

## STUDY PAK 4

### PERSECUTION, HERESY, AND PURITY

“He who accuses me of baptizing twice does not himself truly baptize once.”  
~~ Petilian, Donatist Pastor, *Benedict*, p. 49 ~ ~

#### I. PERSECUTION STARTED FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH.

The first 300 years of church history are usually called the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Church. Christ had forewarned His disciples that they would be \_\_\_\_\_ as He was \_\_\_\_\_. This is seen everywhere in the first 300 years of the Christian era.

A. Persecution by the \_\_\_\_\_.

Acts 4:1-3 Peter and John jailed.

Acts 5:17-42 Peter and apostles put into common prison and beaten.

Acts 7:58 Stephen stoned.

Acts 8:1-3 Saul made havoc of the church.

B. Persecution by the \_\_\_\_\_.

1. Persecution by Nero.

- a. Quotation from McSorley, p. 14, in his book, *Outline of History of the Church by Centuries*—Roman Catholic author. “Nero had the unhappy distinction of being ‘the first who assailed the Christian sect with the imperial sword.’ To shift from himself the suspicion of having caused the great fire which destroyed Rome in the year 64, he accused Christians of the crime and they were punished with cruel torments, ‘covered with the skins of wild beasts, worried to the death by dogs, nailed to the cross, burned to serve as torches at night.’ He offered his own gardens for this spectacle.” In 68, deserted by the army and condemned to death by the Senate, Nero, the last of the Julian line, committed suicide.

b. Quotation from B.K. Kuiper, *The Church in History*, p. 62. "It was at this time that, according to tradition, the apostles Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom in Rome. It is related that Peter was crucified with his head down. This was done at his own request. He said he was not worthy to be crucified in the same manner as his Master. Paul, being a Roman citizen, was beheaded."

2. There would be ten empire-wide persecutions of the Christians. Emperor Trajan \_\_\_\_\_ directing that Christians \_\_\_\_\_ if caught.

3. The stated grounds for persecution:  
The Emperor, Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.), decreed that \_\_\_\_\_ of Christians would be given to those who identified these Christians to \_\_\_\_\_. Throughout the Roman Empire, Christians were reported to the authorities by their neighbors. Many were beheaded. Many times their bodies were burned, and their ashes thrown to the wind or into rivers. Somehow the Roman leaders thought that this would \_\_\_\_\_ from ever taking place!

The Romans gave several reasons for their vicious persecution of the Christians.

a. First, they did not understand the almost \_\_\_\_\_ of separation of church and state.

Rome demanded that all religions be \_\_\_\_\_ and that all religions accept the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as the \_\_\_\_\_. Christians could not, in good conscience, do that. Church and state were separate institutions, and their sole authority was the \_\_\_\_\_ as expressed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ . It is interesting to note that principles now known as Baptist Distinctives, such as sole authority of Scripture, independent, autonomous churches, and separation of church and state, were so \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to the early church. If these truths had not been \_\_\_\_\_ to the early church, they could have avoided much of the persecution they endured.

- b. Christians were also accused of being \_\_\_\_\_. While this charge seems especially ridiculous, we must remember the Romans were used to worshipping idols and people that \_\_\_\_\_. They could not see \_\_\_\_\_ of the worship of the Christians, so they mistakenly assumed that Christians did not \_\_\_\_\_!
- c. Christians were also accused of \_\_\_\_\_, a charge that came from a \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord's Supper.

The vile minds of the Romans caused them to assume that the "\_\_\_\_\_ " of the Lord's body must imply cannibalism practiced in connection with ritual sacrifices.

- d. Emperor Decius (249-251 A.D.) ordered widespread persecution of all who \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Seven years later, another Roman Emperor ordered the deaths of all Christians! Church buildings were destroyed, books burned, thousands of Christians were killed, and many \_\_\_\_\_.

Those were the famous days of the Christians hiding in the \_\_\_\_\_. There were over 500 miles of tunnels dug in the soft stone under the city of Rome that formed an incredible maze under the city. The tunnels were primarily dug as burial places for the dead, and here many Christians \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ their own \_\_\_\_\_. The phrase “\_\_\_\_\_” was first used to describe the existence of the Christians in the catacombs during this time.

