

THE FOLLOWING NOTES OFTEN REFER TO FOUR BOOKS

History of the Donatists by David Benedict, Christian History Archives, Dayton, Ohio, original publication 1865.

History of the Baptists by John T. Christian, Bogard Press, Texarkana, Texas, 1922.

The Faithful Baptist Witness by Phil Stringer, Old Paths Publications, 1998.

Short History of the Baptists by H.C. Vedder, American Baptist Publication Society, 1907.

STUDY PAK 5

THE BAPTISTS IN THE DARK AGES

“Baptists are not unfrequently reminded that they lay too great stress on literal obedience in ecclesiastical matters: but knowing the fearful consequences of disobedience recorded in the Scriptures for the admonition of men, they do not see how they can otherwise, even if they desired to do so!” ~ ~ C.A. Jenkins, *Baptist Faith and Practice*, p. 12, 1881 ~ ~

I. NON-BAPTIST HISTORIANS RECOGNIZE THAT INDEPENDENT CHURCHES CONTINUED AFTER THE FORMATION OF THE STATE CHURCH.

- A. Secular historian Edward Gibbon mentions these independent churches in his famous *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*:

“The visible assemblies ... were extirpated by fire and sword, and the bleeding remnant escaped by flight and concealment, or Catholic conformity. A latent succession was preserved of the disciples of St. Paul who protested against the tyranny of Rome, and embraced the Bible as their rule of faith, and purified their creed of all Gnostic theology.”

- B. Mosheim, Lutheran historian.
Vol. I, pp. 71-71, says: “Churches in those primitive times were independent bodies, and 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.”

- C. English historian Robin Lane Fox.

“During the Second and Third Centuries, groups of Baptists could be found in the district between the mouths of the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers.”

~ ~ *Pagans and Christians*, p. 277 ~ ~

“We can now be certain that Mani grew up in a Jewish-Christian community of Baptists in Mesopotamia.”

~ ~ *Pagans and Christians*, p. 564 ~ ~

II. THE DARK AGES.

It is difficult for modern Americans to imagine what life was like during the period that we call the Dark Ages of Europe. This period was not of the same length in all of Europe, but it covers roughly the _____ through the _____ Centuries.

With the exception of the rule of Charlemagne in the Ninth Century, there was little central government. Most government was based upon contracts of _____. There was _____. Violence settled most disputes. Literacy was almost _____. It is estimated that less than ten percent of all males and less than one percent of all females could read during this period!

For the vast majority of people, the only major activity was the _____. Obtaining food, clothing, and shelter was a _____ task for most people. Very few people ever traveled very far from the region in which they were born. It has been estimated that the average person during the Dark Ages never met more than 200 people in his lifetime!

The church became predominantly _____. A number of the Popes during this period were very open about their lack of traditional Christian doctrines, ethics, and behavior. Astrology, drunkenness, immorality, and homosexuality were all practiced openly by _____ and even _____. The Popes sometimes came under the control of different political powers. For a while, the _____ controlled the selection and activities of the Popes. Later, it was the _____

_____ who exercised control. After that, the _____ took the power. At one point, the Italian nobles made a 12-year-old boy Pope! He later sold the office for a thousand pounds of silver.

The church in the Byzantine Empire officially split with the Roman Catholic Church each claiming to be the _____ of God's will on the earth.

Gradually, the Germanic tribes came under the control of the Roman Catholic Church. This made the church dominant over Scandinavia and most of mainland Europe. Russia came under the control of the Eastern Orthodox (Byzantine) Church.

The established church became characterized by its _____. There was no standard of _____ or _____ expected of its _____. More and more, pagan ideas and fanciful spiritualized interpretations of Scripture became _____ for church doctrine.

Various attempts were made to reform the church, and even some Popes took their responsibilities seriously making some temporary improvements. Different groups developed within the established church to try and solve specific problems. Monasteries were designed to _____ from the influence _____. Some priests took _____ to protect themselves from the influence of money. Gradually, a _____ became the norm for priests. It was thought that this would protect them from being drawn into _____. However, as it became more and more common for priests not to marry, _____ became even more of an issue among the established church clergy. Most reform movements brought about limited, temporary improvements.

Some Popes led the Roman Catholic Church to great moments of power. Gregory VII held such great political power that he could make the German emperor wait barefoot in the snow for three days before seeing him. He then made him bow, kiss his feet, and beg forgiveness. However, such political contests were risky. This same emperor later

increased his power and drove Gregory from Rome, after which the Pope died in exile, hiding in the mountains.

