

BAPTIST TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES ON BAPTISM IN ENGLAND
1600-1689

BAPTIST TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES ON BAPTISM IN ENGLAND
1600-1689

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor in Theology

by
Walter Levon Moore
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TO
PAULINE

"We covenant with God and with one
another to walk in all his ways made
known or to be made known unto us
according to our best endeavours
whatsoever it shall cost us."

Covenant of Smyth's
Separatist Congregation
At Gainsborough, c. 1602.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

One man alone does not write a thesis. The writing of this dissertation would have been impossible without the help and encouragement of many friends.

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Lawrenceburg, Kentucky

Walter Levon Moore

March 1950

PREFACE

PREFACE

According to the doctrines of my forefathers I will spend eternity in hell, for I do not belong to the church to which they belonged. Being brought up in a Primitive Baptist background, I learned early in life that the doctrine of election was very real to those about me. So real that in their thinking only their group would be saved. As a child I began early to worry about my friends who were not of that persuasion, and I wondered why they also could not go to heaven. As I grew older, I discovered that I could not accept the tenets of my "Hardshell" ancestors, and upon accepting Christ as my Saviour I joined the despised Missionary Baptist Church in my community. In these early years I learned something of the prejudice, bigotry and intolerance which one religious group can have for another. It is now evident that those attitudes arose from a lack of knowledge of the facts of Christian history and were nourished by the continual fanning of the flames of intolerance by ignorant men. Thus my interest in the history of the Christian Church came early in life and has been kept alive by my desire to know the truth concerning the movements of the major denominations.

It was not difficult to persuade myself to study

Church History when I entered the Seminary, for in this study I saw an opportunity to find many of the answers to some of my life-long questions.

This study of the general history of Christianity, under the guidance of Dr. S. L. Stealey, increased my interest in the history of Baptists. I came to see more clearly that Baptists have a rich heritage of which they may be justly proud. Their principles seemed to me to be clearly supported by New Testament teachings.

The subject for this thesis was chosen because there seemed to be a need for tracing the development of the Baptist principle of baptism through its formative period of history. The Baptist principle of baptism has been tersely stated as the "belief in baptism by immersion only for believers only". The period of time selected for the study was 1600-1689, and it was chosen for at least two distinct reasons: first, because this is the period of modern Baptist beginnings, and second, because there is so much confusion in the minds of most Baptists as to what was actually taught during these years. The work had to be limited also as to geographical territory, so naturally the choice was England, the seed-bed of early Baptist thought. Therefore the subject chosen was BAPTIST TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES ON BAPTISM IN ENGLAND: 1600-1689.

In the persuance of this study it was necessary to touch on several controversial matters. It has not been my purpose to renew the old arguments or open the wounds of former controversies. However, I have not hesitated to place in this record the facts discovered even when they were contrary to the beliefs of many of my Baptist brethren. Much of the Baptist history which has been written was written in the heat of controversy, and is for that reason prejudiced and biased.

In seeking to prove a point, men have used historical facts in strange ways. In the Whitsitt Controversy and in other debates on Baptist doctrine or Baptist history men have bitterly opposed each other, and have quoted the same sources to prove their variant theories. I have tried to use all the sources at my disposal, not in order to prove a certain belief or practice, but simply to state what the beliefs and practices of certain groups were, and their arguments for them. I determined in the beginning to discover the facts first, then form my conclusions, rather than draw up my conclusions and seek facts to bear them out. The first chapter of the thesis sets forth more fully the problem, and the manner in which it has been approached.

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CHAPTER I

THE BAPTIST DOCTRINE OF BAPTISM IN ITS BIBLICAL,
HISTORICAL AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL CONTEXT

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER I

THE BAPTIST DOCTRINE OF BAPTISM IN ITS BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL CONTEXT

1. BAPTISM A FUNDAMENTAL PRACTICE OF CHRISTIANITY.

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CHAPTER I

THE BAPTIST DOCTRINE OF BAPTISM IN ITS BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL CONTEXT

1. BAPTISM A FUNDAMENTAL PRACTICE OF CHRISTIANITY.

Baptism is a fundamental practice of Christianity. The forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist, preached repentance and had as one of his greatest missions the baptizing of those who came to him in repentance of sin. He had as his greatest privilege the baptizing of Him who had no sin of His own, but who was "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world".¹ Jesus approved and honored baptism by submitting Himself to it,² and by commanding His disciples to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost".³ All Christians of every age have believed in and practiced some form of baptism. Many of these practices have failed to conform to the New Testament standard.

1 John 1:29.

2 Matthew 3:13-17.

3 Matthew 28:19.

2. THE BAPTIST PRINCIPLE OF BAPTISM.

Baptists believe their views and practices concerning baptism correspond more nearly to the New Testament than those of any differing group. This view may be summed up in the principle "baptism by immersion only for believers only". During certain periods of history there were few, if any, who consistently practiced this principle. It is assumed that no group in England practiced it at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Each generation considers itself more correct than any other. Though other Baptists differed somewhat from present day Baptists, it is assumed that they had some of the truth. Since Baptists admit the supreme authority of the Scriptures, the New Testament should be the standard of truth. The New Testament teaches that only those who believe in Jesus Christ as a personal saviour are saved,⁴ and that those who are saved should be baptized.⁵ Baptists believe that the form of baptism taught in the New Testament is immersion. Thus they believe themselves to be in keeping with Scriptural teaching when they accept as their principle of baptism,

⁴ Acts 16:31.

⁵ Matthew 28:19, 20.

"baptism by immersion only for believers only". This is the New Testament criterion which is used throughout this thesis for Baptist teaching on baptism. Much of the baptism practiced by those called Baptists during the chosen period of study did not correspond to this criterion. It was often by methods other than immersion, and frequently not for believers only. One of several positions may be taken: either it may be said that these men were not Baptists, or it may be admitted that there is room in the Baptist position for a variety of thought and practice, or it may be said that there was a development in Baptist thought until the present position was reached.

3. THE TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES OF OTHER GROUPS AROUND 1600.

There were many practices on baptism at the beginning of the seventeenth century which did not correspond to the Baptist principle. This is clearly seen in the following discussion of the doctrinal statements of other groups.

The teachings and practices of Baptist groups concerning baptism at any given period can be more clearly understood when seen in the light of what other groups taught and practiced. In the year 1600, there were

many religious groups whose views were at variance with those at which the Baptists arrived during the seventeenth century. In this section of the thesis is set forth a brief account of the teachings and practices relative to baptism of the Roman Catholics, the Greek Catholics, the Church of England, the Lutherans, the Anabaptists, the Mennonites, the Calvinists or Presbyterians, the Puritans, and the Separatists up to the time of John Smyth. An attempt is made to compare the teachings of these groups with the Baptist Principle.

There is an overlapping of some of these groups into other groups, for some were merely extensions of the others. For example, the Mennonites consisted of the best part of the Anabaptists following the Münster affair; and the Puritans were greatly influenced by the teachings of Calvin. Practically all the Puritans and Presbyterians were Calvinistic. Also, the Separatists were Puritans who became dissatisfied with their present religious situation, and saw no hope of reform as long as they stayed within the Church. Therefore, they became Independents, or Separatists. Because of this overlapping there was a similarity in doctrine in some cases. However, even at the risk of repetition, each group is treated separately.

A. THE ROMAN CATHOLICS.

The three chief sources of knowledge of Roman Catholic teachings on baptism during the seventeenth century are The Catechism of the Council of Trent, the Catholic Encyclopaedia, and the Roman ritual put forth by Pope Paul V. in 1614.

The Council of Trent. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) was an attempt to define Catholic doctrine so that a clear line could be drawn between the church and heretics; also, the Council sought to pass resolutions of discipline and reform which would make the church less offensive to the world. As stated by the Catholic Encyclopaedia, the main object of the Council was:

the definitive determination of the doctrines of the church in answer to the heresies of the Protestants. A further object was the execution of a thorough reform of the inner life of the church by removing the numerous abuses that had developed in it.⁶

This Council did not make many new doctrines for the Catholics, but simply put into writing and made official

⁶ The Catholic Encyclopaedia, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), Vol. XV., p. 30.

the doctrines which had been held previously. It certified the belief in seven sacraments and decreed that baptism was necessary to salvation. On January 26, 1564, all the decrees of the Council were confirmed by Pope Pius IV. in the Bull "Benedictus Deus". These decrees are known as the Tridentine Profession of Faith, and this Profession of Faith is to this day imposed on all the converts to Roman Catholicism.⁷

The Catechism of The Council of Trent. There have been few, if any, changes in the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine on baptism since the Council of Trent, and certainly few changes took place between 1563 and 1600. Therefore, to arrive at the official statement of doctrine and to determine the teachings of the Roman Catholics at the beginning of the seventeenth century, it is necessary only to study the Catechism authorized by this council. This Catechism deals with every phase of baptism. Baptism is defined as "the Sacrament of regeneration by water in the Word".⁸ Baptism is called

⁷ Henry Bettenson, Documents of the Christian Church (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 374f.

⁸ J. Donovan, The Catechism of The Council of Trent (Published by command of Pope Pius V.; Baltimore: Lucar Brothers, 1829), p. 114.

"the gate to all the other Sacraments by which we are born again to Christ".⁹ Being the gate to the other Sacraments, it is looked upon as the most important, and the one which makes all the others valid. There are two principal effects of the sacraments; sanctifying grace, and the character which they impress. The Catechism states:

In the character impressed by Baptism both effects are exemplified: by it we are qualified to receive the other Sacraments; and the Christian is distinguished from those who profess not the name of Christ.¹⁰

There are other effects of baptism however. It is used to remit original sin and actual guilt, to remit all the punishment due to sin, to replenish the soul with divine grace, to add many other virtues, to unite with Christ, to place a seal upon the soul which can never be effaced, and to open the portals of heaven¹¹ which sin had closed.

According to the Catechism, baptism is essential to one's salvation, and does for the soul what nothing

9 Ibid., p. 107.

10 Ibid., p. 111.

11 Ibid., p. 126f.

else can do. Baptism is more than mere application of water, for, the Catechism continues:

. . . It becomes more necessary to impress on the minds of the faithful, that they may not fall into the vulgar error of thinking, that the baptismal water, preserved in the sacred font, constitutes the Sacrament. Then only is it to be called the Sacrament of Baptism, when it is really used in the way of ablution, accompanied with the words appointed by our Lord.¹²

Each sacrament consists of matter and form. The matter of baptism is water. "Any sort of natural water, which is simply, and without addition of any kind, commonly called water; be it sea-water, river-water, water from a pond, well, or fountain"¹³. The Catholics maintain that water is best adapted to signify the effect of baptism, for "it washes away uncleanness, and is, therefore, strikingly illustrative of the virtue and efficacy of baptism, which washes away the stains of sin".¹⁴

The character of the administrator does not affect the validity of the sacrament, for, as explained by the Catechism:

representing as he does, in the discharge of

12 Ibid., p. 114.

13 Loc. Cit.

14 Ibid., p. 115.

his sacred functions, not his own, but the person of Christ, the minister of the Sacraments, be he good or bad, validly consecrates, and confers the Sacraments; provided he make use of the matter and form instituted by Christ, and always observed in the Catholic Church, and intends to do what the church does in their administration.¹⁵

The Administrator is not the important thing, but the words used in the administration. It is necessary that the words instituted by Christ (Matthew 28:19) be used with the act before it becomes valid. These words are, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost". Baptism may be administered by bishops, priests, deacons, laymen, women, or by anyone else in case of necessity.

Believing that baptism is necessary for salvation, the Catholics insist on the baptism of infants. The Catechism asserts, "the pastor, therefore, will inculcate the absolute necessity of administering baptism to infants. . . ." ¹⁶ It insists that infants should be baptized as soon as possible, for "infants, unless baptized, cannot enter heaven". ¹⁷ In the case of adults

15 Ibid., p. 108.

16 Ibid., p. 123.

17 Ibid., p. 124.

it is not necessary to be in haste for "should any unforeseen accident deprive adults of baptism, their intention of receiving it, and their repentance for past sins, will avail them to grace and righteousness".¹⁸

For adults, the intention which one has is important. In addition to wishing to be baptized there must be faith, compunction and a firm purpose to avoid sin.¹⁹ As already seen, the important thing in baptism is the intention of the administrator and the form, or words, used.

The mode of baptism is not too important, for "according to the common practice of the church, baptism may be administered by immersion, infusion, or aspersion; and that administered in either of these forms is equally valid".²⁰ Burrage's translation of the Catechism, given in his The Act of Baptism in the Christian Church, has this section on the mode of baptism:

Pastors. . . must briefly explain that by the common custom and practice of the church there are three ways of administering baptism. For those who ought to be initiated with this sacrament are either immersed into the water, or have the water poured upon them, or are sprinkled with the water, and whichever of

18 Ibid., p. 124f.

19 Ibid., p. 126.

20 Ibid., p. 117.

these rites be observed, we must believe that baptism is rightly administered; for in baptism water is used to signify the spiritual ablution which it accomplishes. Hence baptism is called by the Apostle a laver. (Tit. iii. 5: Eph. v. 26); but ablution is not more really accomplished by the immersion of any one in water, which was long observed from the earliest times of the church, than by the effusion thereof, which we now perceive to be the general practice, or aspersion, the manner in which there is reason to believe Peter administered baptism when on one day he converted and baptized three thousand persons. (Acts ii. 41). But whether the ablution be performed once or thrice must be held to make no difference; for that baptism was formerly, and may still be validly administered in the church in either way is sufficiently evident from the epistle of Gregory the Great to Leander. The rite, however, which each individual finds observed in his own church is to be retained by the faithful.²¹

To the Roman Catholics, then, the mode of baptism may be immersion, affusion or aspersion. According to their own testimony in the Catechism the most commonly used method at the time of the Council of Trent was affusion.

