

REFORMATION 500 WEEK 12 ANABAPTISTS PART 2

The *ana*-baptizers or *re*-baptizers (they called themselves simply *Brethren*) not only rejected their Roman Catholic infant baptism, but they rejected Luther and Zwingli's attempts to reform the catholic church by the Bible, attempting instead to start from scratch and build a new church from the New Testament alone.

Both Zwingli and Luther accepted, in varying degrees, the union that existed between church and state. Zwingli defended this union on the principle that Christians are obligated to reform all of life (even the state) according to Scripture. Many reformers later rejected the union of church and state but without also rejecting infant membership in the Christian church by virtue of the covenant of grace.

To the Anabaptists, separation from *worldliness* meant separation from the *world*; and the state belongs to the world. On the basis of Matthew 5-7, the "Anabaptists thought that the only proper response to the challenge of living in but not of the world is Christianity against culture" (Nichols, *The Reformation*, 63).

Some Anabaptists were more extreme than others. Thomas Muntzer, originally an advocate of Luther, advocated radical reforms "as one of the leaders of the Peasants' revolt" (Nichols, 60). Claiming the inner light of the Spirit was more important than the written word of Scripture, he felt that true believers "should join in a theocratic community to bring about the Kingdom of God" (Gonzalez, 41). He led a meager army of peasants into battle at Frankenhausen. "His inner light informed him to kill the godless nobles," and when his army was defeated, "he was beheaded [May 27, 1525]" (Nichols, *Luther*, 143).

"It was partly as an attempt to curb extremism among their ranks that a number of Anabaptist leaders met in Schleithem, Switzerland, in 1527...and issued the *Confession of Schleiteim* [the first theological confession of the Reformation]," containing "the seven fundamental practices and principles held by most Anabaptists" (Gonzalez, 70): (1) believer's baptism only; (2) those who refuse to amend their lives after two private admonitions are banned from the community; (3) the Lord's Supper is for believers only; (4) true believers must separate themselves from all that is not united with God and Christ; (5) the qualifications for clergy leave out the need for formal training; (6) Christians must be pacifists; (7) Christians must not swear an oath, for Jesus said, "Do not swear at all" (Matt. 5:34).

Since false doctrine was an offense against both the Church and the State, heresy was a crime punishable by the government. Both Catholics and Protestants regarded the Anabaptists "as a revolutionary sect, dangerous to society," and thus they "were imprisoned, fined, drowned, burned at the stake, tortured" (Kuiper, 207).

In 1533 certain Anabaptists proclaimed that the city of Munster in Westphalia, Germany, "was going to be the new Jerusalem with community of goods and without law.... Soon Munster was besieged by an army of Catholics and Lutherans... At last, on June 24, 1535, the city was taken. A terrible massacre followed. The leaders were horribly tortured" (Kuiper, 208).

Today the direct descendants of the Anabaptists (minus the revolutionary violence) are the Mennonites, the Hutterites, and the Amish.

REFORMATION 500 WEEK 12 ANABAPTISTS PART 2

The *ana*-baptizers or *re*-baptizers (they called themselves simply *Brethren*) not only rejected their Roman Catholic infant baptism, but they rejected Luther and Zwingli's attempts to reform the catholic church by the Bible, attempting instead to start from scratch and build a new church from the New Testament alone.

Both Zwingli and Luther accepted, in varying degrees, the union that existed between church and state. Zwingli defended this union on the principle that Christians are obligated to reform all of life (even the state) according to Scripture. Many reformers later rejected the union of church and state but without also rejecting infant membership in the Christian church by virtue of the covenant of grace.

To the Anabaptists, separation from *worldliness* meant separation from the *world*; and the state belongs to the world. On the basis of Matthew 5-7, the "Anabaptists thought that the only proper response to the challenge of living in but not of the world is Christianity against culture" (Nichols, *The Reformation*, 63).

