

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."



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~ All articles are written by George L. Faull, Rel. D. unless otherwise stated ~

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George L. Faull, Editor

A Different Look at the Inquisition

--George L. Faull, Rel. D.



Ulrich Zwingli

In Zurich Switzerland, on January 18th, 1525 an order was given by the Zurich Council that all infants must be baptized within 8 days of birth. Those not compliant to this ruling would be banished from Zurich. On January 21st, all opponents of this decree were not allowed to meet or speak in public.

This led to martyrdom and many of those who were martyred were Anabaptist. An Anabaptist is not speaking of those called Baptists today. They were a people who were nicknamed "Anabaptist". This comes from the Greek which means "over again" and "baptism". So an Anabaptist is "One who baptizes again!" They did not consider infant baptism or sprinkling a recognized baptism, so they did not consider believer-baptism a re-baptism so they rejected the nickname.

In March of 1525, this order was given: "You know without doubt, and have heard from many that for a long time, some peculiar men, who imagine that they are learned, have come forward astonishingly, and without any evidence of the Holy Scriptures, given as a pretext by simple and pious men, have preached, and without the permission and consent of the church, have proclaimed that infant baptism did not proceed from God, but from the devil, and, therefore, ought not to be practiced... We, therefore, ordain and require that hereafter all men, women, boys and girls forsake rebaptism, and shall not make use of it hereafter, and shall let infants be baptized; whoever shall act contrary to this public edict shall be fined for every offense, one mark; and **IF ANY BE DISOBEDIENT AND STUBBORN THEY SHALL BE TREATED WITH SEVERITY**; for, the obedient we will protect; the disobedient we will punish according to his deserts, without fail; by this all are to conduct themselves. All this we confirm by this public document, stamped with

the seal of our city, and given on St. Andrew's Day, A. D., 1525."

RESULTS: Felix Manz, Henry Reiman, Jacob Falk were drowned. December 1527 they were told, "He who immersed shall be immersed". A townsman said, "They like immersion, so let us immerse them".

Balthasar Hobmaier said, "The command is to baptize those who believe, to baptize those who do not believe, therefore is forbidden. He was imprisoned and later when he was supposed to recant instead he shouted, "Infant baptism is not of God and men must be baptized by faith in Christ. I have never taught Anabaptism...but the right baptism of Christ, which is preceded by teaching and oral confession of faith, I teach, and say that infant baptism is a robbery of the right baptism of Christ." On March 10th, 1528 in Vienna, he was burned at the stake and 8 days later, his wife was drowned.

Not only in Zurich and Vienna was this persecution against those who were for immersion and against infant baptism practiced but at St. Gall, Switzerland they issued this decree – September 9th, 1527: "In order that the dangerous, wicked, turbulent and seditious sect of the Baptists may be eradicated, we have thus decreed: If anyone is suspected of rebaptism, he is to be warned by the magistracy to leave the territory under penalty of the designated punishment [to be drowned]. Every person is obliged to report those favorable to rebaptism. Whoever shall not comply with this ordinance is liable to punishment according to the sentence of the magistracy. Teachers of rebaptism, baptizing preachers, and leaders of hedge meetings **ARE TO BE DROWNED**. Those previously released from prison who have sworn to desist from such things, shall incur the same penalty. Foreign Baptists are to be driven out; if they return they **SHALL BE DROWNED**. No one is allowed to secede from the [Zwinglian] church and to absent himself from the Holy Supper."

The decree on March 26th, 1530, was even more severe: "All who adhere to or favor the false sect of the Baptists, and who attend hedge-meetings, shall suffer the most severe punishments. **BAPTIST LEADERS, THEIR FOLLOWERS, AND PROTECTORS SHALL BE DROWNED WITHOUT MERCY**. Those, however, who

assist them, or fail to report or to arrest them shall be punished otherwise on body and goods as injurious and faithless subjects."

Likewise, the Geneva's Switzerland council in 1632, hung and burned men for denying the Trinity. The same persecution was in Dasil and Berne.