The Catholic position can be more clearly seen in the order of the baptismal service which was prescribed by the Catechism. It is as follows:

- (1) The preparation of the water. The baptismal water is consecrated with the oil of mystic unction.

²¹ Henry S. Burrage, The Act of Baptism in the Christian Church (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1879), pp. 141, 142.

- (2) The person to be baptized is brought or conducted to the door of the church, and is forbidden to enter as unworthy to be admitted into the house of God, until he has cast off the yoke of the most degrading servitude of Satan, devoted himself unreservedly to Christ, and pledged his fidelity to the just sovereignty of the Lord Jesus.
- (3) Then the priest instructs him in the doctrines of the Christian faith.
- (4) Then exorcism is used. It consists of words of sacred and religious import, and of prayers; and is used to expel the devil, to weaken and crush his power.
- (5) Salt is placed in the mouth of the person to be baptized.
- (6) His forehead, eyes, breast, shoulders, and ears are signed with the sign of the cross.
- (7) His nostrils and ears are touched with spittle then he is led to the baptismal font.
- (8) At the font he enters into an obligation (or his sponsors do) to renounce Satan.
- (9) Then is applied the oil of the Catechumens on the breast and between the shoulders.
- (10) Then he makes a profession of faith by saying "I believe" to all the points in the creed.
- (11) He then is asked if he will be baptized and when he answers in the affirmative the priest performs the rite.
- (12) After the person has been baptized, the priest anoints with chrism the crown of his head.
- (13) Then the priest gives the person baptized a white garment.
- (14) Then a burning light is placed in his hand.
- (15) Then, last, a name is given the person baptized.²²

This order of service is followed for both adults and

²² Donovan, op. cit., p. 133f.

infants. In the case of infants the sponsors, or the god-parents, answer the questions and make the obligations for the one being baptized.

The Catholic Encyclopaedia. The second source of knowledge of Roman Catholic teachings on baptism in the seventeenth century is the Catholic Encyclopaedia. This source cites two documents which give the mind of the church on baptism. One defines baptism positively and the other negatively. The positive document is "the Decree for the Armenians" in the Bull "Exultate Deo" of Pope Eugene IV. This is often called the decree of the Council of Florence, (1439). The negative definition of baptism is seen in the Council of Trent, whose Catechism has already been noted. It is called negative because it pronounces anathemas on certain other doctrines on baptism. The positive document thus defines baptism:

Holy Baptism holds the first place among the sacraments, because it is the door of the spiritual life; for by it we are made members of Christ and incorporated with the church. And since through the first man death entered into all, unless we be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, as Truth himself has told us.²³

23 The Catholic Encyclopaedia, Vol. II., p. 259.

Baptism is seen as necessary to salvation and the only sacrament capable of removing sin. The Catholics base this belief on the words of Jesus to Nicodemus, (John 3). Concerning the use of water in the baptismal service, this decree says, "The matter of this sacrament is true and natural water; and it is indifferent whether it be cold or hot".²⁴ The form, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" is the same as that specified in the Catechism²⁵ of the Council of Trent.

In defining the administrator of baptism, this decree asserts:

The minister of this sacrament is the priest, to whom it belongs to baptize, by reason of his office. In case of necessity, however, not only a priest or deacon, but even a layman or woman, nay even a pagan or heretic can baptize, provided he observes the form used by the church, and intends to perform what the church performs.²⁶

This decree also states that the effect of baptism is "the remission of all sin, original and actual; likewise of all punishment which is due for sin".²⁷ According to this doctrinal statement, water is the remote matter

24 Loc. Cit.

25 Loc. Cit.

26 Loc. Cit.

27 Loc. Cit.

of baptism and the proximate matter is the ablution performed with the water.

Three forms of ablution have prevailed among Christians, and the church holds them all valid because they "fulfill the requisite signification of the baptismal laving". These forms are immersion, affusion, and aspersion. The most ancient form usually employed was unquestionably immersion. In the Latin Church, immersion seems to have prevailed until the twelfth or thirteenth century. After that time it is found in some places even as late as the sixteenth century. Affusion and aspersion, however, were growing common in the thirteenth century and gradually prevailed in the western church. Although immersion was the form of baptism that generally prevailed in the early ages, it must not thereby be inferred that the other forms of affusion and aspersion were not also employed and held to be valid.²⁸

In speaking of the necessity of baptism it is stated:

Theologians distinguish a twofold necessity, which they call a necessity of means (Medii) and a necessity of precept (Praecepti). The first (Medii) indicates a thing to be so necessary that, if wanting (though inculpably), salvation cannot

²⁸ The Catholic Encyclopaedia, op. cit., p. 261f.

be obtained. The second (Praecepti) is had when a thing is indeed so necessary that it may not be omitted voluntarily without sin; yet ignorance of the precept or inability to fulfil it, excuses one from its observance. Baptism is held to be necessary both necessitate medii and praecepti.²⁹

The Catholics recognize three kinds of baptism: the baptism of water, the baptism of desire, and the baptism of blood. The baptism of desire is that of a person who wishes to be baptized, and intends to be, but for some reason is deprived of baptism. The baptism of blood is martyrdom.³⁰

Concerning the fate of unbaptized infants it is said, "the Catholic teaching is uncompromising on this point, and that all who depart this life without baptism, be it water, or blood or desire, are perpetually excluded from the vision of God".³¹

The meaning of baptism to the Catholic is seen in this statement:

This sacrament is the door of the Church of Christ and the entrance into a new life. We are reborn from the state of slaves of sin into the freedom of the sons of God. Baptism incorporates us with Christ's mystical body and makes us partakers of all the privileges flowing

29 Ibid., p. 265.

30 Ibid., p. 266.

31 Loc. Cit.

from the redemptive act of the Church's divine founder.³²

The principle effects of baptism are: (1) The remission of all sin, original and actual, (2) The remission of the punishment for sin, (3) The infusion of sanctifying grace and supernatural gifts and virtues, (4) The right to those special graces which are necessary for attaining the end for which the sacrament was instituted and for enabling him to fulfil the baptismal promises, and (5) Baptism, once validly conferred, can never be repeated.³³ There are two types of baptism, solemn and private. "Solemn baptism is that which is conferred with all the rites and ceremonies prescribed by the church, and private baptism is that which may be administered at any time or place according to the exigencies of necessity".³⁴

The Ritual of Pope Paul V. in 1614. The third source of knowledge of Catholic teachings on baptism around 1600 is the ritual put forth in 1614 by Pope Paul V. This ritual shows that baptism was administered primarily to infants, but that adult baptism was not un-

32 Ibid., p. 267f.

33 Ibid., p. 268.

34 Ibid., p. 269.

known. The ritual states:

Either the godfather or godmother, or both, (if both are admitted), holding the infant, the priest takes baptismal water in a small vessel or pitcher, and from it thrice pours over the head of the infant, in the form of a cross; and at the same time uttering the words once only, distinctly and carefully, he says, 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father +' (pours once), 'and of the Son +' (pours a second time) 'and of the Holy Spirit +' (pours a third time).³⁵

This shows the prevalence of infant baptism and also indicates the practice of trine baptism. In the ritual, instructions are given for immersion in these words, "Where it is the custom to baptize by immersion, the Priest takes the infant; and exercising care lest it be injured, he immerses its head and baptizes it with trine immersion, and says once only, 'N., etc'".³⁶

There seem to have been few, if any, who practiced immersion even though instructions for its use were in the ritual. In cases where it might have been used it was not believers' baptism, for it was administered to infants. Usually this was not immersion of the whole body but the head only. In this same ritual Pope Paul V. directed:

³⁵ Burrage, op. cit., p. 157.

³⁶ Loc. Cit.

But in those churches where baptism is by immersion either of the whole body or only of the head, the priest takes the elect by the arms, near the shoulders, . . . and by thrice immersing him, or his head, baptizes him, invoking the holy trinity once only.³⁷

Summary of Roman Catholic Teachings on Baptism.

It may be said, then, by way of summary, that the Roman Catholic Church around 1600 taught the following things about baptism: (1) Baptism is one of the seven sacraments, (2) Baptism is necessary for one's salvation, (3) Baptism may be administered by any person who has the proper intention and uses the correct words, (4) Baptism can be administered by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling, (5) The water used in baptism effects spiritual ablution or cleansing, (6) Baptism may be single or trine, (7) The sign of the cross should accompany baptism, (8) Baptism is administered to infants, (9) Baptism is the doorway to the church, and (10) In baptism, the important thing is not the administrator, not the subject, not the attitude or belief of the subject, not the mode---but the intention of the administrator and the words of the ceremony.

When these teachings are compared to the Baptist principle of baptism, it is seen that they do not fulfil the requirements of Baptist baptism.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 158.

B. THE GREEK CATHOLIC OR EASTERN CHURCH.

Differences Between the Greek and Roman Catholics.

A history of the schism between the east and west cannot be given; but it came as the result of "(1) the removal of the seat of the Empire from Rome to Constantinople, by Diocletian and Constantine, (2) the development of the papal monarchy in the west, and (3) the establishment of a Western empire in connection with it".³⁸ The distinct break between the two came in 1054. Some attempts have been made to unite the two bodies but these have failed. A distinction is shown between the Greek and the Roman Churches in the following statement:

The points in which the Greek Church differs from the Roman are the following: the single procession of the Holy Spirit (against the filioque), which is as far as the Council of Constantinople in 381 went; the equality of the five patriarchs, and the rejection of papacy as an antichristian innovation and usurpation; the right of the lower clergy (priests and deacons) to marry (though only once); communion in both kinds; trine immersion the only valid form of baptism; the use of the vernacular languages in worship; a number of minor ceremonies, as the use of common or leavened bread in the Eucharist, infant communion, the repetition of holy unction in sickness, etc.³⁹

The doctrine and polity of the Eastern Church are based

³⁸ Schaff-Herzog, Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge, (Edited by S. M. Jackson; New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1909), Vol. IV., p. 48.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 50.

on the first seven ecumenical councils. The greatest doctrinal difference between the Greek and the Roman Church is concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit. There are, of course, many smaller differences, yet many similarities. The worship of the Eastern Church is much like that of the Roman Church, with the celebration of the sacrifice of the mass as its center. It is "addressed more to the senses and imagination than to the intellect and the heart. It is strongly oriental, unintelligibly symbolical and mystical, and excessively ritualistic".⁴⁰

There is a great difference in the act of baptism in the two churches. The Greek Church insists on three-fold, or trine, immersion as the only valid form while the Roman Church will recognize immersion, pouring, or sprinkling. In the Greek Church confirmation and baptism are performed simultaneously, while in the Roman Church they are separated.

The Catechism of the Eastern Church. James Chrystal in A History of the Modes of Christian Baptism has given some of the views of the Greek Catholic Church on baptism. He quotes the "Orthodox Confession of The Catholic And

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 51.

Apostolic Eastern Church", part 1, Question 102 which asks:

What is the first mystery,--the sacrament of baptism?
 Answer: Baptism is a washing away of, and removal
 of original sin, by means of the trine immersion
 in the water, the priest saying these words: In
 the name of the Father, Amen, and of the Son, Amen,
 and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.⁴¹

This Confession makes it clear that the Eastern Church
 believes in the ability of baptism to wash away original
 sin. This would make it essential to salvation. The
 Greek Church believes as does the Roman Church that the
 act of baptism alone is not sufficient to wash away sin,
 but the act must be accompanied with the words of Christ.
 Chrystal quotes the Longer Catechism of the Eastern Church
 which asks:

What is baptism?
 Answer: Baptism is a sacrament, in which a man
 who believes, having his body plunged in water,
 in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy
 Ghost, dies to the carnal life of sin.
 What is most essential in the administration of
 baptism?
 Answer: Trine immersion in water, in the name
 of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy
 Ghost.⁴²

This indicates that baptism is administered to those who
 believe. They do not insist on believers' baptism, however,

⁴¹ James Chrystal, A History of the Modes of Christian
 Baptism (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1861), p. 221f.

⁴² Ibid., p. 222.

for they administer the sacrament to infants, and teach
that children dying without baptism can not be saved.⁴³

Summary of the Greek Catholic Teachings on Baptism.

Because of the static position of the Greek Catholic Church this bit of history has been given, for it will show that the Eastern Church held essentially the same beliefs and practices on baptism around 1600 which it has always held. By way of summary, these beliefs are as follows:

(1) Baptism is necessary for salvation for it washes away original sin, (2) Baptism consists of both an act and the proper words, (3) Baptism is administered by trine, or three-fold, immersion, and (4) Baptism is administered to infants.

It will perhaps appear to the mind of the reader that this discussion is not relative to the subject of the thesis, for there were no Eastern Orthodox Catholics in England in the seventeenth century. They are included, however, so that a comparison between them and the Roman Catholics may be seen. These teachings are not in keeping with the Baptist principle of baptism.

⁴³ Schaff-Herzog, op. cit., Vol. I., p. 438.

C. THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Relation of the Rulers of England to the Church of Rome. It is not within the scope of this thesis to give even a brief history of the Church of England. But before one understands the doctrinal position of the Church of England he must keep in mind its proximity to the Church of Rome. When Henry VIII. became king of England in 1500 that country was largely Roman Catholic. That Henry and the Pope were on very friendly terms is seen in the way Henry championed the papal cause, and in the title "Defender of the Faith" which the Pope gave to the king. This friendship did not last, however, and when the Pope refused to give a special dispensation annulling Henry's marriage to Catherine, the break came between England and Rome. Henry had become the ecclesiastical ruler as well as the political ruler of England, and as such he resented the unusual powers of the Pope. The divorce proceedings did not constitute the real cause of the break with Rome, but this fight was used as the excuse for throwing off the yoke of bondage imposed by a foreign power. Henry was a Roman Catholic at heart, and never seemed to question most of the doctrinal statements of the Church as long as they did not interfere with his political power. In A Manual Of Church

History, Newman says, "Great as was his regard for Roman Catholicism, his regard for his own pleasure was greater, and he did not scruple to break with the papacy when it could not be made to minister to his wishes".⁴⁴

Thomas Cranmer, a scholar and theologian, encouraged Henry's break with Rome, and placed his approval on the divorce and remarriage of Henry. Because of his expressions of favor, Cranmer was elevated by the king to the position of archbishop of Canterbury. He was thoroughly Protestant, and his Protestant opinions grew stronger and stronger. Henry, on the other hand, became more rigidly Catholic. There was considerable opposition between the two men, but each remained faithful to the other politically, and at Henry's death Cranmer still held his archbishopric.

In 1547 the son of Henry VIII. and Jane Seymour, Edward VI., became ruler of England. Edward had been brought up a Protestant, and with Cranmer as the advisor of the nine year old ruler, England was soon made Protestant. Cranmer was strongly Calvinistic, and he filled the universities with Reformed theologians. The bishop-

⁴⁴ A. H. Newman, A Manual of Church History (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1931), Vol. II., p. 254.

rics and other positions of religious leadership were also filled with Protestants. Among the many reforms instituted were the following, as stated by Newman:

The laws against Lollardism were rescinded; the "Six Articles" were repealed; images were removed from the churches; the clergy were allowed to marry; communion under both kinds was instituted; tables were substituted for altars; an English Liturgy was introduced; Protestant Articles of Faith were made authoritative. Translations of writings by the leading Lutheran reformers were now freely circulated in England, as were also those of Zwingli, Bullinger, and Calvin.⁴⁵

The Forty-two Articles, later called the Thirty-nine Articles, were prepared by Cranmer and Ridley. These Articles are strongly Calvinistic, especially in the views set forth on baptism. Under Cranmer's influence the Book of Common Prayer was revised, and many other changes were made in the religious life of the nation. When Edward died in 1553 the Protestants were making rapid progress in England.

Mary, the daughter of Henry VIII. and Catherine of Aragon, came to the throne in 1553 with a strong determination to restore England to Catholicism. Newman states:

Once established in power she promptly repealed all the anti-papal legislation of Henry VIII. and

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 263f.

Edward VI., restored much of the sequestered church property, and arraigned, condemned, and burned a large number of the Protestant leaders (including Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, Philpot, Rogers, and Bradford). Thousands of foreign Protestants and thousands of English evangelicals took refuge in the Netherlands, Germany, Geneva, etc.⁴⁶

The archbishop of Canterbury under Mary was Cardinal Pole, one of the strongest advocates of Roman Catholicism to be found. When Mary died in 1558, England was largely Catholic again, for the Protestants had either been killed or driven into exile.

Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn, came to the throne in 1558. She had been brought up as a Protestant under Cranmer, but because of the conditions during the reign of Mary she had outwardly conformed to the Catholic religion. From the first, Elizabeth took a middle-of-the-road attitude toward the two extremes in religion. The Prayer Book was revised and many other changes were made which sought to encourage both Catholics and Protestants. In 1559 Elizabeth received from Parliament the title "Supreme Governor" of the Church. In 1560 the Act Of Uniformity was passed, and the revised Prayer Book was made universally binding. Matthew Parker became the archbishop of Canterbury, and

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 266.

many Protestant bishops were consecrated to places of leadership. In 1563 the Articles of Faith were revised and Elizabeth showed more of an inclination to Protestantism. Many of Elizabeth's subjects demanded a more complete reformation of the church than she was willing to allow. The non-conformers who protested the Catholic rites and ceremonies were called Puritans. The Elizabethan Settlement of religion in England did not suit them, and they continued to work for a reform of the church while remaining in the fold. Hooker's Laws Of Ecclesiastical Polity was written in opposition to the Puritans and sought to show that the episcopacy was well founded in the Scriptures.

With the Elizabethan Settlement of religion, a new church had come into being, The Church of England. It was not Roman Catholic, neither was it Protestant. In her effort to syncretize the two religions, Elizabeth had brought into prominence a third group. It was out of this group that Puritans, Separatists and English Baptists came; and before one can have an understanding of the teachings on baptism among these groups, he must see what the teachings and practices were in the Church of England.

Teachings on Baptism. In his The Act of Baptism in the Christian Church, Burrage has brought together the most important documents which deal with the teachings of various groups on baptism. This work contains the passages from the Catechisms and the Books of Prayer which deal with baptism.

Cranmer's Catechism of 1548 states:

Baptisme and the dipping into the water doth betoken that the olde Adam, with al his synne and evel lustes, ought to be drowned and kylled by daily contrition and repentance, and that, by renewynge of the Holy Gost, we ought to rise with Christ from the death of synne and to walke in a new lyfe, that our new man maye lyve everlastyngly in righteousness and truthe before God, as Saincte Paule teacheth, saying, 'al we that are baptized in Christe Jesu are baptized in hys death, For we are buried with him by baptisme into deth'.⁴⁷

Immersion, which was recognized by the Catholics, seems to have been the mode prescribed in this Catechism. Much of the Roman idea of washing away sin seems also to have been retained.

In The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Ceremonies of the Church, etc., printed in 1549, these words are found:

Then the priest shall take the child in his hands and ask the name, and naming the child shall dip it in the water, thrice, first

⁴⁷ Burrage, op. cit., p. 144.

dipping the right side; second, the left side; the third time dipping the face toward the font; so it be discreetly and warily done, saying, 'N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen'. And if the child be weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it, saying the aforesaid words.⁴⁸

This passage shows that infant baptism was practiced, and that trine baptism was still in force. The Catholics had already recognized pouring and sprinkling, and many of the reformers admitted pouring. This influence is seen in the part of the passage which states that if the child is weak, pouring water upon it will suffice.

In the Book of Common Prayer, published in 1552, the passage just quoted is restated with one important omission. Nothing is said about trine immersion. So by 1552 this particular form of administering baptism was no longer demanded in the Church of England.

In The Form of Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, Used in the English Church at Geneva, published in 1556 and approved by Calvin, it is stated:

'N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Sonne, and of the Holy Ghoste.'
And as he speaketh these words he taketh water in his hand, and layeth it upon the childe's forehead; which done, he giveth thanks. . . .⁴⁹

The practices of sprinkling and pouring seem to have arisen much earlier on the Continent than in England.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 145.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 147.

But due to the influence of the reformers, especially Calvin, the English Church by 1556 had adopted these practices.

Schaff, in The Creeds of Christendom, has included the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Church of England, published in 1571 in English, but set forth first in Latin in 1562 by Queen Elizabeth. In these Articles the following statements are made about baptism; Article XXV:

Sacraments ordayned of Christe, be not onely badges or tokens of Christian mens profession: but rather they be certaine sure witnesses and effectuall signes of grace and Gods good wyll towardes vs, by the which he doth worke invisiblie in vs, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirme our fayth in hym. There are two Sacramentes ordayned of Christe our Lorde in the Gospell, that is to say, Baptisme, and the Supper of the Lorde.⁵⁰

The Calvinistic influence is definitely seen in this statement of faith. The sacraments do not work grace in the souls of men, but they are signs of that grace which God has worked in men. The sacraments are visible witnesses of men's faith in God, and seek to strengthen and confirm that faith. This is far from Catholicism.

⁵⁰ Phillip Schaff, The Creeds of Christendon, The Evangelical Protestant Creeds, With Translations (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1877), Vol. III, p. 502.

Also, it is to be noted that this Article speaks of two sacraments and not seven as in the Roman Church.

Article XXVII states:

Baptism is not onely a signe of profession, and marke of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from other that be not christened; but is also a signe of regeneration or newe byrth, whereby as by an instrument, they that receave baptisme rightly, are grafted into the church: the promises of the forgevenesse of sinne, and of our adoption to be the Sonnes of God, by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed: fayth is confirmed: and grace increased by vertue of prayer vnto God. The baptisme of young children, is in any wyse to be retayned in the churche, as most agreable with the institution of Christe.⁵¹

Though the Articles speak of baptism as a sign of the faith of men and a confirmation of that faith, they make it clear that the faith does not have to be expressed by each individual, for even infants may receive baptism, and their faith is declared and promised by their sponsors or parents. Baptism helps to graft one into the church.

The Catechism of the Church of England was a part of the first Prayer Book of Edward VI. in 1549. It has gone through several modifications. The explanation of the sacraments was added in 1604 by Bishop Overall, Dean of St. Pauls. The Prayer Book was last revised in 1661

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 504, 505.

37

and published in 1662.⁵² It contains the Catechism which shows the belief of the church of England on baptism during the period covered by this thesis. This Catechism has the following:

Ques. How many Sacraments hath Christ ordained in his Church?

Ans. Two only, as generally necessary to salvation: that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

Ques. What meanest thou by this word Sacrament?

Ans. I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.

Ques. How many parts are there in a sacrament?

Ans. Two: The outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.

Ques. What is the outward visible sign or form in baptism?

Ans. Water, wherein the person is baptized (The edition of 1604 said 'the person baptized is dipped, or sprinkled with it') in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Ques. What is the inward and Spiritual grace?

Ans. A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: for, being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.

Ques. What is required of persons to be baptized?

Ans. Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and Faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament.

Ques. Why, then, are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?

52 Ibid., p. 517.

Ans. Because they promise them both by their Sureties; which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.⁵³

When this Catechism is studied closely it is noted that there was the belief in only two sacraments. This sounds like Protestantism until it is observed that it states "necessary to salvation". The Church of England followed the Catholics in the belief that baptism was the doorway into the church, and one of the means of salvation. Also baptism is not only the visible sign of invisible grace but "the means whereby we receive the same". It is also seen that the Church of England was not anti-immersionist, for the Catechism recognized dipping along with sprinkling. There does not seem to be much evidence, however, that this group actually practiced dipping to any great extent. The Catechism states that repentance and faith are required of those who are baptized, but it includes infants who are not capable of believing, and makes it possible for others to believe for them.

Chrystal, in A History of the Modes of Christian Baptism, shows that up until the middle of the sixteenth century immersion (and usually trine immersion) was used in England. He admits that the custom changed some

⁵³ Ibid., p. 521.

during the reign of Edward VI., when it was agreed that it was valid to pour water on the weak infants rather than dip them. He shows that practically everyone was baptized in infancy, and believers' baptism was not known. During Elizabeth's reign there was allowed a greater laxity in regard to baptism. Pouring became common for the children whose parents insisted on a milder form of baptism. During the reign of Mary many fled into Germany and Switzerland to escape persecution. They returned as soon as Elizabeth came to the throne and brought with them many of the customs and practices of the Protestants, especially the ideas of Calvinism, which admitted pouring and sprinkling for baptism.⁵⁴ Chrystal asserts that in England the practice of pouring or sprinkling had become the general practice even though the rubric in the Prayer Book required immersion, and that this laxity was the cause of the rise of the antipaedobaptists.⁵⁵

In A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-nine Articles, Bicknell discusses the meaning of baptism for the Church of England. He affirms the inadequacy of

54 Chrystal, op. cit., p. 185.

55 Ibid., p. 265.

the Anabaptist and Zwiglian position that baptism is only a "sign of profession" of faith in Christ.⁵⁶

"Scripture", he says, "makes it clear that baptism is not only a sign of profession but a means of grace".⁵⁷ He maintains that the new birth and baptism are the same.

This baptism not only symbolizes cleansing and new life, but bestows them. The water is at once the symbol and the channel of the spirit. . . The new man rises from the water of baptism at the creative touch of the Spirit of God. . . By Baptism we are incorporated into the body of Christ and become his members.⁵⁸

He argues that "sign" is clearly defined as "effectual sign". That is, baptism not only symbolizes the new birth, but conveys it.⁵⁹ He distinguishes between "regeneration" and "conversion". The former, he states, according to the Prayer Book means "incorporated into Christ". Conversion means that spiritual renewal which membership in Christ brings. One needs both regeneration and conversion, for, he says, "The actual renewal of the soul requires both the gift of the grace of God in

⁵⁶ E. J. Bicknell, A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), p. 466.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 467.

⁵⁸ Loc. Cit.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 468.

baptism and also the personal surrender of the will to
that grace.⁶⁰ His argument for infant baptism is based
on the silence of the Scripture on any age limit. He
maintains that "we need not be consulted about our
second birth any more than about our first". Where there
is no knowledge of sin, there need be no repentance and
faith.⁶¹

Summary of the Teachings on Baptism in the Church
of England. This section of this thesis is concluded
with this summary of the teachings and practices of the
Church of England on baptism around 1600: (1) Baptism
is one of two Sacraments instituted by Christ, (2) Baptism
is necessary for salvation, (3) Baptism is administered
by immersion, sprinkling or pouring, (4) The most
commonly used modes of baptism are sprinkling and
pouring, (5) Immersion is seldom used, (6) Baptism is
administered to infants, and (7) Baptism is the seal
of the confession of faith and repentance made by the
sponsors for the infants.

Thus it is seen that these beliefs do not corres-
pond to Baptist teachings on baptism.

60 Ibid., p. 471.

61 Ibid., p. 474.

D. THE LUTHERANS.

To understand the teachings and practices of the Lutherans on baptism around 1600 it is necessary to go to the writings of Martin Luther, and to the Confessions of Faith issued by his group from 1530 on. Before 1530 Luther made several statements about baptism.