The worst persecution, however, was still to come. Diocletian devoted the full resources of the military to \_\_\_\_\_ the Christians. It is estimated that \_\_\_\_\_ died during that period! That persecution was condemned by Diocletian's successor, Galerius. For ten years, every Christian father in the empire had to live with the \_\_\_\_\_ that he and his family could be \_\_\_\_\_ by the military.

4. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Roman persecutions, Ps. 76:10. Fleeing from persecutions caused Christians to spread throughout the farthest corners of the empire and beyond. Without a doubt, the message of the gospel \_\_\_\_\_ because of the \_\_\_\_\_ that came \_\_\_\_\_. Remote villages and mountain tribes who might otherwise have never heard the gospel came in contact with \_\_\_\_\_. Only eternity will reveal how many were reached for Christ as a result \_\_\_\_\_.

## II. THE CONSTANTINIAN COMPROMISE.

Shortly before the end of his life, Galerius ordered the end of the persecution of Christians, and he was succeeded by Constantine who carried out his desires. Constantine officially \_\_\_\_\_ as the \_\_\_\_\_; however, there is no evidence that he was \_\_\_\_\_. He began to \_\_\_\_\_ of Christianity with the religious ideas of several other religions that had a significant number of followers. Constantine was the \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, offering \_\_\_\_\_.

Christians were now faced with a new set of decisions to make. There seemed to be freedom from persecution, unlimited opportunity to preach, a great opportunity to influence society with Christian values, and the \_\_\_\_\_ they had to surrender right away were \_\_\_\_\_ and the concept of the \_\_\_\_\_. Right away, two approaches to Christianity developed: those that accepted the concept of a governmentally established Christian church and those who stood for \_\_\_\_\_ of the New Testament church.

Those accepting the established church now seemed free from persecution (though Emperor Julian did try to re-establish paganism by force). Independents (often called “\_\_\_\_\_,” “\_\_\_\_\_,” “\_\_\_\_\_”) churches still had to face persecution. The only difference was that now their persecution came in the \_\_\_\_\_! Many Christians chose the apparent safety of the established church.

The Christians were worn out by decades of violent persecution. Many had lost close relatives to the terrors of the Roman persecutions. It is easy to see how they were tempted to compromise. This mistake, however, was tragic. As soon as the \_\_\_\_\_ became an authority, the Bible stopped being the \_\_\_\_\_. This opened the door to all kinds of \_\_\_\_\_. As the years went by, the established church took a position against every one of the Baptist Distinctives.

While Constantine worked at revamping the Christian religion, he at least \_\_\_\_\_. They were taxed for the support of the established church, but they were not \_\_\_\_\_. Many of his successors, however, took the same attitude toward the independents as past pagan Roman Emperors had against the whole Christian faith.

Theodosius the Great (385-395 A.D.) ordered all inhabitants of the Roman Empire to belong to the established church! He officially sanctioned the growing system of organizational control over local churches.

In 385 A.D., for the first time (in modern-day Spain), independent preachers were \_\_\_\_\_ in the name of the “\_\_\_\_\_.” This was the first such instance—but by no means the last.

### III. THE ORIGIN OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

- A. Signs of degeneracy and corruption appear early in the Christian church.
  - 1. Warnings sounded in the New Testament.
    - a. Acts 20:28-31.
    - b. II Peter 2:1-3.
    - c. II Peter 3:3-4.
    - d. Jude 3-4.
  - 2. Vedder comments as to this early problem.
    - a. “The note of all religions before Christianity was salvation by works; \_\_\_\_\_ taught salvation by faith.”
    - b. Converts imperfectly converted assimilated Christianity to their former faith.
    - c. These (imperfect converts) failed to realize that, “each souls destiny is the result of a personal relation to Jesus Christ.”
    - d. “They imagined that eternal destiny is settled by outward acts, that the wrath of God may be averted by \_\_\_\_\_.”
    - e. “The natural result was the substitution of \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_.”
    - f. Vedder lists three tendencies toward degeneration:
      - 1. the idea of a Holy Catholic church
      - 2. the ministry of the priesthood

3. sacramental grace
- g. The preservation of outward unity became the paramount consideration.
  1. Schism for any reason became a deadly sin.
  2. The idea of a Holy Catholic (i.e. universal) church, outside of which there was \_\_\_\_\_, prepared the way for corruption.
- h. Also the development of the idea that some \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ was vested in the “sacrament” of baptism.

