made in a day, nor even within a year. They came about slowly and never within all the churches. Some of the churches vigorously repudiated them. So much so that in A.D.

251, the loyal churches declared non-fellowship for those churches which accepted and practiced these errors. And thus came about the first real official separation among the churches.

8. Thus it will be noted that during the first three centuries three important and vital changes from the teachings of Christ and His Apostles had their beginnings. And one significant event took place, Note this summary and recapitulation:

(1) The change from the New Testament idea of bishop and church government. This change grew rapidly, more pronounced, and complete and hurtful.

(2) The change from the New Testament teachings as to Regeneration to "baptismal regeneration."

(3) The change from "believers' baptism" to "infant baptism." (This last, however, did not become general nor even very frequent for more than another century.)

9. "Baptismal regeneration" and "infant baptism." These two errors have, according to the testimony of well-established history, caused the shedding of more Christian blood, as the centuries have gone by, than all other errors combined, or than possibly have all wars, not connected with persecution, if you will leave out the recent "World War." Over 50,000,000 Christians died martyr deaths, mainly because of their rejection of these two errors during the period of the "dark ages" alone—about twelve or thirteen centuries.

10. Three significant facts, for a large majority of the many churches, are clearly shown by history during these first three centuries.

(1) The separateness and independence of the Churches.

(2) The subordinate character of bishops or pastors.

(3) The baptism of believers only.

I quote now from Mosheim—the greatest of all Lutheran church historians. Vol., 1, pages 71 and 72: “But whoever supposes that the bishops of this golden age of the church correspond with the bishops of the following centuries must blend and confound characters that are very different, for in this century and the next, a bishop had charge of a single church, which might ordinarily be contained in a private house; nor was he its Lord, but was in reality its minister or servant. . . . All the churches in those primitive times were independent bodies, or none of them subject to the jurisdiction of any other. For though the churches which were founded by the Apostles themselves frequently had the honor shown them to be consulted in doubtful cases, yet they had no judicial authority, no control, no power of giving laws. On the contrary, it is as clear as the noonday that all Christian churches had equal rights, and were in all respects on a footing of equality.”

11. Up to this period, notwithstanding much and serious persecutions, Christianity has had a marvelous growth. It has covered and even gone beyond the great Roman Empire. Almost, if not all the inhabited world has heard the gospel. And, according to some of the church historians, many of the original churches organized by the Apostles are yet intact, and yet loyal to Apostolic teachings. However, as already shown, a number of very marked and hurtful errors have crept in and gotten a permanent hold among many of the churches. Some have become very irregular.

12. Persecutions have become increasingly bitter. Near the beginning of the fourth century comes possibly the first definite government edict of persecution. The wonderful growth of Christianity has alarmed the pagan leaders of the Roman Empire. Hence Galerius, the emperor, sent out a direct edict of more savage persecution. This occurred Feb. 24, 303 A.D. Up to this time Paganism seems to have persecuted without any definite laws to that effect.

13. But this edict failed so utterly in its purpose of stopping the growth of Christianity, that this same emperor, Galerius, just eight years thereafter (A.D. 311) passed another edict recalling the first and actually granting toleration—permission to live the religion of Jesus Christ. This was probably its first favorable law.

14. By the beginning of the year A.D. 313, Christianity has won a mighty victory over paganism. A new emperor has come to the throne of the Roman Empire. He evidently recognized something of the mysterious power of this religion that continued to grow in spite of persecution. History says that this new emperor who was none other than Constantine had a wonderful realistic vision. He saw in the skies a fiery red cross and on that cross written in fiery letters these words—“By this thou shalt conquer.” He interpreted it to mean that he should become a Christian. And that by giving up paganism and that by attaching the spiritual power of the Christian religion onto the temporal power of the Roman Empire the world could be easily conquered. Thus the Christian religion would in fact become a whole world religion, and the Roman Empire a whole world empire.

15. So under the leadership of Emperor Constantine there comes a truce, a courtship and a proposal of marriage. The Roman Empire through its emperor seeks a marriage with Christianity. Give us your spiritual power and we will give you of our temporal power.

16. To effectually bring about and consummate this unholy union, a council was called. In A. D. 313, a call was made for a coming together of the Christian churches or their representatives . Many but not all came. The alliance was consummated. A Hierarchy was formed. In the organization of the Hierarchy, **Christ was dethroned as head of the churches and Emperor Constantine enthroned (only temporarily, however) as head of the church.**

17. The Hierarchy was the definite beginning of a development which finally resulted into what is now known as the Catholic, or "universal" church. It might be said that its indefinite beginnings were near the close of the second and beginning of the third century, when the new ideas concerning bishops and preacher-church government began to take shape.

18. Let it be definitely remembered that when Constantine made his call for the council, there were very many of the Christians (Baptists) and of the churches, which declined to respond. They wanted no marriage with the state, and no centralized religious government, and no higher ecclesiastical government of any kind, than the individual church. These Christians (Baptists) nor the churches ever at that time or later, entered the hierarchy of the Catholic denomination.

And the head of the Catholic Church is honored by the rulers and governments of today. How very shameful.