Some Anabaptists were more extreme than others. Thomas Muntzer, originally an advocate of Luther, advocated radical reforms "as one of the leaders of the Peasants' revolt" (Nichols, 60). Claiming the inner light of the Spirit was more important than the written word of Scripture, he felt that true believers "should join in a theocratic community to bring about the Kingdom of God" (Gonzalez, 41). He led a meager army of peasants into battle at Frankenhausen. "His inner light informed him to kill the godless nobles," and when his army was defeated, "he was beheaded [May 27, 1525]" (Nichols, *Luther*, 143).

"It was partly as an attempt to curb extremism among their ranks that a number of Anabaptist leaders met in Schleithem, Switzerland, in 1527...and issued the *Confession of Schleiteim* [the first theological confession of the Reformation]," containing "the seven fundamental practices and principles held by most Anabaptists" (Gonzalez, 70): (1) believer's baptism only; (2) those who refuse to amend their lives after two private admonitions are banned from the community; (3) the Lord's Supper is for believers only; (4) true believers must separate themselves from all that is not united with God and Christ; (5) the qualifications for clergy leave out the need for formal training; (6) Christians must be pacifists; (7) Christians must not swear an oath, for Jesus said, "Do not swear at all" (Matt. 5:34).

Since false doctrine was an offense against both the Church and the State, heresy was a crime punishable by the government. Both Catholics and Protestants regarded the Anabaptists "as a revolutionary sect, dangerous to society," and thus they "were imprisoned, fined, drowned, burned at the stake, tortured" (Kuiper, 207).

In 1533 certain Anabaptists proclaimed that the city of Munster in Westphalia, Germany, "was going to be the new Jerusalem with community of goods and without law.... Soon Munster was besieged by an army of Catholics and Lutherans... At last, on June 24, 1535, the city was taken. A terrible massacre followed. The leaders were horribly tortured" (Kuiper, 208).

Today the direct descendants of the Anabaptists (minus the revolutionary violence) are the Mennonites, the Hutterites, and the Amish.

REFORMATION 500 WEEK 12: HEIDELBERG CATECHISM, QUESTION 31-32

Question 31: Why is He called Christ, that is, Anointed? **Because He is ordained of God the Father and anointed with the Holy Spirit to be our Chief Prophet and Teacher, who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption; and our only High Priest, who by the one sacrifice of His body, has redeemed us, and ever lives to make intercession for us with the Father; and our eternal King, who govern us by His Word and Spirit, and defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us.**

MESSIAH is the Hebrew word, and CHRIST is the Greek word, meaning ANOINTED. In the Old Testament, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed with oil to symbolize that they were ordained and gifted by God to fulfill the duties of their office. They were types (examples) of what God intends every believer to become through Christ the ultimate Prophet, Priest, and King (Num. 11:29; Rev. 1:6). Isaiah foretold that Messiah would be anointed with the Holy Spirit (11:1; 61:1). At His baptism, Jesus the Son of God was anointed by the Father with the Holy Spirit to fulfill His threefold office (Acts 10:38). As our Chief Prophet, He has fully revealed the truth to us, especially the truth about our redemption in Him (Matt. 16:16-17; John 1:18; 15:15; 17:8). As our only High Priest, “by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. 9:26), He has redeemed us by His blood (Heb. 9:11-15). And with His Father in heaven, “He always lives to make intercession for us” (Heb. 7:25), praying that our faith would not fail (Luke 22:32; John 17:9-15). As our eternal King, at God’s right hand, He governs us by His Word and Spirit, preserving us in the faith so we persevere in showing ourselves thankful for our salvation (Heb. 12:2; 1 Peter 1:5).