Pope Innocent III brought the Roman Catholic Church to a place of supreme power in Europe. The will of Pope Innocent III was law, and during his rule no one ever successfully defied his power. Later popes found it difficult to retain that much control. The Crusades took place during this time for the purpose of driving the _____ and establishing _____ in the land where most _____ took place. The First Crusade succeeded in driving the Moslems out of areas of Palestine, and kingdoms modeled after the _____ of Europe were established. These kingdoms lasted several decades, but eventually were overrun by the Moslems again. A number of other Crusades were launched with very little success. Those Crusades were called for by the Roman Catholic Church, often organized by the popes. Priests and church leaders always accompanied the Crusades. They were up to their collars in thievery, rape, and killings.

The people of Europe were guaranteed that it _____ for them to _____, but after decades of sacrificing tens of thousands of lives and untold financial resources, the people of Europe were very disillusioned. It began to appear that God _____ through the _____ after all. The Crusades led to a tremendous decline _____ of the established church. Nation states began to arise as related tribes were brought under the control of strong rulers who often felt free to _____. One French king openly had the Pope beaten for criticizing him. Arguments developed over who the true Pope was with different nations recognizing different leaders as the Pope. Soon, the authority of the Pope was based upon his ability to _____ of several influential kings.

Day-to-day religious observance drastically changed. Rarely did Catholics attend church services or get any formal religious instruction. People still looked to priests to “baptize” infants, serve communion (which was often done in homes), perform marriages, and conduct funerals. The church still had a _____ on the people, but they had

very little _____ as Catholics.

These circumstances created _____ for independent, Baptist preachers. Through much of the Dark Ages, they _____ and _____ . Even when local governments tried to stop them, they often had little control outside the largest villages. Multitudes flocked to hear the independent, Baptist preachers _____ . Even terrible persecution under Charlemagne and Pope Innocent III _____ this movement.

III. PAULICIANS AND BOGOMILS.

A. Their Theology.

1. Sources of information.

a. Most of the information concerning the Paulicians comes

_____.

1. The first source is that of the Greek writers, Phetius and Potras Sikeliotas.
2. Gibbons used this material in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, but realized that the accounts were deeply prejudiced and he suspected the malice and poison of these writers and laid bare much of the malignity expressed by them.

b. The second source of information is from the writings of the Paulicians themselves, found and translated by a Mr. Conybeare in 1898.

Note: *Christian*, p. 49.

c. The book called, _____, was a book written by the Paulicians and mentioned by Gregory Magistos.

Quotation from *The Key of Truth*: "Therefore, according to the word of the Lord, we must first bring them into the _____, induce them to _____, and give it (_____) unto them."

d. Adeney in his book, *The Greek and Eastern Churches*, p. 217, writes:

“Therefore, it is quite arguable that they should be regarded as representing the survival of a most primitive type of Christianity.” Adeney also called them “ancient, oriental Baptists.”

2. The beginning.

- a. According to Christian, p. 50, there was a young Armenian named _____ who sheltered a Christian deacon fleeing from persecution. In return for his kindness, he received a copy of the New Testament. According to Gibbons in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 386, Vol. V., “Those books became the measure of _____ and the rule of _____, and the Catholics who disputed his interpretation acknowledged that his text was genuine and sincere, but he attached himself with peculiar devotion to the writings and character _____, and the name of _____ is derived by their enemies from some unknown year. But I am confident that they gloried in their affinity to the apostle to the Gentiles.”
- b. It is said by one, John the Philosopher, that the Paulicians took refuge in the Mohammedan dominions where they were tolerated and where their own type of belief never ceased to be accounted orthodox.
- c. The number of Paulicians constantly increased, and they soon attracted the attention of their enemies. In the year 690, Constantine, their leader, was _____ by the command of the emperor, and the successor of Constantine was burned to death.

3. Their ministry.

- a. The capital, _____ was the free state from which _____ a host of missionaries to convert the _____ tribes of Bulgaria, Bosnia, and Cervia to the Paulician faith. Teprice is the _____ in the history of the world to have a _____ of _____. Teprice lasted 150 years

until it was overcome by the Moslems.

b. Paulicians spread to the southern provinces of France. In the year 970, the emperor, John Tzimiskos, transferred some of the Paulicians to Thrace and granted them religious liberty. In the beginning of the eighth century their doctrines were introduced and spread throughout Europe, and their principles soon struck deep into foreign soil. It was in the country of the Albigenses, in the southern province of France, that the Paulicians were most deeply implanted.

