

# History of the Reformation

## Background for Baptist Theology

- Review

- John Knox

- Led the Reformation movement in Scotland
- Convinced of Reformation theology in 1540's
- Enslaved, exiled, and returned to Scotland 1550's
  - Huge influence of Calvin in Geneva 1556-1559
- Goal to reform the church of Scotland
  - Fiery preacher
  - Feared no man (especially Mary the Queen)



- Mary Queen of Scots

- Sent by Catholic mother to France to be raised
- Marries Francis II, but he died within months of becoming king
- Has to return to Scotland 1560
  - Catholic, but doesn't want to repeat Bloody Mary's pattern
  - Tries to woo Scottish noblemen, but John Knox is unmoved
    - The Catholic mass is idolatry
    - Knox opposed her marriage to her cousin
  - Son James is born 1566
    - Her husband is murdered and she marries the murderer
- Deposed and flees to England
  - Initially protected by Elizabeth I
  - Later arrested and beheaded for plot to assassinate Elizabeth I



- James VI of Scotland – age 1 - 1567

- Son of Mary Queen of Scots and Lord Darnley
- Later James I of England (KJV fame)
- Knox preached at his coronation
  - In a context of “the Divine Right of Kings”
  - Message of “Constitutional Monarchy”
    - Monarchy created by law and subject to a constitution
  - later becomes Great Britain standard and to this day
    - 1578 – in Scotland
    - 1688 – in England
- At Knox's death – an developed but unexecuted vision for Scotland

- Knox's last sermon Aug 1572

- The Sunday just following the St Bartholomew's Day massacre

- Knox died Nov 23, 1572

- Weak health since days of Galley slave

- The mantel of the Reformation in Scotland

- Andrew Melville (1545 – 1622)
- Great advances in the development of Presbyterianism

- Lasting Contributions of John Knox
  - Visionary ideals for Scotland:
    - The First Book of Discipline was a manifesto for a Christian commonwealth
      - Reformed Faith (Presbyterianism) as the basis for all of life
      - A far-seeing vision of universal education for children, universities
      - Vision of relief for the poor
  - Spearheaded rejection of the papacy without leaving the church subject to the monarch
    - He purified the church much more thoroughly than England experienced at the same time
  - Laid the theological foundations for the right of Christians to resist wicked rulers
    - The American Revolution was commonly called a Presbyterian revolution, as many of its leaders were Presbyterian, having imbibed the fiery Scottish sense of independence
    - WWII – Dutch resistance to Hitler and his invasion of the Low Countries
  
- Presbyterian Government
  - Knox – “the father of the Presbyterian Church”
  - Knox postulated elder (*presbuteros*) rule of the church (ala Calvin)
    - Elders selected by the members of the congregations
    - Teaching elders (pastors) are called by the congregations
    - Collectively, the elders form a presbytery in a district or parish, which then sends representatives to a national assembly
    - Rejected by Scottish Parliament in 1560 with 1<sup>st</sup> Book of Discipline
  - Put into place 1578 with 2<sup>nd</sup> Book of Discipline
    - Even though back-and-forth battle with Episcopal rule would continue until 1688
  - Presbyterianism will later include Calvinism, Covenant Theology
    - Westminster Confession of Faith (1646)
  
- Reformation in England
  - Henry VIII
    - Split with Church of Rome
    - Catholic structure/worship and King as the head
  - Edward VI
    - Moved the Church of England toward Reformation
    - Reformed rather than Lutheran influence
    - Thomas Cranmer, Martin Bucer and others
  - Lady Jane Grey
    - Brilliant, Protestant, but poorly politically connected
    - Only 9 days
  - Mary I
    - “Bloody Mary” – attempted to restore Roman Catholicism
  - Elizabeth I
    - Elizabethan Settlement – coexistence of Protestant episcopal structure with catholic-like ceremonies