Question 32: But why are you called a Christian? **Because by faith I am a member of Christ and thus a partaker of His anointing, in order that I [as a prophet] also may confess His name, [as a priest] may present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to Him, and [as a king] with a free conscience may fight against sin and the devil in this life, and hereafter in eternity reign with Him over all creatures.**

Every believer is a member of Christ, united as one body to the risen and glorified Lord Jesus Christ in heaven (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 2:6; 5:30), “united to Him by the same Holy Spirit dwelling in Him and in us” (Ursinus; cf. John 15:5; 1 Cor. 12:13). Therefore, we are called *Christians*, “anointed ones,” for we all share in the anointing of Christ’s Spirit (1 John 2:20, 27), enabled by the same Spirit to imitate and follow Christ as *prophets, priests, and kings* – to *know, love, and live* truth (Jer. 15:16). “As prophets, we are to confess the name of Christ and declare His truth to others [Matt. 10:32; Eph. 4:15]. As priests, we are to present ourselves as living sacrifices to Christ and dedicate all we are and have to the service of God [Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9-10]. This includes our talents and our money. As kings, we are to exercise dominion by the Word of God over ourselves, our homes, our churches, our society [Gen. 1:28]. We are to fight the good fight against sin and the devil and reign with Christ both now and forever [2 Tim. 4:7; Rev. 2:26; 5:9-10]. When we begin to grasp the real meaning of being a Christian, life becomes a wonderful, new challenge” (Jones, *Study Helps*, 74).

REFORMATION 500 WEEK 12: HEIDELBERG CATECHISM, QUESTION 31-32

Question 31: Why is He called Christ, that is, Anointed? **Because He is ordained of God the Father and anointed with the Holy Spirit to be our Chief Prophet and Teacher, who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption; and our only High Priest, who by the one sacrifice of His body, has redeemed us, and ever lives to make intercession for us with the Father; and our eternal King, who govern us by His Word and Spirit, and defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us.**

MESSIAH is the Hebrew word, and CHRIST is the Greek word, meaning ANOINTED. In the Old Testament, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed with oil to symbolize that they were ordained and gifted by God to fulfill the duties of their office. They were types (examples) of what God intends every believer to become through Christ the ultimate Prophet, Priest, and King (Num. 11:29; Rev. 1:6). Isaiah foretold that Messiah would be anointed with the Holy Spirit (11:1; 61:1). At His baptism, Jesus the Son of God was anointed by the Father with the Holy Spirit to fulfill His threefold office (Acts 10:38). As our Chief Prophet, He has fully revealed the truth to us, especially the truth about our redemption in Him (Matt. 16:16-17; John 1:18; 15:15; 17:8). As our only High Priest, “by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. 9:26), He has redeemed us by His blood (Heb. 9:11-15). And with His Father in heaven, “He always lives to make intercession for us” (Heb. 7:25), praying that our faith would not fail (Luke 22:32; John 17:9-15). As our eternal King, at God’s right hand, He governs us by His Word and Spirit, preserving us in the faith so we persevere in showing ourselves thankful for our salvation (Heb. 12:2; 1 Peter 1:5).

Question 32: But why are you called a Christian? **Because by faith I am a member of Christ and thus a partaker of His anointing, in order that I [as a prophet] also may confess His name, [as a priest] may present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to Him, and [as a king] with a free conscience may fight against sin and the devil in this life, and hereafter in eternity reign with Him over all creatures.**

Every believer is a member of Christ, united as one body to the risen and glorified Lord Jesus Christ in heaven (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 2:6; 5:30), “united to Him by the same Holy Spirit dwelling in Him and in us” (Ursinus; cf. John 15:5; 1 Cor. 12:13). Therefore, we are called *Christians*, “anointed ones,” for we all share in the anointing of Christ’s Spirit (1 John 2:20, 27), enabled by the same Spirit to imitate and follow Christ as *prophets, priests, and kings* – to *know, love, and live* truth (Jer. 15:16). “As prophets, we are to confess the name of Christ and declare His truth to others [Matt. 10:32; Eph. 4:15]. As priests, we are to present ourselves as living sacrifices to Christ and dedicate all we are and have to the service of God [Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9-10]. This includes our talents and our money. As kings, we are to exercise dominion by the Word of God over ourselves, our homes, our churches, our society [Gen. 1:28]. We are to fight the good fight against sin and the devil and reign with Christ both now and forever [2 Tim. 4:7; Rev. 2:26; 5:9-10]. When we begin to grasp the real meaning of being a Christian, life becomes a wonderful, new challenge” (Jones, *Study Helps*, 74).