4. Christian's explanation of their faith, p. 55: "Turning to the doctrines and practices of the Paulicians, we find that they made constant use of the Old and New Testament; they had _____ in the clergy as distinguished from laymen by their modes of living, their dress or other things; they had _____ or similar institutions; their teachers were of _____; they strove diligently for the simplicity of the apostolic life; they _____ which was practiced in the Roman church; the miraculous relics were a heap of bones and ashes, destitute of life and of virtue; they held to the orthodox view of _____ and to the human nature and _____ of the Son of God."

"They held that man must repent, believe and then at a mature age ask for baptism, which alone admitted them into the church. 'It is evident,' observes Mosheim, "they rejected the baptism of infants." They baptized and rebaptized by immersion. They would have been taken for downright Anabaptists."

~ Allix, *The Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont*, Oxford, 1821~ ~

B. The Bogomils were a branch of Paulicians who dwelled in Thrace. Their name appears to have been derived from one of their leaders in the midst of the tenth century, though others declare that their name comes from a Slavic word, which is defined "_____." The Bogomils were repeatedly

_____ and often _____, but they _____ through the Middle Ages and still existed in the 16th Century. (Christian, p. 58)

1. Vedder says: “We get our chief information about Bogomil doctrine from the writings of one Euthymius, a Byzantine monk who died in 1118, who wrote a learned refutation of those and other heresies of his time. His account is generally accepted by historians as substantially correct, a most uncritical conclusion.”
2. “The most prominent man among the Bogomils, toward the close of the 11th Century, was a venerable physician named _____. He is sometimes described as their bishop; he was really one of the _____, and his preeminence was due to his _____, not to his official rank. The emperor, Alexander Commenius I, persecuted the Bogomils and trapped Basil, burning him at the stake for heresy.” (Vedder)
3. Dr. L.P. Brocket’s history, *Bogomils of Bulgaria and Bosnia*, pp. 11-12, has this to say: “Among these historians of the Bulgarians, I have found often in unexpected quarters the _____ that these sects were all during their _____ Baptists not only in their views in the subjects of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, but _____ to pedo-baptism, to a church hierarchy, and to the worship of the virgin Mary and to the saints, and in their adherence to church independency and freedom of conscience in religious worship. In short, the conclusion has forced itself upon me that in those Christians of Bosnia, Bulgaria, and Armenia, we have an _____ of Christian churches, New Testament churches, and that as early as the 12th Century these churches numbered a converted membership as large as that of the Baptist churches throughout the world today.”

IV. THE CELTIC CHRISTIANS.

A. The Celtic People.

The Celts were the original tribal inhabitants of the British Isles. Later centuries brought Romans, Danes, Germanic Angles and Saxons, and French Normans to Britain.

All of these groups formed the rich background of the modern-day English people; however, the Celts were the _____ of England. They were known for their _____. The Celts demonstrated this ferocity when they resisted the attempts of the Roman Empire to conquer them (First Century B.C.), and again when the independent Celtic Christian churches resisted the _____ of Roman Catholicism

B. Christianity comes to the British Isles.

There was frequent trade between the British Isles and the rest of Europe during the First Century of Christianity. Christian teachings soon found their way to the British Isles, and they seemed to have flourished there. The _____, which once dominated Celtic society, _____ on the British people. It still remained an important force, but by 200 A.D., it no longer controlled the British Isles. Tertullian wrote that _____ had accomplished what the _____ could not—the conquest of the Druids.

Because of their _____ from the rest of Europe, the British escaped _____ by many of the events that controlled affairs in mainland Europe. Only one of the Roman persecutions of the Christian church extended to Britain (that of Diocletian). When other regions were deeply affected by the merger of church and state under Emperor Constantine, the Celtic churches _____. There was very little _____ among the churches.

Because all British churches were independent, each developed its own _____ . While many viewpoints were represented, what we call the _____ were very common among the British churches of the Second through Sixth Centuries. Separation of church and state, baptism by immersion of professing believers, and the concept of independent church congregations seem universal among the early British churches. There does not seem to be any concept of baptismal regeneration, infant baptism, salvation by church membership, or an organized priesthood _____ their _____ by Roman Catholicism.

C. The Real Story of Saint Patrick.

One of the most famous and most touching stories of church history took place during this period. About 385 A.D., in the village of Bannavern, Scotland a boy was born. His father, Calpurnius, was a deacon in the independent church there. The boy was named _____, though he would be remembered in church history as _____. Though raised in a _____, as a teenager he became _____ toward _____. At age 16, he was kidnapped by Irish pirates and sold as a slave to a pagan Irish chief. Patrick became the keeper of the swine for this chief. While alone, keeping the swine, he _____ of his parents and he put his _____ in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. At age 22, he escaped from his master who had been mistreating him. Following his escape, he returned to his family.