Martin Luther

In Germany, Luther taught immersion even translating "baptize" as "dip". He wrote these words in 1518: "The signification of baptism demands, for it signifies that the old man and sinful birth from the flesh and blood shall be completely drowned through the grace of God.

Therefore, a man should sufficiently perform the signification and a right perfect sign. The sign rests, in this, that a man plunge a person in water in the name of the Father, etc., but does not leave him therein but lifts him out again; therefore it is called being lifted out of the font or depths. And so must all of both of these things be the sign; the dipping and the lifting out. Thirdly, the signification is a saving death of the sins and of the resurrection of the grace of God. The baptism is a bath of the new birth. Also a drowning of the sins in the baptism" (Luther, Opera Lutheri, I. 319. Folio edition).

He also wrote: "The term baptism is a Greek word; it may be rendered into Latin by "mersio": when we immerse anything in water, that it may be entirely covered with water. And though that custom be quite abolished among the generality, (for neither do they entirely dip children, but only sprinkle them with a little water,) nevertheless they ought to be wholly immersed, and immediately to be drawn out again, for the etymology of the word seems to require it. The Germans call baptism "tauf", from depth, which they call "tief" in their language; as if it were proper those should be deeply immersed, who are baptized. And truly, if you consider what baptism signifies that the old man and our native character that is full of sin, entirely of flesh and blood as it is, may be overwhelmed by divine grace. The manner of baptism, therefore ought to answer to the signification of baptism, so that it may show forth a sign that is certain and full." – Opera

"When the washing away of sin is attributed to baptism, it is rightly so attributed; but the meaning of the phrase is too slight and weak to fully express baptism, which is rather a symbol of death and resurrection. For this reason I could wish that the baptized should be totally immersed, according to the meaning of the word and signification of the mystery; not that I think it necessary to do so, but that it would be well that so complete and perfect thing as baptism should have its sign also in completeness and perfection, even as it was doubtless instituted by Christ." – Primary Works, p. 192.

Later, Luther began to oppose immersion and those who opposed infant baptism. Though he was opposed to executing them he wished them all to be banished for disagreeing with his doctrines. Again, he changed his mind and encouraged the destruction of peasants who revolted from the lords seeking their freedom.

He wrote: "The peasants would not listen; they would not let anyone tell them anything; their ears must be unbuttoned with bullets, till their heads jump off their shoulders. ... On the obstinate, hardened, blinded peasants, let no one have mercy, but let everyone, as he is able, hew, stab, slay, lay about him as though among mad dogs, . . . so that peace and safety may be maintained..." [Martin Luther, Werke, Erlangen edition, vol. 24, p. 294; vol.15, p. 276]

(Over 100,000 peasants died. Do I accuse falsely? - GLF)

He wrote: "It was I, Martin Luther, who slew all the peasants in the insurrection, for I commanded them to be slaughtered. All their blood is upon my shoulders. But I cast it on our Lord God who commanded me to speak in this way." [Martin Luther, Werke, Erlangen edition, vol. 59, p. 284]

So Luther sought the death of those opposing infant baptism and favored believers' immersion. In 1529, the Diet of Speirs all Anabaptists were condemned to death. Mr. Halley points out 400 special police were hired to hunt down those believers and execute them on the spot. Thousands were burned across Europe for their faith. So the Lutherans killed many of the immersed believers.

Urbanus Rhegius was a Lutheran who wrote a book in 1528 showing a river running into the ocean of water that was on fire. This was the view of Switzerland and Germany that immersion led to hell.

Banishment, death, burnings, hangings, torturing, branding, and imprisonment was their fate.