Luther's Early Writings. In 1519 Luther wrote a sermon on The Sacrament of Baptism in which he distinguished between the "sign" and that which it "signifies" to establish the fact that it is faith which appropriates to man what the sign signifies. Immersion in water in the name of God denotes death to sin and resurrection to grace.⁶² Burrage translates Luther's words in the sermon:

Although in many places it is no longer the custom to immerse the children entirely at baptism but only to pour upon them with the hand, yet rightly, according to the formula, the child, or everyone who is baptized, should be let down wholly into the water and baptized and taken out. In this way will the requirements of the sign be fully met.⁶³

This sermon is seen in its entirety in Luther's Works, Vol. I, p. 49f.

62 Schaff-Herzog, op. cit., Vol. I., p. 439.

63 Burrage, op. cit., p. 129.

In the Babylonian Captivity he "emphasizes the promise which the order of baptism contains. In reality, the Word is everything in the sacrament, immersion in the water is only the seal which confirms the Word and makes it fully certain".⁶⁴ He does insist on immersion, however, for as shown in Burrage's translation:

On this account I could wish that such as are to be baptized should be completely immersed in water, according to the meaning of the word and the signification of the ordinance---not because I think it necessary, but because it would be beautiful to have a full and perfect sign of so perfect and full a thing, as also without doubt it was instituted by Christ.⁶⁵

In the first part of Luther's ministry he used essentially the Catholic form of baptismal service. After 1525 his service was divided into two parts, and is described by Schaff-Herzog:

Outside the church or in the vestibule occurred an exorcism, signing with the cross on forehead and breast, prayers, another exorcism, reading of Mark X, 13-16, imposition of hands, and recitation of the Lord's Prayer. At the font: salutation, renunciation and profession of faith, request for baptism, also made by the sponsors, baptism by three-fold immersion, giving of the chrisom cloth.⁶⁶

The Strasburg ritual, drawn up under Butzer's

64 Schaff-Herzog, Loc. Cit.

65 Burrage, op. cit., p. 130f.

66 Schaff-Herzog, op. cit., p. 444.

influence, called for "baptism by pouring" rather than the trine immersion used earlier. A few changes were made in this form of service in 1537, but since that time it has remained essentially the same.⁶⁷

The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge has this statement about the meaning of Luther's teaching on baptism:

In order to understand correctly Luther's attitude toward baptism it is necessary to grasp his idea of grace, which forms the central distinction between the conception of the sacraments in Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. Luther defined grace no longer in the sense of divine power (virtus), but as a sign or token of the divine disposition--in the older Latin sense as the divine favor. He also considered baptism necessary for salvation, believing unconditionally in the command of Christ, Matt. xxviii, 19. He did not seek for the reason of this command, for its "necessity" in a rational sense, seeing in it simply an expression of the love of Christ, who desires to convince us through baptism of God's favor and thereby to awaken "faith" (fides in the sense of fiducia). In baptism we experience the actual bestowal of the favor of God, which without it, does not, or at least does not indubitably, descend on man. Luther does not understand the necessity of baptism for salvation in the sense that the grace of God is included in the sacrament in an objective sense, but that while one can not be entirely certain of grace without the sacrament, in virtue of it one may be "always" assured of the grace of God in faith. . . . Luther does not follow the Roman idea of "character" as conferred by baptism, but

67 Schaff-Herzog, loc. cit.

applies his new definition of grace to the content of baptism in order to establish validity for the whole life, validity as a real offer of grace. He seeks in baptism nothing but grace. Throughout the whole life that is realized which God in baptism makes known to us as his will through the signum, the act performed by means of water. Luther's idea of baptism was identical with his idea of the sacraments in general---that they make plain and confirm the "Word". Like the word, baptism can only be efficacious if it finds faith or establishes faith by its power. But in faith one can always look back on it, in order to know that he possesses God's grace.⁶⁸

The exact views of Luther were not always held by his followers. In the references to be stated next, it is seen that some changes took place in the doctrinal position of the Lutherans. Before the Lutherans of any period can be understood, however, one must know what Luther himself believed, taught, and practiced.

The chief sources of knowledge of the Lutheran position on baptism are the Augsburg Confession of 1530, Luther's Small Catechism of 1531, The Heidelberg Catechism of 1563, The Formula of Concord issued in 1576, and The Saxon Visitation Articles which were composed in 1592.

The Augsburg Confession. Article IX of the Augsburg Confession teaches the following things about baptism, (1) Baptism is necessary for salvation, (2) By

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 438, 439.

baptism the grace of God is offered, (3) Children are to be baptized, for by this act they are brought into the favor of God, (4) The Anabaptists are condemned because they do not allow the baptism of children and affirm that children are saved without it.

Luther's Small Catechism. In Luther's Small Catechism, a copy of which is found in Schaff's Creeds of Christendom, and which has also been published in a separate volume, the following questions and answers on baptism are found in Part IV:

I

Ques. What is Baptism?

Ans. Baptism is not simply common water, but it is the water comprehended in God's command, and connected with God's word.

Ques. What is the Word of God?

Ans. It is that which our Lord Jesus speaks in the last chapter of Matthew. (xxviii. 19): 'Go ye into all the world and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost'.

II

Ques. What does Baptism give, or of what use is it?

Ans. It worketh forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe, as the Word and promise of God declare.

Ques. What are such words and promises of God?

Ans. Those which our Lord Christ speaks in the last chapter of Mark: 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned'.

III

Ques. How can water do such great things?

Ans. It is not water, indeed, that does it, but the word of God which is with and in the water, and faith, which trusts in the word of God in the water. For without the word of God the water is nothing but water, and no baptism; but with the word of God it is a baptism---that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says, Titus, Third Chapter. (iii. 5-7) 'By the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life'.

IV

Ques. What does such baptizing with water signify?

Ans. It signifies that the old Adam in us is to be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and perish with all sins and evil lusts; that the new man should daily come forth again and rise; who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Ques. Where is it so written?

Ans. St. Paul, in the 6th Chapter of Romans, says: 'We are buried with Christ by baptism into death; that like as he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life'.⁶⁹

This Catechism shows the belief that water alone is not baptism, but the water must be accompanied with the words of the ceremony instituted by Jesus Christ. Baptism works the forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and

⁶⁹ Schaff, op. cit., pp. 85, 86.

the devil, and gives salvation to those who believe. Baptism shows that the old man of sin has died and the one baptized has risen to a new life in Christ.

The Heidelberg Catechism. The Heidelberg Catechism, published in 1563, has this section on baptism:

Question 68: How many Sacraments has Christ appointed in the New Testament?

Answer: Two: holy baptism and the holy Supper.

Question 69: How is it signified and sealed unto thee in holy baptism that thou hast part in the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross?

Answer: Thus: that Christ has appointed this outward washing with water, and has joined therewith this promise, that I am washed with his blood and Spirit from the pollution of my soul, that is, from all my sins, as certainly as I am washed outwardly with water whereby commonly the filthiness of the body is taken away.

Question 70: What is it to be washed with the blood and Spirit of Christ?

Answer: It is to have the forgiveness of sins from God, through grace, for the sake of Christ's blood, which he shed for us in his sacrifice on the cross; and also to be renewed by the Holy Ghost and sanctified to be members of Christ, that so we may more and more die unto sin, and lead holy and unblamable lives.

Question 71: Where has Christ promised that we are as certainly washed with his blood and Spirit as with the water of Baptism?

Answer: In the institution of Baptism, which runs thus: Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. This promise is also repeated where the Scripture calls Baptism the washing of regeneration and the washing away of sins.

Question 72: Is then, the outward washing of water itself the washing away of sins?

Answer: No; for only the blood of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit cleanse us from all sin.

Question 73: Why, then doth the Holy Ghost call Baptism the washing of regeneration and the washing away of sins?

Answer: God speaks thus not without great cause: namely, not only to teach us thereby that like as the filthiness of the body is taken away by water, so our sins also are taken away by the blood and Spirit of Christ; but much more, that by this divine pledge and token he may assure us that we are as really washed from our sins spiritually as our bodies are washed with water.

Question 74: Are infants also to be baptized?

Answer: Yes; for since they, as well as their parents, belong to the covenant and people of God and both redemption from sin and the Holy Ghost, who works faith, are through the blood of Christ promised to them no less than to their parents, they are also by Baptism, as a sign of the covenant, to be ingrafted into the Christian Church, and distinguished from the children of unbelievers, as was done in the Old Testament by circumcision in place of which in the New Testament Baptism is appointed.⁷⁰

Since a Catechism is a set of instructions on the doctrines of a church, it is unnecessary to make comment on all the points in the Catechism, for it is largely self-explanatory. The chief teachings may be set forth in this summary: (1) Baptism is one of the two sacraments appointed by Christ, (2) When the outward washing of water is joined with the words of Christ, true baptism

⁷⁰ Schaff, op. cit., pp. 329-331.

takes effect, (3) The outward washing of water is a symbol of the washing away of sin by the blood and Spirit of Christ, (4) Baptism should be in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, (5) Baptism must accompany belief before one's salvation is assured, (6) Infants are to be baptized because they have original sin, and because they are a part of the covenant made to the people of God. This Catechism does not indicate the mode of baptism to be used, nor does it give the qualifications of the administrator.

The Formula of Concord. The Formula of Concord, drawn up in 1576, does not mention baptism except to point out the errors of the Anabaptists. The Anabaptists' views of infant baptism were rejected by the Lutherans. The reason no definite doctrinal statements are made in this document is because it is a confirmation of the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Catechism.

The Saxon Visitation Articles. The Saxon Visitation Articles were composed in 1592 by a group of Lutheran theologians against crypto-Calvanism. They are "historically important as a condensed and authoritative statement of the differences between orthodox Lutheranism and

Calvinism".⁷¹ Article III gives the views of the Lutherans on baptism.

I. That there is but one Baptism, and one ablution: not that which is used to take away the filth of the body, but that which washes us from our sins.

II. By Baptism, as a bath of the regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost, God saves us, and works in us such justice and purgation from our sins, that he who perseveres to the end in that covenant and hope does not perish, but has eternal life.

III. All who are baptized in Jesus Christ are baptized in his death; and by baptism are buried with him in his death, and have put on Christ.

IV. Baptism is the bath of regeneration, because in it we are born again, and sealed by the Spirit of adoption through grace (or gratuitously).

V. Unless a person be born again of water and Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of heaven. This is not intended however for cases of necessity.⁷²

Summary of the Lutheran Teachings on Baptism. This doctrinal statement less than a decade before 1600 is a clear summary of the Lutheran teachings on baptism at that time, and it shows that the Lutheran beliefs on baptism did not correspond to the Baptist principle.

71 Schaff, op. cit., p. 181.

72 Schaff, op. cit., pp. 183, 184.

E. THE ANABAPTISTS.

The plan and scope of this thesis do not include even a brief history of the Anabaptists. Their connection with the evangelical groups of the middle ages, and their influence upon various protestant groups since the Reformation involve such a mass of historical facts, that it is impossible to treat them in full here.

Many of the followers of Zwingli opposed him due to the slowness of his procedure in reform and his spirit of compromise with the civil authorities. They insisted on more radical changes in the social and ecclesiastical order than Zwingli would approve.

A Brief Statement About the Rise of the Anabaptists.

George W. Richards, in Protestantism--A Symposium, has this brief summary of the beginning of the Anabaptist movement:

The radicals came to be known as Anabaptists and appeared for the first time in the Second Disputation of 1523. They were represented by Simon Stumpf, Balthasar Hubmeier, and Conrad Grebel. Their aim was wholly to separate themselves from the ungodly, whether in the old church or in the old state, and to begin anew a church and people strictly according to God's word. . . . In January 1523 while a small group was assembled in the town of Zallikon, in Chur, Conrad Grebel rebaptized George Blaurock by pouring water from a dipper upon his head. Afterward Blaurock rebaptized fifteen others, then they celebrated the

Lord's Supper. This was the first Baptist congregation in Switzerland.⁷³

Types of Anabaptists. The Anabaptists were the Independents of the Reformation period. There were many groups of Anabaptists, and there was not a uniformity of doctrine or practice among them. Joseph Minton Batten wrote:

The name covers the widest range of religious opinion, as each Anabaptist exercised complete freedom in interpreting Scripture and in defining his own concept of the essentials of the Christian religion: Most Anabaptists were primarily concerned with the restoration of the beliefs and practices of primitive Christianity as described in the New Testament Despite this confusing diversity most Anabaptists shared certain common beliefs. They were willing to accept the basic principles of Protestantism. They believed that the church should be a voluntary organization, composed of regenerate persons who seek to share its fellowship. Each local church should be a completely autonomous, self-governing unit. The practice of infant baptism was repudiated, and persons baptized in infancy were rebaptized on profession of faith prior to admission into church membership. Anabaptists united in the rigorous advocacy of the separation of church and state, the right of liberty of conscience for the individual, and full toleration for all religious faiths.⁷⁴

⁷³ George W. Richards, Protestantism A Symposium (Nashville: Edited by William K. Anderson; Commission on Courses of Study, The Methodist Church, 1944), pp. 60, 61.

⁷⁴ Joseph Minton Batten, Protestantism A Symposium, op. cit., pp. 94, 95.

Newman shows the wide diversity of belief among the Anabaptists by naming five types. These are the Chiliastic, the Soundly Biblical, the Mystical, the Pantheistic, and the Antitrinitarian.⁷⁵ These titles show that one group gave major emphasis to one doctrine, while other groups emphasized some other doctrine.

Although the Anabaptist movement began in Switzerland it soon spread to various other countries on the Continent.