3. John T. Christian writes concerning these early events as follows (p. 27):

- a. “... even before the death of the last apostle many dangerous and grievous heresies had sprung up in the Christian churches.”
- b. “The trend from the Word of God has been noted by the Apostle Paul ...” (2 Cor. 2: 17).
- c. Not all or even most of the Roman Catholic doctrinal errors are seen immediately at this time; some that came later are:
  1. the worship of Mary.
  2. Transubstantiation - approximately 1200 A.D.
  3. the infallibility of the Pope - 1870 A.D.
  4. the immaculate conception - 1955 A.D.
- d. The tendency—lessened the demand for repentance and faith, and placed emphasis on the external signs and symbols.
- e. “The point of departure probably had its largest expression in \_\_\_\_\_, and the tendency of some churches toward episcopacy, and away from democratic simplicity.”
- f. Christian writes: “One of the earliest and most hurtful errors was the dogma of baptismal regeneration. This error in one form or another has marred the life and colored the history of all Christian ages. It began early and its virus may be traced to this day not only among ritualists but likewise in the standards of evangelical

Christians.”

B. Events leading up to the formation of the Papacy.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ leads to \_\_\_\_\_, Acts 10:39; I Corinthians 1: 14-17; Galatians 5: 11.

a. Infant baptism’s beginning is uncertain.

1. Passages often quoted by pedobaptists are admitted by candid pedobaptists to fall short of proof that infants were baptized in those times.

2. Christian points out (p. 30): “The Apostolic Fathers require that \_\_\_\_\_ shall \_\_\_\_\_, and hence they know nothing of infant baptism.” Dr. Charles W. Bennett, Professor Historical Theology at Garrett Biblical Institute, Methodist, says: “The Fathers contain no positive information relative to the practice of their time respecting infant baptism.” ~ ~ Bennett, *Christian Archaeology*, p. 391, New York, 1889 ~ ~

3. Christian quotes Harnack (the Father of Modernism) as follows:

“There is no sure trace of infant baptism in the epoch; personal faith is a necessary condition.”

~ ~ Harnack, *History of Dogma*, I, p. 20 ~ ~

**Note:** Read Christian, pp. 30-41.

4. He further states (Harnack): "Complete obscurity prevails as to the church's adoption of the practice of child baptism which, though it owes its origin to the idea of this ceremony being indispensable to salvation, is nevertheless a proof that the superstitious view of baptism had increased."

~ ~ Ibid., II, p. 142 ~ ~

5. And finally he says: "It was established in the fifth century as the general usage. Its complete adoption runs parallel with the death of heathenism. " ~ ~ Ibid., II, p. 142 ~ ~

- b. Infant baptism paves the way for the Papacy.
  - 1. \_\_\_\_\_ ushered into the church.
  - 2, These sought for world acclaim.
  - 3. They sought for the worldly advancement of the church in the world to advance their own \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
  
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ was also a powerful agency in corrupting the church.
  - a. Early fathers gave evidence of the tendency to stress the real presence or \_\_\_\_\_ in the communion service.
  - b. Decrease in faith leads to formalism and sacramental ism ending in the mass of the Roman church.
  - c. The idea of \_\_\_\_\_ other than the \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ developed very early in the post-apostolic literature.
  
- 3. The \_\_\_\_\_ also led to corruption in the church.
  - a. Clement of Rome was the first to draw a parallel between the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_.  
First to speak of the “\_\_\_\_\_” and the “\_\_\_\_\_.”
  - b. By the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century or early in the 4<sup>th</sup>, the idea had been accepted that the clergy formed an \_\_\_\_\_ or a \_\_\_\_\_ separate from the laity. See Revelation 2:6, 2:15 (Nicolaitans).
  