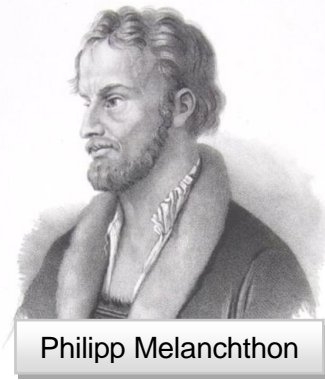
John Calvin

Likewise, Calvin was a persecutor and a murderer. "So entirely was he in favour of persecuting measures, that he wrote a treatise in defence of them, maintaining the lawfulness of putting heretics to death; and he reduced these rigid theories to practice, in his conduct towards Castellio, Jerom Bolesee, and Servetus, whose

fates are too generally known to require being here repeated. At the council of Geneva, 1632, Nicholas Anthoine was condemned to be first hanged and then burned for opposing the doctrine of the Trinity..." (J.J. Stockdale, The History of the Inquisitions, 1810, p. xxviii).

In the days of King Edward VI of England, Calvin wrote a letter to Lord Protector Somerset and urged him to put Anabaptists to death: *"These altogether deserve to be well punished by the sword, seeing that they do conspire against God, who had set him in his royal seat"* (John Christian, A History of the Baptists, Vol. 1, chap. 15).

Historian John Christian observes that Calvin "was responsible in a large measure for the demon of hate and fierce hostility which the Baptists of England had to encounter."



Philipp Melancthon

In October 1563, Calvin had Servetus killed, burned at the stake for disagreeing on the Trinity. It was approved by both Melancthon of Germany and Bullinger of Geneva and other leading reformers. Some of the worst persecutions were done by the Calvinists against the Arminians.

Some were beheaded, imprisoned, or banished. Likewise, the Church of England under King Henry VIII, as well as King Edward VI and King James, persecuted immersionists. They organized burnings. These included both men and women. Many of their names are recorded in history but all in God's book of martyrs. Hangings were common as well persecutions and imprisonments which continued over several centuries.

Why do I print this? It shows that it is not only the Muslims and Catholics that kill their opponents. The reformers also persecuted those who insisted on immersion and other Bible truths. The very founders of Protestantism were also butchers filled with murderous practices on those who disagreed with their doctrines.

The Legacy of Zwingli today - He was the one responsible for calling baptism a work and establish the "faith only" doctrine we contend with to this day.

As for John Calvin, the founder of Calvinism, predestination is still taught in many mainline churches and was the cause of the death of many believers in Christ. Yet he did not predestinate the murders.

Martin Luther by his own mouth caused the deaths of many in Germany and Prussia. His hatred and persecution of Jews is also renowned. The Church of England likewise took their toll on religious freedom.

Ironically, these men had been greatly persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church. However, where they established themselves elsewhere in Switzerland, Germany, England, etc., they motivated other countries to prosecute and persecute. The persecuted became the

persecutors. **Romans 11:16** says, "If the root is holy, so are the branches." Is not the opposite true? "If the root is unholy, can the branches be holy?"

Isn't it strange and ironic that the adherents to these men's heritage now are saying that the mode, purpose, and candidates for baptism is simply immaterial? The rotting corpses of hundreds of thousands whom their ancestors tortured and slew over these questions gave their lives for believers' immersion. Christ never intended His Kingdom to be spread by force. Those who do so prove they are none of His. It was at the price of the martyrs' blood that we have the freedom today to preach believers baptism. Truly many of our own brethren lack the courage in this free society to preach the necessity of believer's baptism.

Today, if we teach what the restoration fathers taught in rejecting the reformer's teachings, both would be counted worthy of martyrdom by the founding reformers. The tolerance many brothers show toward the doctrine of the founding reformers to me is astounding. To teach the faith-only doctrine of Zwingli, the doctrine of election of Calvin, and the non-necessity of immersion of Luther as practiced now by many in the Church of Christ, denies not only the teaching of Jesus Christ but is a rejection of our heritage. It cheapens and tramples the blood of Christ and the blood of the martyrs. It makes the martyrs radical legalists who simply died on the wrong hill.

(This article was collected from many sources. We especially are thankful for the writings of David Cloud.)

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SUMMIT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
2766 Airport Road - Peru, IN 46970
(765) 472-4111
summit1@myvine.com
www.summit1.org