After studying and training to _____, Patrick became burdened for the _____ with whom he had lived _____. His family and friends tried to dissuade him, but he determined to go back there _____. He gathered the _____ in fields near their village and _____ to them. Thousands were converted to Christ. He baptized all those converts _____, and then formed _____ for them. The son of a tribal chieftain, Benignus, was

converted and Patrick trained him as a preacher. Benignus also baptized thousands of converts! Many more _____ were formed through their ministries (over 300).

Patrick wrote and taught _____ and he is sometimes given credit for being the _____ ever to speak unequivocally against slavery.

Several of Patrick's writings and songs are available today. One of his songs includes this stanza about his dependence on Christ.

Christ to shield me today
Against poison, against burning,
Against drowning, against wounding,
So that there may come to me abundance of reward.
Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise.

Another stanza shows his personal focus on the Lord.

I arise today
Through God's strength to pilot me:
God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak to me,
God's hand to guard me,
God's way to lie before me,
God's shield to protect me,
God's host to save me,
From snares of devils,
From temptations of vices,
From everyone who shall wish me ill,
Afar and anear,
Alone and in multitude.

Patrick's preaching ministry lasted for _____ years. So many people were

converted that _____ of _____ and _____
_____ were no longer carried out in the open. Thomas Cahill described
the change this way, "Something new, something never seen before—a Christian
culture, where slavery and human sacrifice became unthinkable, and warfare,
though impossible for humans to eradicate, diminished markedly" (*How the Irish
Saved Civilization*, p. 148). Cahill also wrote "Ireland is unique in religious
history for being the only land into which Christianity was introduced _____
_____" (p. 151).

Patrick appears to have believed most of the Baptist Distinctives; however, there
is some question as to whether or not he _____ as the
_____. He _____ held to all of the others.
The later attempt by Roman Catholicism to claim "St. Patrick" as one of their
representatives was strictly political and has absolutely _____ in historical
fact.

D. Columba.

In the Sixth Century, in one of the independent Irish churches formed by Patrick,
a young man named _____ decided to go as a _____
_____. He was the grandson of a local Irish king. A church was built on a
small island known as _____, and from there missionaries traveled throughout
Scotland. Many young men came to Iona to study. They were taught every one
of _____, and they spread these ideas throughout
Scotland. Iona became a college for _____. Eventually,
missionaries traveled from Iona _____. Unfortunately, their
attempts to take the gospel to the Saxon invaders of England constantly met with
failure.

Winston Churchill described this period of time this way (*The Birth of Britain*,
pp. 72-73):

"It was therefore in Ireland and not in Wales or England that the light of

Christianity now burned and gleamed through the darkness.

And it was from _____ that the _____ to the North of Britain and for the first time cast _____ upon the Pictish invaders. Columba, born half a century after St. Patrick's death, but an offspring of his Church, and imbued with his grace and fire, proved a new champion of the faith. From the monastery, which he established in the island of Iona, his disciples went forth to the British kingdom of Strathclyde, to the Pictish tribes of the North, and to the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria. He is the founder of the _____.

Thus the message which St. Patrick had carried to Ireland came back across the stormy waters and spread through wide regions.”

E. Roman Catholic military conquest.

Finally, the Roman Pope, known as _____, determined to bring the British Christians under the _____. A constant struggle then broke out between Roman Catholicism, (backed by the Germanic tribes) and the Celts, for control of their previously independent churches. The Angles and Saxons were Germanic tribes that had invaded Britain. Three church councils were held, and at all three councils the independent churches _____ the control of Rome. But the _____ accomplished what _____ could not.

The Saxons began to conquer areas they previously had not controlled, and they continually executed _____ and burned or seized _____. During this time, a Saxon king, _____, and his brother, _____, were converted, baptized by immersion, and convinced of the need for a separation of church and state. They, with a few other Saxons, now identified themselves with _____.

Oswald desired to return as a missionary to the Saxons, but he was compelled to become the military leader of the Celts. He conquered the area of Northumbria and _____ the independent churches there. He called for _____. One missionary, Aidan, was especially successful in reaching the Saxons of the area for Christ. After ruling for nine years, Oswald was slain fighting against another of the Germanic tribes, which had been sent by the Roman Catholics to fight against him. He was succeeded by his brother, Oswiu, in the north and another relative, Oswine, in the south. Oswiu determined to rule the entire area and had Oswine assassinated. To solidify his rule and his relations with the other Germanic tribes, Oswiu _____ and _____ of the independent churches for which he had once fought. Throughout England, Roman Catholicism _____.