- Protestants in England
  - **Conformists** –
    - claimed that “more than earthly authority” was given to head of state and of church (High church)
  - **Non-Conformists** – reform the church from within
  - **Puritans** –
    - Originally within Church of England – wanted full Calvinistic reformation in England
    - Wanted to see Church of England reorganized on presbyterian grounds rather than episcopal lines
    - Englishmen who had fled from Bloody Mary’s persecution
    - Returned to England with a renewed zeal gotten from Geneva
  - **Separatists or Dissenters**
    - Repudiated State church – favored “gathered church”
    - Church = those who have responded to the call of Christ
- **Puritans**
  - Puritanism became a way of life (a Christian pilgrimage)
    - Emphasis on personal regeneration
    - Personal sanctification
    - Household prayers
    - Strict morality
  - Bible (interpreted in spirit of early continental reformers [Bullinger & Beza]) is only source of doctrine, liturgy, polity, personal religion
  - 1558 – Exiles began returning from Geneva with hope of reforming the Church of England
    - Pick up where they’d left off with Edward VI
  - 1559 – 1593 – governing classes became more Protestant
  - 1559 – Puritans disappointed that Elizabeth chose diocesan episcopate rather than Reformed episcopate
  - Parliament pressed for further reformation
    - Name “Puritans” came into use since they wanted to purify the church
    - Also known as “Precisian”
  - Elizabeth would have none of restructure along Presbyterian lines
    - 1593 – Act against Puritans
    - Required attendance and participation in Church of England services at least once per month
- **Separatists, or Dissenters**
  - Repudiated State church – favored “gathered church”
  - Doubted that Church of England was scriptural
  - Church = those who have responded to the call of Christ
  - Leader was Robert Browne
    - 1582 – “Reformation without Tarrying for Any”
    - “The church planted or gathered is a company or number of Christians or believers, which, by a willing covenant made with their God, are under the government of God and Christ and keep His laws in one holy communion.”
  - Later known as **Congregationalists/Independents**
  - Given up hope of reforming the Anglican Church from within
    - Church is not subject to bishops or magistrates
    - Ordination is in hands of the whole church

- Separatists (cont.)
  - Persecuted by both Mary and Elizabeth
    - Death penalty for preaching separatism
  - Endured invectives from both Conformists and Puritans
  - Sought religious freedom in Holland
  - By 1603 (accession of James I) only one Separatist church remained, in Gainsborough, in charge of pastor John Smyth
  - 1605 – that flock fled to Amsterdam
  - John Robinson’s congregation at Leyden – from which Pilgrims set off in 1620 on the Mayflower
    - Both Puritan and Separatist
  
- Baptists
  - John Smyth – associated with but did not join another English Separatist group in Amsterdam
    - Thomas Helwys, an old friend, joined with him
  - 1608/09 – came to believe that, since most members were baptized as infants, his Separatist Church was invalid
    - Came to a new understanding of the church as a company of believers, and the necessity of believer’s baptism
    - Baptised himself, then Helwys
      - On the basis of confession of faith
  - Always bothered by self-baptism, sought Mennonite association
    - Helwys was hesitant because of Mennonite view of Christology
    - Understood baptism by immersion through this group
  - Smyth also gradually moved from his understanding of Calvinistic predestination to Arminianism and Universal Salvation
  - Smyth died 1612, before he could be received by the Mennonites
    - His last book was a plea for full liberty of conscience in religion
    - Necessary to ‘reconstitute’ the church rather than “reform” it
  - Early Baptist Emphases
    - Personal conversion
    - Baptism to those confessing faith
      - Mode was pouring. Not immersion yet
    - Mutual covenanting among believers
    - Separation of Church from State
  - 1612 – Helwys leads the new pro-Arminian, pro-Anabaptist, separation of Church/State back to London
    - Thoughts of cowardice from “running from persecution” rather than “taking a stand for Christ”
    - Made great efforts to try to convince King James that Baptists were loyal subjects and not heretics
  - 1613 – Helwys arrested, jailed, dies in jail 1616(?)
  - 1625 – **General Baptists**
    - Term comes into common usage
    - Strongly anti-Calvinistic

- **Particular Baptists**
  - Reject any relationship to John Smyth
    - Independent Churches – did not necessarily leave Church of England – even though driven to “separate”
    - 1616 – Henry Jacob – led a small independent congregation
    - Constant discussion about meaning of baptism
  - 1633 – a number withdrew and formed a separate congregation which adopted believer’s baptism
    - Historians date 1<sup>st</sup> Particular Baptist congregation to 1638
  - May 1640 – Council of Independent congregations in London
    - Called to adjudicate question of child baptism
    - Result – new congregation created under leadership of William Kiffin
  - 1643 – Kiffin organized seven congregations together
  - 1644 – Issued London Confession of Faith
    - Signed by 15 Particular Baptist leaders
    - Pre-dates Westminster Confession (1646)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition issued 1646
- Baptist Issues
  - Scripture alone, not decisions of Churches or States
  - Persecution for conscience sake is anti-Christian
  - Atonement
    - General vs Particular
  - Eternal security
  - Baptism
    - Infant vs Believer’s
    - Pouring vs Sprinkling vs Immersion
  - Congregational Polity
  - Lord’s Supper