- 4. The gradual \_\_\_\_\_ of the Roman church.
  - a. Christian writes (p. 28): “The churches continued to be free and independent. There were as yet no metropolitan bishops, and the office and authority \_\_\_\_\_ was not yet known. Rome in those days had \_\_\_\_\_ in the Christian world.”
  - b. Quotation from the Roman Catholic historian, McSorley, p.17:

“The form of sound words mentioned in the second epistle of St. Paul to Timothy (1:13) suggests a creed; and the story of the eunuch told in the Acts of the Apostles (8:37) seems to indicate that it was customary to make a profession of faith as a preliminary to baptism.”

**Note:** This would indicate a recognition of the early church practicing believers’ baptism only, by a Roman Catholic historian.

- c. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century we find bishops and presbyters two officers not one, the bishop being superior, to the presbyters.
1. This found in the writings of Ignatius about 115 A.D.
  2. Christian says (p. 28): “There was a constant tendency \_\_\_\_\_ . As the pastor assumed rights which were not granted to him by the Scriptures, some of the metropolitan pastors exercised \_\_\_\_\_ over some of the smaller churches.”
  3. Irenaeus speaks of his parish (pareckia), and this develops into the diocesan system.
  4. Cyprian calls the bishop the viceregent (one exercising delegated powers) of Christ, in things spiritual.
  5. Christian adds (p. 28): “Finally Rome, the political center of the world, became the religious center as well. In time the \_\_\_\_\_ became \_\_\_\_\_ . All of this was of slow growth and required centuries for its consummation.”
- d. Gregory the Great (590-604 A.D.)
1. The first of the proper popes - with him is the development of \_\_\_\_\_ , (Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, I, p. 15).
  2. The growth of the papacy was a process of history. The bishops of Rome made arrogant claims over the other

churches. Notable was Leo XI (440-461).

#### IV. MONTANISTS, DONATISTS, AND NOVATIANS.

From the very beginning there were those who \_\_\_\_\_ the concept of the church as one all-encompassing organization. Some were very sincere Bible-believers, others were blatant heretics. Their \_\_\_\_\_ was their claim of \_\_\_\_\_ for the local church.

##### A. Montanists.

##### 1. Their Origin.

One of the earliest protests against the growing denominational character of the church came from \_\_\_\_\_, a preacher in Phrygia, around 150 A.D. He emphasized the local church and separation of church and state, and opposed the \_\_\_\_\_ who had control over several churches. He held to all of the Baptist Distinctives, but one. He believed in continuing \_\_\_\_\_ (much like the \_\_\_\_\_ of our own day), and could thus not be considered an advocate of the Scriptures as the sole authority for faith and practice.

Montanus, however, influenced many churches to act and think \_\_\_\_\_ and to \_\_\_\_\_ for themselves. These churches were usually called Montanists, regardless of what doctrinal conclusions they reached. The Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D. declared that Montanists should be considered pagans. In spite of opposition from denominational Christianity, the Montanists continued to grow for several hundred years.

Because Montanists were free to study the Bible for themselves, they often came to very \_\_\_\_\_. While many of the Montanists would be classified as heretics if they lived today and others would be similar to the modern Protestant movements, many of them held

to the \_\_\_\_\_ . It is very fair to say that many of the early Montanists were, in fact, Baptists.

2. Their Development.

a. Their leader, Montanus.

1. a converted priest of Cybele.
2. began his teachings about 150-156 A.D.
3. gathered followers, including two women of rank: Maximilla and Priscilla.
4. new teachings spread rapidly with little opposition.

b. The characteristics of their doctrines (Vedder, p. 58):

1. \_\_\_\_\_ church membership.
2. Regeneration and indwelling of \_\_\_\_\_ (John 16:13).
3. \_\_\_\_\_ (Christian, p. 43) – “They held that science and art, all worldly education or gay form of life, should be avoided because such things belonged to paganism.”
4. \_\_\_\_\_ (Christian, p. 43): “Against a mortal sin the church should defend herself by rightly excluding him who committed it, for the holiness of the church was simply the holiness of the members.”
5. The “lapsed” should be baptized anew because they had denied Christ. Thus termed, “*Anabaptist*,” (*Schaff, History of the Christian Church, II*, p. 429).
6. Received the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Old and New Testaments.
7. Sound in their views of the \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_ (Epiphanius, Heer, XLVIII, 7).
8. Return of Christ (Vedder, p. 60): “... a speedy coming of Christ to reign with His saints for a thousand years.”