The Roman Catholic Church then set out to take control of _____ and, thus, of _____. They even succeeded in winning over the pastor of the church at Iona, but he was quickly removed by his people. Finally, a Roman Catholic priest named Egbert persuaded the Iona church to unite with Rome. While many independent churches and believers _____, the independent Celtic Christian churches _____ became the _____ religious movement of England.

V. BAPTIST HEROES OF THE DARK AGES.

A. Albigenses.

The little city of Albi in southern France became the center of tremendous _____. It was in Albi that a number of independent churches _____ the Roman Catholic establishment. Soon, independent churches throughout France carried the name of the little town of Albi as they became known as _____. It was common among these independent churches to baptize believers only, to advocate separation of church and state, the

priesthood of believers, and soul liberty. Some of the churches and preachers went even further and taught the sole authority of Scripture. Many of the independent churches called *Albigenses* were _____.

Most of the churches claimed to be derived directly _____, either through the Paulicians or through an earlier French group called the _____. Many of the famous Cathari were heretics. The Cathari got their name, which meant _____ by insisting upon a regenerated membership in their independent churches.

Most of the _____ seem to be Baptist, but their movement was relatively quickly taken over _____.

The Waldenses had missionaries in southern France, but they soon joined with the Albigenses. The Albigenses, Paulicians, and Waldenses often were in fellowship with one another and respected each other's baptism and ordination.

The Albigenses developed their own hospitals, schools, and seminaries while Roman Catholicism declined throughout the entire region. The independent groups were condemned by various church councils, and representatives of the established church were sent to persuade them to abandon their independent churches. Finally, Pope Innocent III ordered them _____. His order was carried out by the destruction of _____ where the Albigenses had strong churches. The Albigenses were the objects of such hatred that the Catholic establishment was willing to kill thousands _____ to be sure that all of the Albigenses were slain. This bloody persecution continued for 20 years. Albigenses who survived hid in the forests or mountains or fled to refuge with the _____.

When a Catholic general was informed that many local Catholics were being

killed during the Albigensian persecution he replied, “Kill them all, let the Lord sort them out!”

B. Peter of Bruys.

Around the year 1100 A.D., Peter of Bruys became a prominent independent preacher in France. He _____ all of what we call the Baptist Distinctives and _____ for his stand. He was banished from several areas, but he preached for 20 years in Toulouse. In 1126, he was seized by Catholic authorities and _____. Those influenced by his teachings formed independent churches and were called _____. They became so popular that special councils of the Roman Catholic leadership were called to decide how to deal with them.

C. Henry of Lausanne.

One of the Peter’s followers was Henry of Lausanne who preached all over France and Switzerland. Entire Roman Catholic congregations _____ and became _____. Those churches were known as _____. Henry taught the truths that we currently call the Baptist Distinctives. He was arrested after being declared _____ by Catholic leadership and died in _____ around 1148 A.D. The Swiss Anabaptists, 400 years later, claimed that their churches sprang from the Henricians and Petrobrusians who fled to the Alps.

Georgeus Casseander, a Catholic writer wrote of Peter and Henry:

“They first openly condemned infant baptism and stiffly asserted that baptism was fit only for the adult, which they both verbally taught and really practiced in their administration of baptism.”

~~ Casseander, *De Baptismo Infantum*, Cologne, 1545 ~~

D. Arnold of Bresica.

Arnold of Bresica was a _____ for separation of church and

state, and his work caused him _____ from one country after another. He finally moved to Rome where his strong teaching led the people of Rome to _____ and drive him from the city. For a time, the people of Rome _____, and many independent churches _____. Arnold identified himself with the _____, and soon many of the independent churches were called _____. He gained many followers in the Italian region of Lombardy. For hundreds of years advocates of separation of church and state in Italy were to be called _____.

Unfortunately, military forces loyal to the Pope retook Rome, and Arnold was captured and hanged. His body was burned, and his ashes were thrown into the Tiber River. Many of his followers were also killed.

The Arnoldists later identified themselves with the Waldenses as did most of the Petrobrusians, Henricians, and surviving Albigenses.

E. Berengarius.

Berengarius was the director of the Catholic schools in Tours. His study _____ led him to teach baptism by immersion of believers only and that the Lord's Supper was only an ordinance. He was _____, and he spent the rest of his life _____. He had many followers who often _____. One Catholic writer estimated that the combined membership of those independent churches was over 800,000. Little is known of what happened to that movement.