

STUDY PAK 10

BAPTISTS AND THE AMERICAN FRONTIER

“Pungent words and homely illustrations made vividly clear some of the profoundest religious ideas ... Strong gestures and a fervent plea told the people that the preacher was intently involved in his message!” ~ ~ Commentary on the Preaching of Shubal Stearns ~ ~

I. PILGRIMS, PURITANS AND BAPTISTS.

The famous Pilgrims espoused many Baptist ideas even though they were not Baptists. They taught the sole authority of Scripture, the priesthood of believers, separation of church and state, soul liberty, independent churches, and the concept of a regenerated church membership. They came to the New World for the _____ of being _____ as they chose, and they endured the hardships of the wilderness for an opportunity to _____.

The area in which the Pilgrims were not Baptists was their understanding of the _____. Most of them accepted the ideas of _____ and _____. From the Pilgrims, however, came a number of people whose study of the Scriptures led them to become Baptists. _____, one of the _____ on the *Mayflower*, became a Baptist preacher. This was after the establishment of a Baptist colony in Rhode Island. Cooke moved to the Dartmouth area, and started a Baptist church. The Pilgrims upheld his religious liberty, and several of them joined his church.

As the _____ settled all around the Pilgrims, they brought their ideas of a _____ with them, and they soon began to harass the Baptists and other non-conformists. The independent English preacher, _____, fled the persecution of William Laud and came to the village of _____, where he became pastor of the church there. Two of his teachings angered the Puritans. First, he taught the complete separation of church and state, and, secondly, he urged the _____. He was soon _____ from New England.

Williams gained permission from Charles II to establish a colony where religious freedom would be _____ to everyone. This became the _____. This was really an experiment on the part of Charles II.

A settlement was begun at Providence upon land purchased from the Indians. A number of Baptists fled there for personal safety, and Williams became convinced that their teaching on baptism was correct. He was baptized by one of them, and soon he baptized ten others; however, within three months he _____ his identification as a Baptist and became an _____ again. He often said that Baptists were the _____ to New Testament churches, but that _____ New Testament church continued to exist.

Williams continued to promote the Rhode Island Colony and negotiate with both the English government and the Indians. He had more success with the Indians than any other colonial leader. He _____ separation of church and state in many important publications. The Puritans wished to _____ the Rhode Island Colony, but they could not because of the _____ secured by Williams.

The first real continuing Baptist church in America was founded by _____. He is often remembered as the father of _____. He was both a leader in the Rhode Island Colony and a church builder and planter. Once, he and two other members of his church were visiting an aged church member who lived under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The men were arrested and ordered to pay fines, but one of his members, _____, refused to pay the fine and was publicly whipped. This caused _____, first President of _____ (the first American college), to study the Baptist positions. Dunster wanted to know why Holmes was _____ persecution for the cause of believers' baptism. His study convinced him of the truth of believers' baptism. When he expressed this, he was _____ from Harvard.

Obadiah Holmes later _____ John Clarke as pastor of the Baptist church in Newport, Rhode Island.

The influence of Williams and Clarke created a colony where all men could _____ as they pleased, and there were many Baptist churches in the colony. Many _____ were represented in the colony. One historian wrote, "Notwithstanding so many differences, here are fewer quarrels about religion than elsewhere, the people living peaceably with their neighbors of whatever profession."

Despite the persecutions awaiting them, the Baptists continued to increase in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Welsh Baptists moved to the New World and began Welsh-speaking Baptist churches in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

A Baptist church was begun in Boston in the home of the pastor, _____, and persecution soon came. Various people were imprisoned for _____ with the Baptists, including the mother of David Yale, founder of Yale University.

The Puritans were _____ in their persecution of Baptists, Quakers, and other non-conformists. This was the time of the famous _____. Various individuals in Salem were accused and punished as witches without there being any real evidence against them. Baptists opposed the witchcraft trials. _____, the pastor of the Baptist church in Boston, wrote a book _____ the foolishness of the trials, and the Puritans accused the Baptists of being _____.

One important Puritan leader repented of persecuting the Baptists and openly spoke out for religious freedom. _____, once a vicious persecutor, preached the ordination sermon for a Baptist in 1717. Unfortunately, very few Puritans agreed with him.

II. BAPTISTS IN THE OTHER COLONIES.

William Penn, whose father was a Baptist, founded the colony of Pennsylvania. Penn, a Quaker, was a supporter of _____, and soon men of all religious persuasions flocked to the new colony. Baptists from England, Wales, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island soon moved to Pennsylvania and began churches there. A group of _____ became convinced of believers' baptism and became known as _____.

A group of Germans who had become convinced of believers' baptism settled in New York and Pennsylvania. They were known as _____ or _____.

