

**THE REFORMATION CHURCH (1500–1648) (Cont'd)**

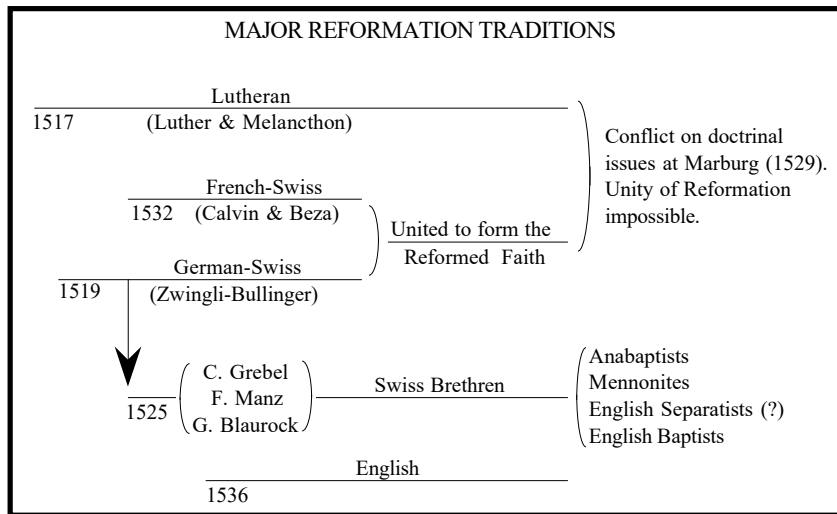
**Lecture 2**

**Topic: Anabaptism**

**Due: Gonzalez, 2.66–76**

**Anabaptism**

**D. THE ANABAPTIST TRADITION**



1. Introduction

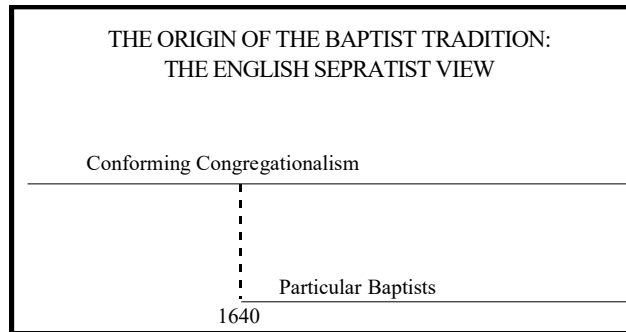
a. Origin of the FREE Church Tradition: “free” church means separation of Church and State. Three views of its origin.

1) The Trail of Blood or Silver line of Grace Theory.

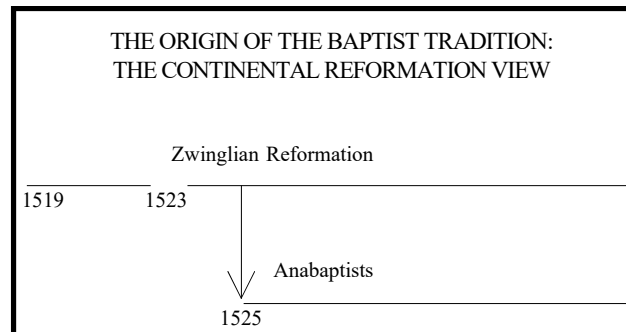
Back to John the Baptist, i.e., a silver line of grace of “Baptist” churches, i.e., truly evangelical, this is deep in Southern Baptist mythology.

2) The Particular Baptist Theory (1644)

English Separatist theory: The church began in England in the 17th century, ca. 1640.



- 3) The Swiss Anabaptist or Continental Reformation theory (1525) - it began on January 21, 1525, when a “pouring” baptism occurred, in Zurich. Why the regency of this last theory and its current popularity is explained below.



b. Anabaptists and Recent Historiography

- 1) Most of the early material written on the Anabaptists were by its antagonists, i.e., the Reformers took a very dim view of them.
- 2) Persecution stymied protagonistic writings, i.e., it is hard to write an apologetic on the bottom of Lake Zurich. Anabaptists were less literate.
- 3) Guilt by association:
  - a) There were all kinds of Anabaptists. Thomas Munster was a radical, chiliastic Anabaptist (like the Zwickau prophets). This gave all Anabaptists a bad name.
 

