

## BAPTIST HISTORY

### Lesson 5 - Particular and General Baptists in the Seventeenth Century

Recommended Reading: "Baptists Through the Centuries", Chapter 4

#### I. Introduction

- A. Possible Anabaptist influence over the Baptists (See Bebbington, p. 29-41)
  1. Influence of Particular Baptists?
    - a) Some similar ideas
      - (1) Believers baptism
      - (2) Separatism
      - (3) Baptism at a sign of Christ's death, burial and resurrection
    - b) Weak evidence
  2. Influence of General Baptists?
    - a) John Smyth
      - (1) Contact with Anabaptists in Amsterdam
      - (2) Many similarities in doctrine
      - (3) In 1610 Smyth, along with a large part of his congregation, applied to join the Amsterdam (Waterlander) church and produced writing arguing for continuity of belief with them before his death in 1612.
  3. Read summary on Bebbington, p.40
- B. English separatism
  1. The ecclesiastical policies of Charles I during the 1630's lead to more and more discontentment among the Puritans.
  2. By 1640 London had at least 10 separatist congregations
    - a) Some English Puritans began organizing Presbyterian system of ecclesiastical government based upon the Scottish and Dutch model.
    - b) Independents, rejecting the Presbyterian model, developed a network of distinct congregations.
      - (1) Baptists sprang up among the Independents.
      - (2) By 1646 there were about three dozen separatist congregations, whether Independent, Baptist, or mixed, in London.
- C. Ebb and flow of toleration
  1. 1649 - English civil war culminated with execution of King Charles I
    - a) Official toleration of all Protestants under Cromwell
    - b) Religious pluralism
  2. 1660 - Return of Charles II to England put to an end freedom of conscience
    - a) 2,000 ministers left their pulpits refusing to accept the Prayer Book of the CoE
    - b) Intermittent persecution of all dissenters
    - c) Created a movement outside of the CoE that was too large to suppress
  3. 1685 - Death of Charles II
    - a) Charles' brother, James II, came to power - openly Roman Catholic
    - b) Because he wanted to insure freedom to worship for Roman Catholics he allowed Dissenters the same liberty
    - c) Removed in the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688; joint monarchs William and Mary retained the established CoE
  4. 1689 - Parliament passed Act of Toleration - Dissenters allowed to freely worship

#### II. The Emergence of General and Particular Baptists

#### III. Differences Between Particular and General Baptists

#### IV. Similarities of Particular and General Baptists