9. Montanists \_\_\_\_\_ (Vedder, p. 62): “No other baptism so far as we know was practiced by anybody in the Second Century.”
10. Montanists believed in baptism of \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Remarks by Christian, p. 44: “Montanism had made so much stir in Asia Minor before the close of the Second Century that several councils were called against it. And finally the whole movement was officially condemned, but Montanism continued for centuries and finally became known under other names.” (Eusebius, *The Church History*, p. 229, Note 1 by Dr. McGiffert).

In Frigia the Montanists came in contact with, and probably in actual communion with, the Paulicians. We know that they were still in existence in the year 722. (Theophanus, 617, Bonded).

- d. Comments from McSorley, p. 32: “We read that the Christians of Gaul twice appealed to Eleutherius to check the Montanists’ heresy; and Victor we know threatened to excommunicate the Asiatic bishops for their refusal to adopt the Roman usage in the celebration of Easter.”

**Note:** This indicates very clearly that the Montanists had spread as far as Gaul, which was France.

- e. Another quote from McSorley, p. 34: “The early rituals, both Eastern and Western, and many passages from the writings of the fathers make it clear that the common form of baptism was immersion although the sprinkling of water and pouring of water were also recognized as valid methods. Immersion continued in use until the 12<sup>th</sup> Century in the Western church and has never been abandoned in the Orient.”

**Note:** This is a striking statement coming from a Roman Catholic historian whose book bears the imprimatur of the archbishop.

3. Tertullian.

Perhaps the most famous of all the Montanist teachers was \_\_\_\_\_. He preached in northern Africa during the Third Century. He is often remembered as one of the greatest of the early church fathers, in spite of the fact that he \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_. He is sometimes called the “Father of Latin Theology.”

Tertullian spoke out boldly for independent churches, baptism by immersion of believers only, separation of church and state, and the sole authority of the Scriptures. He is sometimes falsely accused of teaching baptismal regeneration, but his own \_\_\_\_\_ make it clear that this is \_\_\_\_\_. He appears to have been genuinely Baptist. He was, in fact, sometimes called “Tertullian the Baptist” because of his strong emphasis on proper baptism.

B. The Donatists.

1. Their Origin.

By the Fourth Century, Christianity was becoming strongly \_\_\_\_\_ and was gradually being taken over by the \_\_\_\_\_. Other groups joined the Montanists in separating from organized Christianity. A new wave of independent churches took place in \_\_\_\_\_. Most of these churches broke fellowship with the established church over the qualifications for bishops, pay from the state for the clergy, purity in church, and the final authority in solving disputes between the church and state. The movement began to be known by the name of one of its most able leaders, \_\_\_\_\_, pastor of the church at Carthage.

Emperor Constantine ordered the Donatists \_\_\_\_\_ with the recognized church; \_\_\_\_\_. He then banished the Donatist pastors and used the army to close their church buildings. He continued to persecute them for five years, but then decided to leave them alone as

long as they did not meet in formal church buildings. All through northern Africa, the Donatist churches \_\_\_\_\_ until they became as popular as the \_\_\_\_\_.

The Donatist churches tended to \_\_\_\_\_. Normally, they taught the sole authority of Scripture, baptism by immersion of believers only, and separation of church and state. Some went even further and taught all of what we would call the Baptist distinctives. They sent \_\_\_\_\_ throughout the Roman Empire.

2. Their Beliefs.

a. Some characteristics of their position.