Many Baptists also settled in the colony of New Jersey. They included Baptists from England, Holland, and Germany. Obadiah Holmes moved to New Jersey and pastored a Baptist church there. _____ helped organize the first Baptist church in _____, but persecution forced him and the other Maine Baptists to _____. The early rulers of South Carolina determined to establish the Church of England by force but constantly _____ from the early settlers. Later governors were sympathetic to religious freedom (one was rumored to be secretly a Baptist), and they hesitated to enforce the concept of an established church.

There were few Baptists in the _____ before the _____; however, some General Baptists had moved into Virginia. Baptist congregations were rare. Later, Baptists from Maryland and Wales moved into Virginia in great numbers.

Baptist churches in Philadelphia organized the _____ that provided them a basis for cooperation in several projects. This idea of a _____ became very popular and was a common vehicle for Baptist churches to use in carrying out _____. Most colonial governments treated Baptists with _____ or _____. Only in Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, and Delaware (and temporarily in New York, New Jersey, and Maryland) did they find the religious freedom and separation of church and state that

was so important to them. In some colonies, the persecution became as great as it had been in England. Several New England Baptists formed the _____, headquartered in Warren, Rhode Island, to campaign for religious freedom in the colonies. The Warren Association appointed _____ as its spokesman, and he traveled throughout the colonies campaigning for religious freedom and _____ for churches in trouble. He led the battle against _____ for the support of established churches, _____ of preachers, and _____ upon publishing religious literature. While carrying out this work, Backus continued as the pastor of the same Baptist church for 60 years.

Baptists in Virginia found themselves in considerable _____ with the Church of England that was established by the _____. Baptists were ordered to pay taxes to the _____, but most refused. They were ordered to _____ from the state or _____, but most refused. Rewards were offered to anyone turning in a Baptist. Children (infants) were taken from Baptist parents and _____.

The Great Awakening led to a _____ in the number of Baptists in Virginia: General, Regular, and Particular Baptists. Eventually the Regular and Particular Baptists merged, and a new group that was greatly influenced by the Great Awakening became popular. They were led by _____, were _____ in outlook, and were quick to oppose the idea of _____ for preachers. This _____ movement grew greatly in Virginia.

A marker at the original Separate Baptist Church at Sandy Creek, North Carolina, reads:

“On this site, in November and December 1755, Reverend Shubal Stearns, his wife and those who came with him, seven other families, 16 souls in all, built their first meeting house where they administered the Lord’s Supper. It

is a mother church, nay a grandmother and a great-grandmother. All the separate Baptists sprang hence not only eastward toward the sea, but westward toward the great River Mississippi but northward to Virginia and southward to South Carolina and Georgia.

The word went far from this Sion and great was the company of them who published it, in so much that her converts were as drops of morning dew.”

George Whitefield observed that many of the converts of the Great Awakening were becoming Baptists. He is reported to have said, “My chickens have turned to ducks.”

In 1768, three Baptists were arrested for _____ in Virginia, and they continued to preach _____ of the Culpepper County jail. This attracted great crowds, and the authorities finally freed their prisoners rather than allow this to continue. This led to a tremendous upsurge in persecution. Baptists were constantly being fined for _____ the state church. Non-Baptists such as _____, _____, and _____ came to their defense. The love of liberty that was about to be expressed in the War for Independence was outraged by this example of tyranny from the colonial government. Patrick Henry defended Baptists in court who were accused of preaching without _____, and he did it without _____ to the preachers. His eloquence and his political influence usually led to _____. Jefferson and Madison campaigned for religious liberty in the state legislature; however, Baptists did not have freedom until _____ the War for Independence had been _____.

Baptists played _____ in the settlement of Kentucky. The famous explorer and settler, _____, was a Baptist. In fact, the entire settlement at Boonesborough appears to have been Baptist. _____, Daniel’s brother, was an ordained Baptist preacher who founded the _____ in Kentucky. He later founded the first Baptist church in Indiana, near Squire Boone Caverns. Baptists were very widespread in Kentucky.

III. BAPTISTS AND THE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE.

On May 4, 1776 (two months before the Declaration of Independence), the colony of Rhode Island officially withdrew from Great Britain and repudiated any allegiance to King George III. The large number of Baptists in this colony—which had been _____—led the way in demanding freedom. Their doctrine of _____ logically led to the idea of _____ from the _____ of government. Rhode Island had always been the most free of all the colonies. Rhode Island had no laws restricting religion, no taxation without representation, and no governor appointed by the king.

Rhode Island was quickly taken by British armies, but a strong local resistance tied down large numbers of British troops until the British government decided that occupying the colony was not worth the trouble.