Lofton, in The English Baptist Reformation, says there were no strictly English Anabaptists in England before around 1600, for they were all foreigners, having come from Holland and the Continent. The Anabaptist movement, he asserts, began in England during the reign of Henry VIII.⁷⁶

The Münster Affair and Its Effect on the Anabaptists. After the Münster affair in Germany, the name Anabaptist was very unpopular, and because of severe persecution against the movement there were many who continued to hold the beliefs but did not retain the name. The

⁷⁵ Newman, op. cit., p. 156.

⁷⁶ George A. Lofton, The English Baptist Reformation (Louisville: Charles T. Dearing, 1899), p. 18f.

Mennonites, who will be discussed in the next section, were the remnants of this Anabaptist movement. By 1600 they were strong in Holland, and their influence was great also in England. Lofton sums up the main principles of the Anabaptists around 1600 thus:

These people maintained believers' baptism as opposed to infant baptism; a converted church membership as opposed to the corrupt Establishments of Rome and England; independency as opposed to magisterial interference and force in matters of faith; the word of God as opposed to the traditions and commandments of men; a voluntary as opposed to a compulsory religion.⁷⁷

With this brief background in mind, the question, "What did the Anabaptists teach concerning baptism?" is raised. The sources of information for their teachings on baptism are (1) Balthasar Hubmaier's writings, (2) The Strassburg Order of Baptism, (3) The VII Articles from Schlatten Am Randen, and (4) the Rechenschaft Unserer Religion by Peter Riedemann.

Balthasar Hubmaier's Writings. Burrage, in his The Act of Baptism in the Christian Church, has translated Hubmaier's Von dem Christlichen Tauff der Glaubigen, a treatise written in 1525, in which he said, "To baptize in water is to pour over the confessor of his sins external water, according to the divine command, and to

⁷⁷ Lofton, op. cit., p. 18.

inscribe him in the number of the separate upon his own
⁷⁸
 confession and desire".

In his A Form of Baptizing in Water Those Who Are
 Instructed in Faith, Hubmaier said:

Do you desire upon this faith and duty to be
 baptized in water, according to the institution
 of Christ, and be thus incorporated and inscribed
 in the external Christian church for the re-
 mission of your sins? Then say, 'I desire it,
 God helping me'.

Then the formula which follows states, "I baptize thee
 in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy
 Spirit, for the pardon of thy sins. Amen".⁷⁹ Thus it
 seems that Hubmaier believed baptism to be the doorway
 into the external organization of the church. His
 practice as regards the mode of baptism is seen in
 Burrage's statement:

In April, 1525, it being Easter, the customary
 season for baptism, Hubmaier called his followers
 together and having sent for a pail of water
 solemnly baptized 300 persons at one time.⁸⁰

The Strassburg Order of Baptism. In the Strassburg
 Order of Baptism, published in 1525, it is stated that
 "the minister, with the pouring out of the water, says,

78 Burrage, op. cit., p. 132.

79 Ibid., p. 132f.

80 Ibid., p. 131.

'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son and
⁸¹
 the Holy Spirit'".

The Seven Articles From Schlatten Am Randen.

From the early Anabaptist writings called The VII Articles From Schlatten Am Randen, drawn up on February 24, 1527, and translated by McGlothlin, this statement is taken:

First learn concerning baptism! Baptism ought to be administered to all who have been taught repentance and a change of life and in truth believe their sins to have been blotted out through Christ, and who wholly wish to walk in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and who wish to be burried with him into death that they may be able to rise again with him. To all, then, who ask baptism after this manner and make the request of us for themselves we administer it. By these means are excluded all baptism of infants, the supreme abomination of the Roman Pontiff. For this article we have the testimony and strength of Scripture; we have also the practice of the Apostles, which we shall preserve with simplicity and at the same time with firmness. For we have been made sure.⁸²

In the second article on excommunication, reference is made to those "who have been baptized into one body of Christ". In the third article on the breaking of bread it is stated that those who break the one bread and drink the one cup should first be united into one body, the church, "Moreover that is particularly through baptism". It continues, "Those who have not the call

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 132.

⁸² W. J. McGlothlin, Baptist Confessions of Faith (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1911), pp. 3, 4.

of their God into one faith, into one baptism, into one Spirit, into one body with all the children of God, these cannot come together unto one bread. . .".⁸³

These articles indicate clearly that baptism is to be administered only to those who believe in Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Baptism signifies the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and also the new life of the one who places faith in Christ. Baptism is administered only to those who ask for it, thereby excluding infant baptism. Baptism is a prerequisite to the observance of the Lord's Supper and by baptism one is united to the body of Christ, the church.

Peter Riedemann's Rechenschaft Unserer Religion.

Peter Riedemann, an Anabaptist pastor and one of their most able literary representatives after Hubmaier, wrote an account of their doctrines and practices called Rechenschaft Unserer Religion. This treatise was drawn up about 1545, and is also found in McGlothlin's Baptist Confessions of Faith. It contains the following reference to Anabaptist baptism:

83 Ibid., p. 4.

Only those who truly repent are baptized; the candidate kneels while the administrator pours water upon him, repeating the words, 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, who according to thy faith hath forgiven thee thy sins and drawn [thee] into his kingdom and accepted [thee], therefore sin henceforth no more so that no worse thing befall thee'; baptism should be administered in the presence of the congregation since 'the sins are remitted and forgiven the man in baptism and the congregation has the key'; teaching and baptizing must not be done by all but only by those who have been called by the Lord and the congregation and set apart there-
to. . . .84

This statement of doctrine shows that the Anabaptists believed repentance of sin to be the requisite for baptism. The authority to baptize belongs to the congregation, and the ordinance should be administered only in the presence of the congregation, and by men called of God and set apart by the church.

These Anabaptists had many things in common with modern Baptists, but they cannot be called Baptists for they did not practice immersion. McGlothlin states:

The Anabaptists were not Baptists in the modern acceptation of that term, since they did not insist upon immersion as the only acceptable mode or form of baptism. Some of them practiced immersion at least occasionally, but none of

84 Ibid., p. 14.

them required it as a term of communion, and apparently a majority practiced affusion.⁸⁵

Whitsitt, in A Question in Baptist History, is of the opinion that the Anabaptists in England came from Holland, and he wrote:

But none of the Anabaptists of Holland or of the adjacent sections of Germany were immersionists. So far as any account of them has come to light, they were uniformly in the practice of pouring or sprinkling for baptism, excepting the Collegiants, who, at Rhynsburg, began to immerse in 1620.⁸⁶

George C. Lorimer, in The Baptists in History, wrote:

Some of the Anabaptists, before the declaration of 1633, in which they determined 'not to receive or practice any piece of positive worship that had not precept, or example in the word of God', occasionally sprinkled or affused for baptism both in England and on the continent.⁸⁷

The Anabaptists gave most attention to the subjects of baptism and little to the form or mode. Therefore, as Burgess asserted, "we find that the Anabaptists of the Reformation period, and related bodies, like the Mennonites, acquiesced, for the most part, in the practice⁸⁸ of the Romish and reformed churches".

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 1.

⁸⁶ William H. Whitsitt, A Question in Baptist History (Louisville: Chas. T. Dearing Co., 1896), p. 35.

⁸⁷ George C. Lorimer, The Baptists in History (Boston: Silver, Burdett and Company, 1893), p. 58.

⁸⁸ Burgess, op. cit., pp. 165, 166.

Summary of Anabaptist Teachings on Baptism. By way of summary, then, it is noted that the Anabaptists held the following beliefs about baptism: (1) Baptism should be administered only to those who repent of sin and make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, (2) All those baptized in infancy should be rebaptized, (Thus the name "Ana-Baptist"), (3) The only valid administrator for baptism is one called of the Lord and appointed by the church, (4) Baptism should always be administered before the congregation, and (5) Baptism may be performed by pouring or sprinkling, and immersion is not necessary.

The Anabaptists were the spiritual ancestors of the Baptists, though no definite historical connection can be traced between them and the English Baptists. They held many beliefs in common with the English Baptists, and their teaching on baptism corresponds to the Baptist principle in every way except the mode. They baptized only believers, but did not make immersion the only valid mode.

F. THE MENNONITES.

Their Relation to the Anabaptists. Closely related to the Anabaptists were the Mennonites; for the latter group was hardly more than an extension of the former. The Anabaptists arose about 1523, and grew rapidly for the next decade. The Münster affair caused many reverses and persecutions to attend the Anabaptists.

The Münster Affair. The Münster story cannot be fully retold; however it is noted that in 1532 this German city was a Catholic stronghold. The Anabaptists gained a foothold and by 1533 were so strong that practically all the Catholics were driven out. Under the leadership of Bernard Rothman, Jan Matthys and John of Leyden, a new theocratic kingdom was established. They proclaimed Münster as the New Jerusalem, and thousands of people from the Netherlands flocked to this city. The city was completely under the control of these fanatics. In their effort to maintain a communistic society, polygamy and many other perversions were introduced and practiced. This fanaticism prevailed until the forces of the King entered the city and drove out or massacred the entire group in 1535.

The blame for this horrible spectacle was laid at the door of the Anabaptists, even though only a small

fanatical group was responsible for it. For years the name Anabaptist was despised and ridiculed. From 1536 onward, this group in the Netherlands went by the name Mennonites, from the name of their leader, Menno Simons, who died in 1559.

A complete history of this group cannot be given; for their activities were many and varied. Their teachings on baptism and other doctrines greatly influenced the English Baptists. It was from them that John Smyth received many of his ideas. Their teachings on baptism are seen in the writings of Menno Simons and in their confessions of faith.

Menno Simons' Teachings on Baptism. Burrage quotes Prof. Howard Osgood, of Rochester Theological Seminary, who says that in all of Menno's writings he has found only two passages which indicate his practice of baptism. Osgood states:

On page 22 of the folio edition, 1681, he says: 'I think that these /to love enemies, crucify flesh and lust/ and similar commands are more painful and difficult to perverse flesh, which is naturally so prone to follow its own way, than to receive a handful of water'.

On page 88 of the same edition Menno says: 'How any one who is so unbelieving and rebellious that he refuses God a handful of water can conform himself to love his enemies, to mortify the flesh to the service of his neighbor, and to take up

the cross of Christ, I will leave the serious reader to reflect upon in the fear of God'.⁸⁹

The First Mennonite Confession of Faith. McGlothlin, in Baptist Confessions of Faith, wrote that at first the Mennonites would make no Confession of Faith, but because of the dissension among the various groups of Mennonites about the middle of the sixteenth century, they began to issue statements of their views in the form of Confessions. The earliest was issued by the Waterlanders of North Holland. This was the group which may have influenced John Smyth to the view of believers' baptism. This Confession was written by Hans de Ries and Lubbert Gerrits. These men perhaps more than any other Anabaptists influenced the Baptists in England.⁹⁰

In this Confession, Baptism and the Lord's Supper are called "external and visible actions, and signs of the immense goodness of God toward us. . . ." Also it states:

Holy Baptism is an external, visible and evangelical action, in which, according to Christ's precept (a) and the practice of the Apostles (b), for a holy end (c) are baptized with water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, those who hear, believe and freely receive

⁸⁹ Burrage, op. cit., p. 141.

⁹⁰ McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 24f.

in a penitent heart the doctrine of the holy gospel (d); for such Christ commanded to be baptized, but by no means infants.⁹¹

This statement reveals that the Mennonites, in keeping with the earlier Anabaptists, held to believers' baptism; for only those who hear, believe and freely receive the gospel in a penitent heart are proper subjects for baptism. This rules out all infant baptism.

This Mennonite Confession also states:

The whole action of external, visible baptism places before our eyes, testifies and signifies that Jesus Christ baptizes internally (a) in a laver of regeneration (b) and renewing of the Holy Spirit, the penitent and believing man: washing away, through the virtue and merits of his poured out blood, all the spots and sins of the soul (c) and through the virtue and operation of the Holy Spirit, which is a true, heavenly (d), spiritual and living water, washing away the internal wickedness of the soul (e) and renders it heavenly (f), spiritual (g) and living (h) in true righteousness and goodness. Moreover baptism directs us to Christ and his holy office by which in glory he performs that which he places before our eyes, and testifies concerning its consummation in the hearts of believers and admonishes us that we should not cleave to external things, but by holy prayers ascend into heaven and ask from Christ the good indicated through it baptism (i): A good which the Lord Jesus graciously concedes and increases in the hearts of those who by true faith become partakers of the sacraments.⁹²

McGlothlin gives several other Mennonite Confessions of Faith, but he thinks this was the only one

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 42.

⁹² Ibid., p. 42f.

which directly influenced the Baptists.⁹³ From this statement of belief it can be seen that they administered baptism only to penitent and believing men. Baptism was an external and visible act by which Christ placed before the eyes the internal renewing of the soul. The blood of Jesus Christ washed away the sins of the soul, and baptism was a symbol of that washing.

The Testimony of Historians Concerning Mennonite Baptism. Because of the influence of the Mennonites on the English Baptists, the question is discussed, "What was the mode of baptism used by the Mennonites?" This section of the thesis will be concluded with several testimonies of able historians on the mode used by the Mennonites.

