

BRIEF HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS

ROMAN CATHOLICS: Founded by Pope Leo I in Rome - gradual apostasy until 251 when when Baptists declared non-fellowship. Power gradually developed in the Bishop of Rome - Leo made first claim of the Bishop of Rome being head of all the Church (in the universal sense). Boniface III nearly 200 years later was so recognized 440 - 606.

LUTHERNS: Founded by Martin Luther, who was encouraged by Jerome to search for truth. He was at the time a Catholic Monk and did not of his own desire wish to separate from the Catholic religion; however he was outlawed by Church and because of papal influence was outlawed by state. He, like others, tried to reform the Roman religion without success. He married a former Nun and gave the structure to his following to that which became known as the Lutheran Church. This movement was put in motion in 1520.

EPISCOPAL: Founded by King Henry VIII. It was the result of a dispute that developed between the King of England and the Pope of Rome. The latter was collecting his tax in England at the time. King Henry VIII wished to divorce and put away his wife and marry another. This was not acceptable to the Pope; therefore the king removed all papal interference in the country of England, divorced his wife, married another, and brought the religious life under his control. It was then known as the High Church of England or Anglican. When it came to America and further developed it took on the identity of its government - Episcopal. It was founded in 1534.

PRESBYTERIAN: Founded by John Calvin, who stood as another outstanding reformer. The moral and spiritual level of the masses

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was very low during these days due to the sale of indulgences. One could buy a life indulgence (forgiveness of all sin), then live a riotous, nicolaitine life - the natural result of the unregenerate - as "the hog to his wallow and the dog to his vomit." John Calvin led a movement of reform in Switzerland and his following became known as Calvinists and again set on the type of government - Presbyterian in 1536.

**METHODISTS:** Founded by John and Charles Wesley as they were schooling at Oxford University and saw the need for reform and established what they felt was a fraternal method of reformation. Those who followed the teaching and methods of reform of these men became known as Methodists. They were organized into a definite movement (denomination) in 1740.

#### FURTHER TESTIMONIES TO THE BAPTISTS

John T. Christian: "I have no questions in my mind that there has been a historical succession of Baptists from the days of Christ to the present time."

George W. McDaniel: "Baptists are justly proud of their parentage - the New Testament. They have an ancient and scriptural origin. . . There is no personality this side of Jesus Christ who is a satisfactory explanation of their origin."

Alexander Campbell (Church of Christ): "The Baptists can trace their origin to Apostolic times and can produce unequivocal testimony of their existence in every century down to the present time."

John C. Ridpath (Methodist): I should not readily admit that there was a Baptist church as far back as A.D. 100, though without doubt there were Baptists then, as all Christians were then Baptists."

Ypeij and Dermount (Dutch Reformed Church): "We have now seen that the Baptists who were formerly called Anabaptist, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and who have

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long in history. . . received the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which have stood since the days of the apostles, and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrines of the Gospel through all the ages.'

Mosheim (Lutheran): "The first century was a history of the Baptists.'

Yes, you can be proud of your Baptist heritage because the ministry of the Baptists does go back to the personal ministry of Jesus, who founded His church and said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Many historical references can satisfy the sceptic if he will study with an open and unbiased mind. - John T. Christian, A History of the Baptists; George W. McDaniel, The People Called Baptist; W. A. Jarrell, Baptist Church History; G. H. Orchard, A Concise History of the Baptists; and others.

A question was posed by one gentleman to another: "If you were not a Baptist what would you be?" The other responded: "I guess I would be ashamed."

-- Canaan Baptist Church (La.)  
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