Baptists were among the first groups to recognize the Continental Congress as the _____ for this new nation. Several associations of Baptist churches wrote letters of recognition to Congress that usually included _____ to the Congress to remember that many of the former colonies did not yet have _____. Baptists so _____ the War for Independence that there is only record of one Baptist pastor siding with the British government. Even the Baptists of England supported the American patriots. Dr. Rippon, a well-known Baptist pastor in London, wrote the following to President Manning of Rhode Island College:

“I believe all of our Baptist ministers in town, except two, and most of our brethren in the country were on the side of the Americans in the late dispute ... We wept when the thirsty plains drank the blood of our departed heroes, and the shout of a king was among us when your well fought battles were crowned with victory; and to this hour we believe that the independence of

America will, for a while, secure the liberty of this country, but if that continent had been reduced, Britain would not have long been free.”

The Baptist respect for religious and personal freedom _____ to the English Baptists than the _____ the American colonies for financial gain.

_____, pastor of a Baptist church in Charleston, South Carolina, became a well-known spokesman _____ the British. He was chased out of Charleston by British agents, and he fled to the American military camp. The famous British general of that region, Lord Cornwallis, is quoted as having said that he “_____ of that godly youth (Furman) more than the _____ of Sumter and Marion.” In fact, Cornwallis offered a large financial bounty to anyone who would kill or capture Furman. Remembering this incident years later, President James Monroe would invite Furman to preach to the Congress and government leaders.

Many Baptist preachers served as _____ in the patriot army, the most famous being _____. Gano had previously been one of two evangelists commissioned by the Philadelphia Association. The other evangelist was _____, the only Baptist leader recorded as _____ the War for Independence.

Gano became a firm friend of George Washington, and it is said that their discussions convinced Washington of _____. There is a _____ that Gano baptized Washington by immersion in front of 42 witnesses.

Many Baptist church buildings were devastated by the war such as Gano’s church in New York that was used as a stable by the British cavalry. Many Baptist church buildings were looted and destroyed.

_____ of Hopewell, New Jersey, was a Baptist and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. He was _____ to flee for his life and had most of his property and buildings destroyed. Of course, he had _____

to the cause of freedom when he signed the Declaration of Independence. He kept his word, even though it _____.

George Washington is quoted as saying that Baptists were “throughout America, uniformly and almost unanimously, the firm friends to _____ and the _____ of our Glorious Revolution.” Without any doubt, the Baptists played a great role in _____ and _____ in our nation.

IV. BAPTISTS AND THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION.

After the war was over, the most crucial time came for our nation. It was a time of national development. Most revolutions that are fought for freedom end up failing during this period, usually leading to a worse government than the one that was overthrown.

The attempt to create a _____ was a unique answer to the question of civil government. For several years the adoption of the Constitution was hotly debated. In the North, the work of Baptists in Massachusetts is credited with _____ of the Constitution in that state. Isaac Backus strenuously campaigned for the Constitution feeling that it presented the _____ for securing separation of church and state.

In Virginia, the battle over the adoption of the Constitution raged fiercely. Patrick Henry used all of his influence to _____ of the Constitution because he did not believe that there were enough _____ in the document. Baptists agreed, but they felt it was an important step in the right direction. _____ of Culpepper County—a close friend of Thomas Jefferson—was the most _____ for the Baptists. In fact, Jefferson occasionally attended his church and credited Leland for influencing his philosophy of government. Leland led the Baptists of Virginia in supporting James Madison in his fight for the Constitution. The part Baptists played was so important that they _____ with making the _____ in that pivotal state. Later, Baptists helped Madison get elected to

the House of Representatives, and from that office Madison campaigned for the Bill of Rights, especially the First Amendment.

The First Amendment was _____ by all Baptists to _____ their long-sought religious liberty. It guarantees: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Baptists now had _____ what they had desired for so long—a _____ of separation of church and state (_____).

V. **BAPTISTS AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN VIRGINIA AND MASSACHUSETTS.**

The victory was only half won, however, since _____ were still free to make any laws _____ that they chose. This was addressed by the federal government with the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment following the Civil War. That Amendment declared that the _____ limit rights _____ by the federal government.

Such states as Virginia, Massachusetts, and Connecticut still had powerful established churches and various forms of religious persecution. Opposition to the state church was powerful in all these colonies. In Virginia, an attempt to reach a compromise was made. Prominent Virginia politicians, including Patrick Henry, proposed recognizing _____ in the state—_____ (new name for the _____), _____, _____, and _____. Each citizen would be allowed to _____ to whichever one of those four churches he chose. This was vigorously supported by the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches, while the Methodists split over the issue. Baptists, however, fought vehemently _____ such a proposal.

Baptist goals did not include a _____ advantage, but religious liberty. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison led the struggle for _____ religious freedom. In 1785, they succeeded, and the Episcopal Church was no longer upheld and

supported _____. The Episcopal Church soon collapsed as its churches and clergy were no longer supported by _____. The Episcopal Church ceased to be a major influence in Virginia.