De Hoop Scheffer, in A History of the Free Churchmen, states that "The Mennonites baptize only adult persons, who have made a profession of their own faith".⁹⁴ In A History of the Modes of Christian Baptism, Chrystal asserts that the Mennonites practiced affusion, and did not make the mode essential.⁹⁵

93 Ibid., p. 49.

94 J. De Hoop Scheffer, History of the Free Churchmen (Ithaca, New York: Andrus and Church, 1922), p. 31.

95 Chrystal, op. cit., p. 294f.

Newman states that no Mennonite group at that time [c.1609] practiced immersion, for when Smyth and his followers applied to them for admission into their church they were examined by the Mennonites who stated that "we have not found that there was any difference at all, neither in the one nor the other thing between them and us".⁹⁶ The testimony is also given by Newman that "The most competent Mennonite scholar of the present time (Dr. J. G. De Hoop Scheffer) does not hesitate to assert that the universal practice of Mennonites of all parties about 1609 was affusion".⁹⁷ De Hoop Scheffer makes the significant observation that the use of the term "washing with water" by Smyth, Helwys and others does not prove immersion, for this term was used by the Mennonites who practiced affusion, and by many others who did not immerse.⁹⁸

A Summary of the Mennonite Teachings on Baptism.

It seems that around 1600 the Mennonites did not practice or teach concerning baptism anything different to that practiced and taught by the Anabaptists. They rebaptized those who had been baptized as infants, insisted on

⁹⁶ A. H. Newman, A History of Antipaedobaptism (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1902), p. 387.

⁹⁷ Loc. Cit.

⁹⁸ De Hoop Scheffer, op. cit., p. 52f.

believers' baptism, and rejected infant baptism;
but they did not practice immersion as the proper mode
of baptism.

G. THE CALVINISTS OR PRESBYTERIANS.

The Calvinists received their name from John Calvin (1509-1563). Calvin was one of the greatest reformers in Protestantism, and his influence has been more far-reaching than that of practically any other man among the Protestant leaders. Newman characterizes the Calvinistic Reformation as (1) a continuation of Zwinglianism; (2) a gathering up of the vital elements of Zwinglianism and Lutheranism with a tendency and design to mediate between the two and to unite the Protestant forces; and (3) in many ways an original movement.⁹⁹

Space and time do not permit a lengthy discussion of Calvin's life, his work in Geneva, and his writings. There are many phases of Calvinism into which it will be impossible to go. Before stating the teachings of Calvin and his followers on baptism, it should be noted that this group was in later years called the Reformed Church, and was the forerunner of Presbyterianism. The Presbyterian Church was the outcome of Calvin's system of church government and discipline. Calvinism, however, is more than a denomination. It is a system of thought or doctrine, and has influenced many denominations.

99 Newman, op. cit., p. 201.

Calvinism was adopted not only by the Presbyterians, but it influenced Puritans, Baptists, and many others. In the next section of this thesis a fuller statement will be made about the effect of Calvinism on Puritanism.

Sources of information on the Calvinistic teachings on baptism include (1) Calvin's statements seen in the Institutes, his Commentary on Acts, his Catechism and his Liturgy which included his manner of administering the sacraments, (2) The French Confession of Faith issued in 1559, (3) The Scotch Confession of 1560, (4) The Belgic Confession issued in 1561, (5) the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566, (6) the Saxon Visitation Articles of 1592, (7) the Westminster Confession of Faith in 1647 and (8) the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Statements from all these sources will reveal the teachings on baptism among the Calvinists or Presbyterians around 1600.

Calvin's Writings. In the Institutes, published in 1536, Calvin wrote:

Whether the baptized person is wholly immersed, and that three times or once, or whether water is only poured or sprinkled upon him, is of no consequence. In that matter churches ought to be free according to the different countries. The very word baptize, however, signifies to immerse, and it is certain that immersion was

observed by the ancient church.¹⁰⁰

In his Commentary on Acts, his explanation of 8:38 is as follows:

'They descended into the water'. Here we perceive what was the rite of baptizing among the ancients, for they immersed the whole body; now the custom has become established that the minister only sprinkles the body or the head.¹⁰¹

The Liturgy used in the church in Geneva contained Calvin's form of administering the sacraments. This was published in 1545, and contained this statement about baptism, "Then the minister of baptism pours water on the infant, saying, 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost'¹⁰²". These statements indicate clearly that Calvin did not think the form or mode of baptism too important; and though he admitted immersion as the mode of the early New Testament church, he did not think it necessary now. Baptism was to be administered to infants by pouring or sprinkling water on the head.

The French Confession of Faith. The French Confession of Faith, prepared by Calvin and his pupil De Chandieu in 1559, was adopted by the Synod of La Rochelle

¹⁰⁰ John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Vol. IV., Chap. 15, sec. 19.

¹⁰¹ John Calvin, Commentary on Acts, Vol. I., p. 304.

¹⁰² John Calvin, Liturgy.

in 1571 and was called the Confession of Rochelle.

It is a clear statement of Calvin's views. In section xxviii. this statement is made concerning baptism:

Nevertheless, as some trace of the church is left in the papacy, and the virtue and substance of baptism remain, and as the efficacy of baptism does not depend upon the person who administers it, we confess that those baptized in it do not need a second baptism. But on account of its corruptions, we can not present children to be baptized in it without incurring pollution.¹⁰³

Calvin believed that the efficacy of baptism did not depend upon the administrator, therefore he could accept that baptism administered in the church of Rome. He would not, however, present children to it for baptism, but administered it in his own church. Section xxxiv. continues:

We believe that the sacraments are added to the Word for more ample confirmation, that they may be to us pledges and seals of the grace of God, and by this means aid and comfort our faith, because of the infirmity which is in us, and that they are outward signs through which God operates by his Spirit. . . . yet we hold that their substance and truth is in Jesus Christ, and that of themselves they are only smoke and shadow.¹⁰⁴

Baptism, then, to Calvin would be an outward sign of the work of God's Spirit, and only a pledge or seal of the grace of God. He did not, as the Catholics, believe that

¹⁰³ Schaff, op. cit., p. 276.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., pp. 378,379.

the sacraments could confer grace, but only signify it.

Section xxxv. of this confession then states:

We confess only two sacraments common to the whole church, of which the first, baptism, is given as a pledge of our adoption; for by it we are grafted into the body of Christ, so as to be washed and cleansed by his blood, and then renewed in purity of life by his Holy Spirit. We hold, also, that although we are baptized only once, yet the gain that it symbolizes to us reaches over our whole lives and to our death, so that we have a lasting witness that Jesus Christ will always be our justification and sanctification. Nevertheless, although it is a Sacrament of faith, and penitence, yet as God receives little children into the church with their fathers, we say, upon the authority of Jesus Christ, that the children of believing parents should be baptized.¹⁰⁵

The Scotch Confession of Faith. The Protestants triumphed in Scotland in 1560, and Parliament commissioned Knox and others to draw up a Confession of Faith. The statement of doctrine drawn up by them was called the Scotch Confession of Faith and was strongly Calvinistic. It remained the standard of doctrine in Scotland until the Westminster Confession of Faith set forth the same doctrines more elaborately in 1647.¹⁰⁶ This confession has several references to baptism. Article xxi. states:

And this we utterlie damne the vanitie of thay
that affirme Sacramentes to be nathing ellis bot

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 379f.

¹⁰⁶ Newman, op. cit., p. 242.

naked and baire signes. No, wee assuredlie beleeve that be baptisme we ar ingrafted in Christ Jesus, to be made partakers of his justice, be quihilk /by which/ our sinnes ar covered and remitted.107

Article xxii. deals with the administration of the sacraments and makes this assertion:

That Sacramentes be richtlie ministrat, we judge twa things requisite; the ane, that they be ministrat be lauchful ministers. . . the uther, that they be ministrat in sik elements, in sik sort, as God hes appoynted; else, we affirme, that they cease to be the richt Sacraments of Christ Jesus.108

Calvin had stated that the character of the minister did not affect the validity of the sacrament. This Scotch Confession insists on having a lawful minister to perform the sacrament, but does not mention the character of the minister. It also maintains that if the sacraments are not performed or administered in the elements prescribed by God, they are not true sacraments of Jesus Christ. Those who are proper subjects for baptism are named in article xxiii. of the confession:

We confesse & acknowledge that Baptisme apperteinis asweil to the infants of the faithfull, as unto them that be of age and discretion: and so we damne the error of the Anabaptists, who denies baptisme to apperteine to children, before that they have faith and understanding.109

107 Schaff, op. cit., pp. 467, 468.

108 Ibid., p. 471.

109 Ibid., p. 474.

This Confession follows the French Confession of Calvin the year before in recognizing the baptism of infant.

The Belgic Confession. The position of the Reformed or Calvinistic Church is further seen in the Belgic Confession of 1561. It was composed by Guy De Brēs for the churches in Flanders and the Netherlands. It was adopted by a Reformed Synod at Emden in 1571 and by the National Synod of Dort in 1619 after a careful revision. This Confession, in Article xxxiii., says of the sacraments, "for they are visible signs and seals of an inward and invisible thing, by means whereof God worketh in us by the power of the Holy Ghost".¹¹⁰ Then Article xxxiv. states concerning baptism:

. . . he, [Jesus Christ], having abolished circumcision, which was done with blood, hath instituted the Sacrament of baptism instead thereof, by which we are received into the church of God. . . . Therefore he has commanded all those who are his to be baptized with pure water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: thereby signifying to us, that as water washeth away the filth of the body, when poured upon it, and is seen on the body of the baptized, when sprinkled upon him, so doth the blood of Christ, by the power of the Holy Ghost, internally sprinkle the soul, cleanse it from its sins, and regenerate us from children of wrath to children of God. . . . Therefore, the ministers, on their

110 Ibid., p. 424.

part, administer the sacrament, and that which is visible, but our Lord giveth that which is signified by the Sacrament, namely the gifts of invisible grace. . . .111

This part of the Confession declares that baptism in the New Testament was substituted for circumcision in the Old Testament. Because circumcision was administered to the infants, it is believed that baptism should also be administered to them. This baptism is by sprinkling or pouring water upon the subject, and is a sign of the cleansing of the soul from sin by the blood of Jesus Christ. The act of baptism does not give grace, for that is invisible and is given by Christ. Concerning rebaptism the Confession states in the same article:

Therefore, we believe that every man who is earnestly studious of obtaining life eternal ought to be but once baptized with this only Baptism, without ever repeating the same: since we can not be born twice. . . . therefore we detest the error of the Anabaptists, who are not content with the one only baptism they have once received, and moreover condemn the baptism of the infants of believers, who, we believe, ought to be baptized and sealed with the sign of the covenant. . . .112

Here is seen the anathema placed on the Anabaptists for their rejection of infant baptism, and their rebaptism of believers only. The plea is made for infant baptism on the basis of the covenant signified by circumcision.

111 Ibid., pp. 425, 426.

112 Ibid., p. 427.

The Confession continues "moreover, what circumcision was to the Jews, that Baptism is to our children. And for this reason Paul calls Baptism the circumcision of Christ".¹¹³

The Second Helvetic Confession. Another statement of the Calvinistic position on baptism is seen in the Second Helvetic Confession, published in 1566. In chapter xx. it is stated:

Baptism was instituted and consecrated by God, and the first that baptized was John, who dipped Christ in the water in Jordon. . . Hence baptism is called by some a sign of initiation for God's people, whereby the elect of God are consecrated unto God. . . There is but one baptism in the Church of God; for it is sufficient to be once baptized or consecrated unto God. For baptism once received does continue all a man's life, and is a perpetual sealing of our adoption unto us. For to be baptized in the name of Christ is to be enrolled, entered, and received into the covenant and family, and so into the inheritance, of the sons of God. . . Moreover, by the sacrament of baptism God does separate us from all other religions and nations, and does consecrate us a peculiar people to himself. We therefore, by being baptized, do confess our faith, and are bound to give unto God obedience, mortification of the flesh, and newness of life. . .114

This Confession states what practically all the other Calvinistic Confessions assert. It even adds, "we condemn the Anabaptists, who deny that young infants,¹¹⁵ born of faithful parents, are to be baptized".

113 Ibid., p. 428.

114 Ibid., p. 889f.

115 Ibid., p. 891.

The Saxon Visitation Articles. One of the clearest and most significant statements of the Calvinistic doctrine of baptism is found in the Saxon Visitation Articles, composed in 1592 by a group of Lutherans against crypto-Calvinism in Electoral Saxony. These articles are a condensed statement of the differences between Lutheranism and Calvinism. They list the "false and erroneous doctrines of the Calvinists" as follows:

On Holy Baptism

- I. That Baptism is an external washing of water, by which a certain internal ablution from sin is merely signified.
- II. That Baptism does not work nor confer regeneration, faith, the grace of God, and salvation, but only signifies them.
- III. That not all who are baptized in water, but the elect only, obtain by it the grace of Christ and the gifts of faith.
- IV. That regeneration doth not take place in and with baptism, but afterwards, at a more advanced age, yea with many not before old age.
- V. That salvation doth not depend on Baptism and therefore in cases of necessity should not be required in the church; but when the ordinary minister of the church is wanting, the infant should be permitted to die without baptism.
- VI. The infants of Christians are already holy before baptism, in the womb of the mother, and even in the womb of the mother are received into the covenant of eternal life: otherwise the sacrament of baptism could not be conferred on them.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 188, 189.

This presentation of the beliefs of the Calvinists does not need any explanation, but is a distinct statement of their views.

The Westminster Confession of Faith. Not long after the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Calvinists were called Presbyterians. The most important statement of doctrine ever set forth by this group is the Westminster Confession of Faith. It sums up all the other Calvinistic Confessions and statements of belief, and has remained authoritative for the Presbyterians since its publication in 1647. This Confession has these statements on baptism:

Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted of God, to represent Christ and his benefits, and to confirm our interest in him: as also to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the church and the rest of the world. . . . There is in every Sacrament a spiritual relation or sacramental union, between the sign and the thing signified. . . . The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments, rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them. Neither doth the efficacy of a sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it, but upon the work of the Spirit, and the word of institution. . . . There be only two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the gospel, that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord: neither of which may be dispensed by any but by a minister of the word lawfully ordained. . . .117

117 Ibid., p. 660.

These are expressions much like those already seen in the earlier Calvinistic Confessions of Faith. Continuing, it states:

Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ to walk in newness of life. . . The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the Gospel lawfully called thereunto. Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person. Not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized. Although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it, as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated. The efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet, notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, in his appointed time. The sacrament of baptism is but once to be administered to any person.¹¹⁸

The Westminster Shorter Catechism. To more fully explain the contents of the Westminster Confession of

¹¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 660-663.