Schwenkfelder Anabaptist put the “inner light” over the Scriptures; the canon was not closed.
- 4) They were castigated for their theological differences.

- a) A “gathered” church of born-again people, instead of a born-into church dependent on a church-state alliance, i.e., Anabaptists were fundamentally anti-church-state.
- b) Believer's baptism was only after true conversion, i.e., they did not practice infant baptism.

## 2. The Emergence of Anabaptism

### a. Conrad Grebel (1498–1526) - His early years

He was born into upper class society in Zurich. He received 2 years of Latin school then attended the U. of Basel for 1 year then moved to the U. of Vienna because his teacher moved (Zwingli advised him to go). All he got there was gonorrhoea which wrecked his health. Then he went to the U. of Paris. He received no degree.

While there he killed a Frenchman who was a thief. This brought on an international incident because Swiss-French relations were near war. His father imprisoned Conrad in his home. Zwingli invited Conrad to his Bible studies. In 1521 he came to Christ and became a disciple of Zwingli. He became convinced of the need for a Protestant Reformation.

### b. The disagreement with Zwingli

ANABAPTISTS DIFFERED WITH REFORMERS OVER THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH	
GREBEL	ZWINGLI
Believers' Baptism	Infant Baptism
Gathered Church	State Church
Separation of Church and State	Cooperate Union of Church and State

#### 1) First Zurich Disputation (Jan. 1523)

Conrad accompanied Zwingli at the first Zurich Disputation. Both rejoiced over the victory.

#### 2) Second Zurich Disputation (Oct. 1523)

The debate was over the Mass, i.e., whether it should be a part of emerging Protestantism. The city fathers said no, so Conrad tried to pressure them into abolishing it starting Christmas Day,

1523, but the fathers changed their mind. Zwingli backed them up, but Conrad did not.

- a) Zwingli thought he should preach the Bible and let the city fathers apply it as they saw fit; but Conrad didn't.
- b) Grebel felt that Zwingli's change of mind was an error of conscience, i.e., that Zwingli sold out at the crucial moment.
- c) Grebel and friends broke with Zwingli and came up with believers baptism and anti-church-state from inductive Bible study.

3) Third Zurich disputation (Jan. 1525)

Zwingli vs. Grebel. Zwingli won. All children were commanded to be baptized by January, 1525 or else violators could not freely assemble or speak freely. Zwingli put Grebel in the position of submit or break the laws of the State.

- c. The Birth of Anabaptism: On Jan. 21, 1525, Grebel et. al. debated what to do. One member requested believers baptism "by pouring" (no other way possible in the home) in Zurich. They determined to stand against Zwingli.

3. The spread of Anabaptism

a. In Switzerland

1) Conrad Grebel (1498–1526)

He married a lady committed to Zwingli. He was imprisoned for preaching. He started the Zollikon Anabaptist church. In the spring of 1526 he died of the plague.

2) Felix Manx (1498–1527)

Son of a priest, he was illegitimate. He wanted to teach in Zwingli's seminary. He became a field preacher after the split with Zwingli. He was arrested and drowned with his wife by Zurich authorities.

3) George Blaurock (1491–1529)

Educated at U. of Leipzig. He was a convert of Zwingli. A good early preacher. He was expelled from Switzerland by Zwingli. He went to Austria where he was burned at the stake.

b. In Germany

1) Background

Loss of leadership in Zurich and strong Zwingli control prevented any growth. The persecution went from leaders to the laity.

2) Hans Denck

A Bulgarian humanist. He was the first Anabaptist in S. Germany. He organized the Anabaptists in S. Germany. Died of the plague in 1528.

3) Han Hut

A book peddler converted by Denck. A traveling evangelist. He was tortured to death. He was a Pacifist, Chiliast, and Adventist.