Thomas Jefferson became a hated target of those who favored a state church. In his own religious beliefs, Jefferson denied the _____, _____, and the _____. In the minds of some, these beliefs motivated his opposition to the state church, and he was vigorously accused of trying to use the government to promote _____ and _____.

In their attacks against Jefferson, the Episcopal Church ignored the fact that he was a member in good standing of one of their own congregations. The Presbyterians joined in condemning Jefferson, but he found staunch _____ among the Baptists. He spoke to Baptist associations and received letters of support from Baptist churches. John Leland openly campaigned for Jefferson's election to the Presidency. These _____ were bound by a _____ to individual liberty and the separation of church and state.

The battle for religious liberty was to be waged in Massachusetts for a long time. With Isaac Backus leading the way, Baptists fought against paying taxes to the state church and against the licensure of preachers. When the state, trying to avoid further conflict, offered to _____ any ordained Baptist preacher, Backus still refused. Backus felt that he could not accept such licensure without acknowledging a power in man that should _____. The struggle in Massachusetts continued for a long time. Not until 1833 was complete religious liberty permitted there. The refusal of Baptists (and Quakers) to abandon their _____ is credited with finally _____ the state government _____.

VI. BAPTISTS SPREAD FROM COAST TO COAST.

Baptists formed the American Baptist Home Missionary Society for the purpose of _____ on the frontier. Without a doubt, its most famous

representative was _____, a former Congregationalist who had become convinced of the Baptist distinctives. In 1817, he was appointed a _____ to the area “west of the Mississippi.” During his first 14 years he established over 30 churches, helped to build a _____ in Illinois, and raised the finances for the _____ of Isaac McCoy. Peck was not known as a great speaker, but he was considered a master organizer. He started _____ and _____ throughout the western states. After 14 years his health broke, and he was required to take a long rest. He returned to his work, continuing to leave a trail of churches and schools behind him.

The years _____ the Civil War are often referred to as the “_____.” The rest of the Nineteenth Century is referred to as the “_____.” In most areas, local associations of Baptists were formed to promote joint projects. On a state level, missionary conventions were formed, and these usually identified with either the Southern or Northern Baptist Conventions. Bible colleges, universities, seminaries, and publishing agencies became common.

By 1850, it is estimated that one out of every 11 people identified with Baptists. Only the Methodists had more influence. Baptists were _____ the outcasts of society or the objects of persecution, and Baptist schools were often attended by _____. Baptists could even run for _____. Sam Houston, first President of the Republic of Texas, and first Governor of Texas after it became a state, was an active Baptist.

The emphasis on colleges, nice campuses, and academic recognition seemed to change the character of the _____ during this era. Reverend Thomas Curtis of South Carolina said:

“The requisites for an institution of learning are three B’s: bricks, books, and brains. Our brethren usually begin at the wrong end of the three B’s; they spend all

their money for bricks, have nothing to buy books, and must take such brains as they can pick. But our brethren ought to begin at the other end of the three B's."

In an attempt to rectify this somewhat, Baptist leaders put _____ on _____ and _____. _____ became a leader in this movement, and he changed the way many thought about seminaries. He encouraged the admission of non-college graduates, practical experience for students, and demanded a commitment from all teachers to be loyal to the Baptist distinctives. He was one of the _____ of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. During Boyce's lifetime, this seminary seemed to inspire a _____ among many Baptists.

One influential professor at Southern was _____, who had been a very successful pastor who now devoted himself to _____ young men to _____. He encouraged the production of _____, and the first Southern Baptist publishing house was named Broadman Press after him and another professor at Southern, Basil Manly, Jr. These men were devoted Baptists who helped train many Baptist preachers.

The beginning of the Twentieth Century saw Baptists active in every region of the country. They had enjoyed freedom for almost a century and were as socially respectable as any other Christian group. They now comprised about one-sixteenth of the American population. The American population had boomed because of millions of immigrants from Europe, and many of these people were of Roman Catholic or Lutheran background. Roman Catholicism was now the largest religious group in the nation, and Baptists comprised the _____.

VII. FAMOUS FRONTIER BAPTISTS.

Jesse and Frank James, Daniel and Squire Boone, and Sam Houston all were members of Baptist churches.

The James did not consider themselves outlaws. They claimed to be carrying on the Civil War because they only robbed trains and banks belonging to northerners. They became _____ in their church, and they were _____ of the membership by a narrow vote.

Abraham Lincoln's parents were strong Baptists. The church that they were members of split over the means versus anti-means debate. As a result of this discouragement, he never formally joined a church, though he attended many and spoke highly of the _____ and _____.

After he was elected to the presidency, but before he went to Washington, Lincoln was _____ by a German Baptist preacher. See *Lincoln's Unknown Private Life*, (edited by Lloyd Ostendorf and Walter Oleksy), chapter 21. His wife was a staunch Presbyterian and he kept his baptism _____.