Faith, these statements are given from the Westminster Shorter Catechism of 1647:

Question 94: What is baptism?

Answer: Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

Question 95: To whom is baptism to be administered?

Answer: Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible church, are to be baptized.¹¹⁹

By the time of the Westminster Assembly in 1647 there was a great deal of discussion over the mode of baptism. The Baptists of England had already adopted immersion by 1641, and this mode was rapidly gaining acceptance. There were many in England who vigorously opposed this innovation in baptism. The Westminster Assembly sought to make a decision on which form should be followed. Lightfoot in his Works describes what took place:

Then fell we upon the work of the day, which was about baptizing of the child--whether to dip or sprinkle him. And this proposition, 'it is lawful and sufficient to besprinkle the child', had been canvassed before our adjourning, and was ready now to vote. But I spoke against it as being very unfit to vote that it is lawful to

¹¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 696, 697.

sprinkle when every one grants it. Whereupon it was fallen upon, sprinkling being granted, whether dipping should be tolerated with it. And here fell we upon a large and long discourse whether dipping were essential or used in the first institution or in the Jew's custom. Mr. Coleman went about in a large discourse to prove tauveleh to be 'dipping over head', which I answered at large. After a long dispute it was at last put to the question whether the Directory should run: 'The minister shall take water, and sprinkle or pour it with his hand upon the face or forehead of the child'; and it was voted so indifferently that we were glad to count names twice; for so many were unwilling to have dipping excluded that the vote came to an equality, within one, for the one side was twenty-four, the other twenty-five, the twenty-four for the reserving of dipping, and the twenty-five against it. And then grew a great heat upon it; and when we had done all, we concluded upon nothing in it, but the business was recommitted. . . The following day it was decided that the Directory should read: 'He is to baptize the child with water, which, for the manner of so doing, is not only lawful, but also sufficient and most expedient, to be by pouring or sprinkling water on the face of the child, without any other ceremony'.¹²⁰

Thus we observe that pouring and sprinkling were used almost altogether by the Presbyterians in England by 1647. Whitsitt, in A Question in Baptist History, said:

By the year 1644 the Presbyterians of England and Scotland had even traveled far enough to decide by a formal vote in the Assembly at Westminster that immersion was not a proper form in which to administer baptism.¹²¹

¹²⁰ John Lightfoot, Works, Vol. XIII., pp. 300, 301.

¹²¹ Whitsitt, op. cit., p. 33.

Whitsitt also adds that "generally speaking, the Reformed or Presbyterian church was indifferent, if not opposed, to immersion"¹²².

This section of this thesis will be concluded with Wall's explanation of how these ideas of the Presbyterians were received from Calvin. In his History of Infant Baptism, (Vol. II, pp. 308-310), he wrote:

Pouring was not in Queen Mary's time used but in case of necessity. But there are apparent reasons why that custom should alter during Queen Elizabeth's reign. The first refers to the latitude allowed in the liturgy of Edward VI., and adds: 'another thing that had a greater influence than this was that many of our English divines and other people had, during Queen Mary's bloody reign, fled into Germany, Switzerland, etc.: and coming back in Queen Elizabeth's time, they brought with them a great love to the customs of those Protestant churches wherein they had sojourned; and especially the authority of Calvin and the rules which he had established at Geneva, had a mighty influence on a great number of our people about that time. . . . And there was added to all this the resolution of such a man as Dr. Whitaker, Regius Professor at Cambridge--'though in case of grown persons that are in health I think dipping to be better, yet in the case of infants and of sickly people I think sprinkling sufficient'--the inclination of the people backed with these authorities, carried the practice against the Rubric, which still required dipping, except in case of weakness, so that in the later times of Queen Elizabeth and during the reigns of King James and of King Charles I, very few children were dipped in the font.¹²³

¹²² Loc. Cit.

¹²³ Burrage, op. cit., p. 166f.

Summary of the Teachings of the Calvinists on Baptism. Around 1600 the Calvinists or Presbyterians taught the following things about baptism: (1) Baptism is one of the two ordinances instituted by Christ, (2) Baptism is an external washing of water, by which a certain internal ablution from sin is signified, (3) Baptism does not work nor confer regeneration, faith, the grace of God, and salvation, but only signifies them, (4) Regeneration does not take place at baptism but at a more advanced age, (5) Baptism is administered to the infants of believing parents, (6) The ordained Minister should administer baptism, and if he is not available, the infant should be permitted to die without baptism, (7) Baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon a person, and dipping is not necessary, and (8) Baptism is to be administered only once.

H. THE PURITANS AND SEPARATISTS.

A Brief History of the Rise of Puritanism. In the preceding section the Calvinists and the Presbyterians were treated together, for Calvinism is a system of thought which is not confined to one denomination, or religious group, but which found fullest expression in the Presbyterian denomination. For this same reason, the Puritans and Separatists are discussed together in this section. Puritanism was a type of thought which greatly influenced the Church of England, the Separatists, Baptists, Presbyterians and others. The Separatists grew out of the Puritan movement, and according to Haller in The Rise of Puritanism, "Separatism was the extreme expression of the religious individualism of Puritan faith and doctrine".¹²⁴

After the Elizabethan Settlement of religion in England, there were many within the church who were greatly dissatisfied over the religious situation. They had hoped for many reforms in the discipline and doctrine of the Church of England. They did not desire to depart from the main body of the church, but hoped, rather, to reform the church from within. The Anglican church was characterized

¹²⁴ William Haller, The Rise of Puritanism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), p. 181.

by worldliness and corruption. It had retained many of the Roman Catholic practices and doctrines. The Puritans, many of whom were the Marian exiles who learned about Protestantism while on the Continent, longed for a purer church.

Walker, in The Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism, stated:

Even the Puritans of England, who labored under Elizabeth for the purification and full Protestantizing of the establishment, and from whom the majority of early Congregationalists were to come, held to the church membership of all non-excommunicate Englishmen, and looked upon the true method of reform as a vigorous purging from within by the rigid enforcement of discipline, the appointment of the officers whom they believed to be designated in the Scripture model, and the aid of civil magistrates, rather than a separation from the national church.¹²⁵

From Puritans to Separatists. For approximately two decades this group remained within the Church of England and were known as Puritans. When they saw no hope of gaining the desired reforms and changes some of them began to withdraw and form congregational groups. They were known as Separatists because of their separation from the mother church.

The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge states that:

¹²⁵ Williston Walker, The Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893), p. 3.

Congregationalism is a form of ecclesiastical polity rather than of doctrinal belief. Its distinctive features are two: (1) the absolute independence of each local church; (2) the privilege and duty of cooperative fellowship among the churches. . . The earliest demonstrable Congregationalist church of that era was formed by Robert Browne at Norwich, apparently in 1580.¹²⁶

With the opinion that Robert Browne was the first Congregationalist, Walker agrees, for he says "the first Englishman to proclaim congregational principles in writing was Robert Browne".¹²⁷ In speaking of Browne, Haller states that "up to a certain point, nothing distinguished him from the typical Puritan reformer and spiritual preacher".¹²⁸

Robert Browne was born in 1550 at Tolethorpe, Rutlandshire. After his education at Cambridge University he taught school until 1578. He settled in Norwich about 1580, where he was joined by Robert Harrison. They were the leaders of the first Congregational church. Walker says, "at some uncertain time in 1580 or 1581 he formed with others whom he gathered about him the first Congregational church of the long series which has continued since that day".¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Schaff-Herzog, op. cit., Vol. III., p. 231f.

¹²⁷ Walker, op. cit., p. 7.

¹²⁸ Haller, op. cit., p. 181f.

¹²⁹ Walker, op. cit., p. 10.

Because of several persecutions by the Anglican church this group saw that they could not stay in England, "therefore after much deliberation, Browne, Harrison, and a part of the Norwich company emigrated to the city of Middleburg in the Dutch province of Zeland, probably in the autumn of 1581"¹³⁰.

It was while Browne was in Holland that he published his three tracts. Because of quarrels in his church in Middleburg, he went with a few followers from Holland to Scotland in 1583. By 1584 he was back in London where he was imprisoned for his teachings. In 1586, after his release, he went to Northampton, where he was excommunicated from the Church by the Bishop of Peterborough. Up until 1586 he had remained in the Church of England, as a Puritan. Browne failed to follow through with all his principles, and by late in 1586 he was reconciled to the Establishment and appointed master of a grammar school, where he taught until 1591. He was restored to the ministry of the Church of England and died in its service between 1631 and 1633.¹³¹

There is still doubt as to where Browne received his ideas of Congregational government. Dexter thinks he

130 Ibid., p. 11.

131 Ibid., p. 8.

arrived at them independently and was a disciple of no one. Douglas Campbell maintains that he derived most of his important doctrines from the Anabaptists. There are many reasons why it seems that Browne probably was influenced by the Anabaptists. At least there was a similarity between his major tenets and some of the beliefs of the Anabaptists. "But, on the other hand, Browne utterly rejected the great Anabaptist tenet of believers' baptism".¹³² Walker asserts that "it is safe to affirm that he had no conscious indebtedness to the Anabaptists."¹³³

In Browne's tract, called the Book Which Sheweth the Life and Manners of all True Christians, these statements about baptism are found:

39. How must Baptisme be vsed, as a seale of this covenant? They must be duellie presented, and offered to God and the church, which are to be Baptized. They must be duellie received vnto grace and fellowship.

40. How must they be presented and offered? The children of the faithfull, though they be infants are to be offered to God and the church, that they may be Baptized. Also those infantes or children which are of the householde of the faithfull, and vnder their full power. Also all of discretion which are not baptized, if they holde the Christian profession, and shewe forth the same. . . .

43. Howe must the signe be applied thereto? The bodies of the parties baptized, must be washed

132 Ibid., p. 15f.

133 Ibid., p. 16.

wt water, or sprinckled or dipped, in the name of the Father and of ye Sonne, and of the holy Ghost, vnto the forgevenes of sinnes, and dying thereto in one death and burial with Christ. The preacher must pronounce thē to be baptized into ye bodie and government of Christ, to be taught & professe his lawes, that by his mediatiō & victorie, they might rise againe with him unto holines & happiness for ever. The church must geve thanks for the partie baptised, and praye for his further instruction, and traininge vnto salvation.¹³⁴

The Separatist Confession of Faith and Other Writings. Even after Browne returned to the Established Church, Congregational views spread rapidly. There was a Separatist congregation in London in 1587 or 1588. In 1592, Francis Johnson was chosen pastor of this group and John Greenwood was chosen teacher. In 1589 this group of Separatists published a Confession of Faith. Walker thinks this confession was written by Henry Barrowe and John Greenwood, who were then in prison for their faith. ¹³⁵ Soon after 1592 Greenwood was arrested and executed. Johnson was placed in prison but his life was spared. In 1593 at least fifty-six members of this group followed their pastor into prison. The authorities allowed them to escape late in 1593 so they could leave the country.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 20.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 42.

Most of the group found its way to Amsterdam in Holland,
 where it was reorganized in 1595, with Henry Ainsworth
 136
 becoming pastor.

This London-Amsterdam church put forth a Confession
 of Faith sometime in 1596.¹³⁷ In the words of the Brownists
 this Confession was published:

for the cleering of our selves from those vnchristian
 slanders of heresie, schisme, pryde, obstinacie,
 disloyaltie, sedicion, &c. which by our adversaries
 are in all places given out against us.¹³⁸

According to this Confession of Faith:

Baptism is to be administered to the children
 and wards of the members of the local church, . . .
 But baptism does not admit its recipient to the
 full privileges of the church.¹³⁹

In Article 35 of the Confession it is seen that
 these Separatists expected the infants of those who were
 members of the local church to receive baptism, and then
 those who were of years to partake of the Lord's Supper.¹⁴⁰
 Concerning baptism and the supper it states:

But they are in the ordinance of God signes and
 seales of Gods euerlasting couenant, representing

136 Ibid., p. 42f.

137 Ibid., p. 43.

138 Ibid., p. 49.

139 Ibid., p. 46.

140 Ibid., p. 70.

and offering to all the receiuers, but exhibiting only to the true beleeuers the Lord Ieus Christ and all his benefits vnto righteousness, sanctification and eternal lyfe, through faith in his name to the glorie and prayse of God.¹⁴¹

Article 37 of the Confession makes it clear that only the infants who are the "seed of the faithful" may¹⁴² be received.

When the Puritans sent in the Millenary Petition to James I, the Separatists at Amsterdam also sent a copy of their creed of 1598. Receiving no answer from the king, they sent a second document containing a summary of the fourteen points of difference between themselves and the Church of England. In this document there is one reference to baptism, but this does not differ greatly from the position of the English Church. It states that "the Sacraments, being seales of God's covenant ought to be administered only to the faithfull, and Baptisme¹⁴³ to their seed or those under their government".

In the Seven Articles, written by the Leyden Separatist congregation in 1617, just before they moved to America, there is this reference to their practice on baptism in the second note of explanation of point five:

¹⁴¹ Loc. Cit.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 71.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 80.

"We doe administer baptisme only to such infants as
 whereof ye one parente, at ye least, is of some church".¹⁴⁴
 Walker says there was little difference doctrinally between
 the Puritans and the Separatists.¹⁴⁵

A Summary of Puritan and Separatist Views on Baptism.