1. They stood for the purity of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. For the purity of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. For the \_\_\_\_\_ of each church.
4. They \_\_\_\_\_ those whose first baptism they had reason to doubt.
5. They were consequently called \_\_\_\_\_.

b. Christian's remarks concerning the Donatists, p. 45: "David Benedict, the Baptist historian, is quoted and is referred to as follows: David Benedict followed closely the statements of other writers in his history. But in his last days he went into the original sources and produced a remarkable book called, *A History of the Donatists* (Pawtucket, 1875). In that book he recedes from his noncommittal position and classes them as Baptists. He quite freely shows from Augustine and Optatus, who were contemporaries, that the Donatists rejected infant baptism and were congregational in their form of government."

c. Some remarks: It would seem that the new evidence found by David Benedict, having determined from original sources such as Augustine and Optatus, that the Donatists rejected infant baptism.

Also, on p. 46, Christian says, “Governor Henry D’ Anvers truly remarks Augustine’s third and fourth books against the Donatists demonstrated that they denied infant baptism, wherein he (Augustine) maintained the argument for infant baptism against them with great zeal in forcing it with severe arguments.”

- d. Their form of baptism according to Optatus was immersion.
- e. Christian further writes on p. 46, Lucius Oziander, professor in and chancellor of the University Tubitian, wrote a book against the Anabaptists in 1605 in which he says, “Our modern Anabaptists are the same as the Donatists of old” (Oziander, Epistle Century 16, p. 175, Wittenberg, 1607).
- f. The Donatists stood for \_\_\_\_\_ and they were opposed to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the state-church.
- g. The Donatists stood for the \_\_\_\_\_.

Quotation from Christian, p. 47, “The opposition of these Christians was not only a protest, but an appeal. It was a protest against the growing corruptions and worldliness of these churches, which had sadly departed from the faith in doctrine and discipline, it was an appeal since they were frequently called back to purity of life and apostolic simplicity. All through the days of darkness their voice was not hushed and there was not wanting a people to stand before God. Maligned, they suffered with patience, reviled, they reviled not; and the heritage of these people is liberty of conscience to a world. All hail martyrs of God”—Hebrews 11.

C. The Novatians.

1. Their Origin.

Perhaps the most important of the early separatist groups to Baptist history are the Novatians. Novatian was an \_\_\_\_\_ in Rome during the Third Century who became \_\_\_\_\_ in the western part of the empire that all the \_\_\_\_\_ were

soon called by the name \_\_\_\_\_. This term for independent preachers and churches was to stay in use for 200 years.

The normal distinction of Novatian churches was their advocacy of \_\_\_\_\_ characterized by the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of their membership. The churches in Rome that followed Novatian claimed to be carrying on the original teachings of the church at Rome. They did not believe that they had taken \_\_\_\_\_; rather, they felt that the other churches in Rome had \_\_\_\_\_ from the faith.

2. Their Beliefs.

- a. They were often called by their contemporaries the “\_\_\_\_\_.”
- b. Christian’s comments concerning the Novatians (p. 45): “On the count of the purity of their lives they were called the Cathary, i.e. the pure.” Mosheim comments, “What is still more, they re-baptized such as came to them from the Catholics.” (Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. I, p. 203). Since they baptized those who came from other communions, they were called \_\_\_\_\_. The fourth Lateran Council decreed that these re-baptizers should be punished by death. They were, says Robinson, Trinitarian Baptists. They held to the independence of the churches and recognized the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ in respect to dignity and authority.
- c. Vedder remarks on p. 64: “The Novatians were the earliest Anabaptists; refusing to recognize as valid the ministry and sacraments of their opponents and claiming to be the true church, they were logically compelled to re-baptize all who came to them from the Catholic church. The party gained great strength in Asia Minor where many Montanists joined it and, in spite of the persecution, the Novatians survived to the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> Century.”

- d. Christian on p. 44 comments: “Dr. Robinson traces a continuation of the Novatians up to the Reformation and the rise of the Anabaptist movement. Great numbers followed his, i.e., Novatian’s example, and all over the empire Puritan churches were constituted and flourished through 200 succeeding years. Afterwards, when penal laws obliged them to lurk in corners and worship God in private, they were distinguished by a variety of names and a succession of them continued until the Reformation. (Robinson, *Ecclesiastical Researches*, p. 126, Cambridge, 1792)