4) Pilgram Marpeck

He lived to a natural death, mining engineer in Strasbourg. This was Bucer's city, free to all traditions.

c. In Moravia and Tyrol

1) Balthasar Hubmaier

He was the most brilliant Anabaptist scholar. Educated at Univ. of Friesburg. Earned PhD. under John Eck at Ingelstadt. He was destined and trained to be a great R.C. scholar. He studied the Scripture and in 1522 discovered evangelical truth on his own. He was imprisoned by Zwingli and tortured. He fled Switzerland and Zwingli. He worked among the Hussites in Moravia. He was finally tortured and burned by the Romanists.

2) Jacob Hutter

A hat maker, no formal training, fled to Moravia. He communalistic. His followers called Hutterites.

d. In the Netherlands

1) Melchoir Hofmann

Very little formal training. At first he followed Luther then departed because of his Millennial views. He switched to Zwingli then became an Anabaptist. He thought himself to be the prophet Elijah to introduce Christ's soon return to the world. Insisted Christ's return to Strasbourg, the "New Jerusalem." Multitudes came to Strasbourg. He was imprisoned, but never was released.

His movement moved to Munster when some said that city would be the New Jerusalem. Thus developed the Munsterites.

He was rejected by Swiss brethren.

- 2) Obbe Phillips A Doctor who advocated pacifism in Holland.
- 3) Dirk Phillips A R.C. priest and theologian. Didn't have organizational ability, he became an Anabaptist through his brother.
- 4) Menno Simons (1496–1561) Mennonite
  - a) His life:
 

A Dutch priest ordained in 1525. Came to a Protestant faith in refuting Luther. He was the foremost leader of the Anabaptists. A good organizer and a good mind.
  - b) His contributions
    - (1) Organizer of the movement
    - (2) Voluminous writer - *The Foundation of the Christian Faith*  
He had a weak view of Christ's humanity.
    - (3) Gave Anabaptists a reputable voice and image
    - (4) Saved the movement from division and internal strife.
- e. In England
  - 1) Early beginnings
    - a) 1531 - Anabaptists called "third faction" of the Reformation.
    - b) 1534 - Dutch Anabaptists took refuge in England.
    - c) 1535 - 14 Anabaptists burned to death

d) 1553-58 - Mary Tudor martyred many Protestants, 80% were Anabaptists.

2) Influence upon English Separatism - Non state church people

a) The Brownists - Followed Robert Brown - Congregationalist. In Norwich, 1580. They fled to Holland. From one Anabaptist group to another.

b) The arguments for influence.

(1) As separation emerges in the areas of Anabaptist influence, Anabaptism disappears.

(2) Prevalence of Anabaptist ideas in separatist groups. Believers baptism, Lord's table was a memorial, a ban on discipline, against liturgy and lay preachers.

(3) Depended on Simons for theology.

3) The early separatists

a) Johnson's group

Francis Johnson. Fled to Holland because of persecution, returned to England then established the first Baptist Church of England at Norwich.

b) Scrooby - Gainsborough group - Neighboring towns.

1. The Scrooby Group - Fled to Holland - Separatist similar to Baptist - American Pilgrims.

2. The Gainsborough Group - Fled to Holland under John Smythe then returned to England as General Baptist - Arminian.

4. The Theology of Anabaptism

a. Background

1) No one theologian acceptable to the group

2) Managed to live short lives - martyr complex

- 3) Depended on Zwingli
- 4) Didn't believe in creeds

b. Theology

- 1) The Trinity: All were Trinitarian, No Unitarians.
- 2) The Scripture: Sola Scriptura.
- 3) Justification by Faith alone.
- 4) Baptism Believers Baptism. No infant Baptism. Baptism doesn't save or keep. An outward show and testimony of an inward fact. Mode - all kinds.
- 5) The Church: Played down invisible church. And dealt primarily with the visible local church.
- 6) The Lord's Supper: A Memorial table, perpetual reminder.
- 7) Discipline (Ban): exercise of Discipline in the church.
- 8) Separation of church and State.