It has not been sought to give a history of the Puritan movement or the Separatist movement, but simply to show that they were vitally connected with each other, and also to set forth their views on baptism around 1600. These views, as seen in their declaration of faith, were very similar to the views set forth by the Church of England. All the Puritan and Separatist leaders, and most of their adherents, were at one time members of the Church of England. Their differences were not primarily in the realm of doctrine.

The Puritans and Separatists practiced infant baptism, administered the rite by sprinkling or pouring, called it a sacrament, and used it as a sign of the covenant. These groups did have the idea of baptism as a seal or sign of the death to sin and burial with Christ.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 91.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 97.

This was the result of the influence of Calvinism. The Puritans and Separatists did not practice the type of baptism which corresponds to the Baptist principle.

Thus it is seen that around 1600 there were few, if any, who practiced the Baptist principle of baptism.

4. BAPTIST SUCCESSION: TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT.

It is not the purpose of this work to treat Baptist Succession, or to show a further connection between present day Baptists and Anabaptists. Either of these phases of Baptist history would make an interesting and worthy project of study. A statement must be made, however, about succession, for it is closely related to the subject. There are two schools of thought among Baptists concerning their history: Those who believe in an absolute succession from the New Testament period to the present time, and those who believe that traceable Baptist history goes only to the beginning of the seventeenth century. Historians who belong to the former group attempt to show continual succession of Baptists from John the Baptist. Examples of this group are seen in John T. Christian's A History of Baptists, Carroll's The Trail of Blood, Armitage's History of Baptists and others. To show an unbroken succession, many groups who differ from Roman Catholics are called Baptists. This list of "Baptists" usually includes Montanists, Donatists, Paulicians, Waldenses, Henricians, Petrobruscians, Wycliffites, Hussites, and Anabaptists.¹⁴⁶ They fail, however, to call

¹⁴⁶ Albert Henry Newman, A History of Anti-Pedobaptism from the Rise of Pedobaptism to 1609 (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1902), pp. 15-29.

attention to the fact that the leaders of all these groups came out of the Catholic church, and that these groups held many doctrines which Baptists could not now accept. Those who hold to the latter view submit that there is a continuity of Baptist belief among groups all through the centuries of Christianity, though the people who held them were not called Baptists. There have been Baptist-like people since the time of the Apostles, but known history does not give them an unbroken line of succession,¹⁴⁷ and there are periods where their history is untraceable.

Those who believe in Baptist succession from the time of Christ stoutly refuse to accept the theory that the Baptists were ever connected with the Roman Catholic Church. But in order to prove succession they are obligated to identify Baptists with Anabaptists whose leaders came, without doubt, from the Catholic church. Hubmaier and all the other Anabaptist leaders of any note during the first half of the sixteenth century were formerly priests or members of the Roman church. So it seems that the Successionists must decide whether Baptists came out of Romanism in the sixteenth century as Ana-

¹⁴⁷ Henry C. Vedder, A Short History of the Baptists (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1945), p. 4f.

baptists, or whether they had an independent beginning as Baptists in the early part of the seventeenth century.

Leading Baptist historians seem to be of the opinion that it is of more importance to find in the Baptist churches of today the principles and practices set forth in the New Testament than to be able to trace an unbroken line of succession back to the Apostles.¹⁴⁸ The Roman Catholic Church is the best example of the fact that succession alone is not enough to make a true church. It has historical continuity, but is far away from the New Testament. The succession which Baptists seek should be one of doctrine and spirit. Laslie summed it up well when he said:

In truth, the dogma of organic church succession is of Roman Catholic origin, and is founded not upon New Testament truth, but rather upon the Romanistic pronouncement that a succession of persons is necessary to impart life and verity to the church, 'the body of Christ'. Yet nowhere in the New Testament do we find justification for the frequently urged contention that the right to administer the ordinances of the church and the power to impart divine life to the church depends upon the historic succession of any persons or churches. Such is not found within the lids of Holy Writ, but the voice of Inspiration has said 'whoso abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God; he that abideth in the teaching the same

¹⁴⁸ Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 28; Vedder, *op. cit.*, p. 7; T. A. H. Laslie, Laslie's History of the General Baptists (Poplar Bluff, Missouri: General Baptist Publishing House, 1938), p. 3f.

hath the Father and the Son. If any man cometh to you and hath not this teaching, receive him not' That this succession of doctrine is the only succession which can be certainly traced, and that it is the only succession worth anything to the church is agreed to by nearly all of the writers of the early church as well as the most of those authors of the middle and modern ages.¹⁴⁹

With the opinion that visible succession is not necessary Vedder agrees. He states:

. . . If every church of Christ were today to become apostate, it would be possible and right for any true believers to organize tomorrow another church on the apostolic model of faith and practice, and that church would have the only apostolic succession worth having--a succession of faith in the Lord Christ and obedience to him.¹⁵⁰

One's view of succession will determine his view of many other facts in Baptist history. If it is necessary to the existence of a true church to have a visible succession, then it is of great necessity that one be able to trace a connected history of Baptists back to the Apostles. If however, it is agreed that visible succession is not necessary for a true church of the Lord Jesus Christ, then one does not have to labor endlessly to prove such a continuity. There seem to have always been those who held New Testament principles, and Baptists believe themselves to be much nearer the New Testament than those who try to prove their historical succession.

¹⁴⁹ Laslie, op. cit., pp. 3, 4.

¹⁵⁰ Vedder, op. cit., p. 71.

Baptist historians who try to make a case for succession must of necessity say that Baptists have always believed and practiced the same things about baptism. History does not substantiate the belief that the principle of "baptism for believers only by immersion only" has always been in existence. If some small groups who held this principle were in existence during certain periods of history, there seems to be no record of that existence.

5. IMMERSION.

For the first thirteen centuries immersion was the most commonly used mode of baptism.¹⁵¹ After the Pope of Rome early in the Thirteenth Century issued an edict to change the mode, the practice of baptism by aspersion became prevalent, and aspersion became so much used that the ancient mode seems almost to have vanished from the earth.¹⁵² By the middle of the sixteenth century there were few, if any, who practiced baptism by immersion.¹⁵³ Even when immersion was used it was administered to infants, so it was not real Baptist baptism.

151 Laslie, op. cit., p. 14.

152 Ibid., p. 15.

153 William H. Whitsitt, A Question in Baptist History: Whether the Anabaptists in England Practiced Immersion Before the Year 1641? (Louisville, Kentucky: Chas. T. Dearing Co., 1896), p. 144f.

W. H. Whitsitt has given substantial proof that by 1600 immersion as a form of baptism was practically a lost practice.¹⁵⁴ But there is adequate historical evidence that immersion was renewed during the seventeenth century. This is the opinion of such men as Vedder, A Short History of Baptists, p. 207; Newman, A Manual of Church History, Vol. II., p. 289; Whitsitt, A Question in Baptist History, p. 144f; Lofton, English Baptist Reformation, preface p. vi.; Crosby, A History of the English Baptists, p. 97; Carlile, The Story of the English Baptists, pp. 83, 84; Scheffer, A History of the Free Churchmen of the Dutch Republic, p. 180; McGlothlin, Baptist Confessions of Faith, p. 110, and many others.

6. A PREVIEW OF REMAINING CHAPTERS.

In the second chapter some attention is given to the General Baptists up to 1644. The important men in this study are John Smyth, Thomas Helwys and John Murton. Their views and practices relative to baptism are set forth. The testimony of secondary sources as well as the writings of Smyth and Helwys furnished the material for this chapter.

¹⁵⁴ Whitsitt, loc. cit.; Vedder, op. cit., p. 207; A. H. Newman, A Manual of Church History (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1931), Vol. II, p. 289.

In chapter three the teachings and practices of Particular Baptists up to 1644 are considered. The study here is centered around Henry Jacob, John Lathrop, John Spilsbury and Henry Jessey. This period cannot be studied without giving some attention to the Blunt mission to Holland, and the "1641 theory" advocated by Whitsitt in A Question in Baptist History. It is necessary also to say something about the authenticity of the Jessey Church Records and the Kiffin Manuscript, for upon the validity of these records hinges the truth or falsity of much Baptist History that has been written.

In chapter four is discussed the references to baptism in the Baptist Confessions of Faith issued from 1644 to 1689. The summary and conclusions of this study are presented in the last chapter.

An attempt has been made to use all the primary source materials possible. The writings of the leading men involved were studied wherever available. There is such an abundance of secondary sources that the problem of selection is a large one. An effort has been made to use as many of these references as possible in order to gain a greater perspective and understanding of the subject. Especially in the controversial matters, the opinions of just one or two writers have not been accepted, but many

authors have been consulted and the concensus of the great majority has been presented. A complete list of all the books used is given in the Bibliography.

CHAPTER II
TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES ON BAPTISM AMONG THE GENERAL
BAPTISTS IN ENGLAND UP TO 1644

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER II

TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES ON BAPTISM AMONG THE GENERAL BAPTISTS IN ENGLAND UP TO 1644

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- A. The Church of England and the Puritan movement.
- B. The desire of the Separatists.
- C. Early life and education of John Smyth.
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- E. The persecution under James I. and removal of the congregation to Amsterdam.
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- D. As A Seeker.
 - (1) Repudiation of his self-baptism.
 - (2) His attempt to join the Mennonites.
 - (3) His views expressed in confessions of faith.

3. THE TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES OF THOMAS HELWYS AND JOHN MURTON ON BAPTISM.

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- B. His confession of faith.
- C. The first Book by Baptists.
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CHAPTER II

TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES ON BAPTISM AMONG THE GENERAL BAPTISTS IN ENGLAND UP TO 1644

1. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RISE OF GENERAL BAPTISTS.

No attempt is made here to give a complete history of the General Baptists. However, it is necessary to relate briefly the beginning of the first English General Baptist church.

The Church Of England And The Puritan Movement.

For almost half a century the Church of England had been dealing with the Puritan movement which sought to bring a new reformation within the church. This movement began as early as 1550 when Hooper, who was appointed to the See of Gloucester, refused to wear the robes of the priesthood. This led to the Vestiarian Controversy.¹ From the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, there were those who were dissatisfied with the religious situation in England. They soon saw that the new Queen could not be depended upon to bring about the much needed reforms in the church. The Puritans wanted to introduce their discipline and practice into the Church of

¹ John Tulloch, English Puritanism And Its Leaders (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1861), p. 8f.

England, without withdrawing from that church.² For at least two decades before any withdrew from the church of England they tried to accomplish that purpose.

The Desire Of The Separatists. There were some who saw no possibility of accomplishing the reforms and changes desired, so they came out from the church and became known as Separatists, or Congregationalists.³ Some of the leaders in this Non-conformist, or Separatist group, were Robert Browne, Robert Harrison, Henry Barrowe, John Greenwood, Francis Johnson and John Smyth.⁴ Haller, in The Rise Of Puritanism, says that Separatism was the supreme expression⁵ of the religious individualism of Puritan faith and doctrine. The Separatists held many doctrines in contrast to those of the Church of England. The differences on baptism have been pointed out in the preceding chapter. Some of these Separatists, especially Smyth, saw that in Separatism too much

² Williston Walker, A History Of The Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945), p. 460.

³ Ibid., p. 461.

⁴ Ibid., p. 461.

⁵ William Haller, The Rise Of Puritanism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), p. 181.

of the doctrine of the church of England was retained. Smyth withdrew from them to become the founder of the General Baptists.

Early Life And Education Of John Smyth. Smyth, the leader of the General Baptist movement, was born about 1570, and little is known about his childhood and early life. He was educated at Cambridge University where he was a pupil and friend of Francis Johnson, who became an outstanding Separatist leader.⁶ He received his Master's degree from Cambridge in 1593, and being ordained to the clergy of the Church of England by Bishop Wickham of Lincoln, became lecturer or preacher in that city about 1600.

Smyth's Withdrawal From The Church Of England. He was dismissed by vote of the Church of England congregation in Lincoln in 1602, but appears to have held the office until 1605.⁷ Walker says 1602 was probably the date of the beginning of Smyth's group in Gainsborough.⁸ The exact date of his break with the Church of England and the beginning of the Separatist group at Gainsborough is unknown, but it was between 1602 and 1605. Though Smyth was a member of

⁶ Henry C. Vedder, A Short History Of The Baptists (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1945), p. 202.

⁷ Vedder, loc. cit.

⁸ Walker, op. cit., p. 465.

the church of England to about 1602, and a member of its clergy, he early leaned toward Puritanism.⁹ Because of his close contact with the Separatists in Lincoln he soon became convinced of the rightness of their position. According to Smyth's own testimony, he passed through nine months of doubt before deciding to leave the mother church.¹⁰ At Gainsborough he was associated with Thomas Helwys and John Murton who were later to play such leading roles in the General Baptist movement. The group at Gainsborough made the famous covenant "to walk in all his ways made known or to be made known unto them".¹¹

The Persecution Under James I., And Removal Of The Congregation To Amsterdam. The Persecution of James I. of England was in full force by 1606. When James I. came to the throne he received the "Millenary Petition" from his Puritan subjects expressing their desires for religious reforms. These requests were denied and the Puritans were ordered to conform. Because of the severity of the per-

⁹ A. H. Newman, A History Of Anti-Pedobaptism (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1902), p. 376.

¹⁰ W. T. Whitley, Works Of John Smyth Vol. II., p. 337.

¹¹ Newman, loc. cit.

secution the group from Gainsborough went to Holland and settled at Amsterdam. They did not join themselves to the group of Separatists already established there by Francis Johnson and Henry Ainsworth, but they became "the Second English Church at Amsterdam". Smyth outlined the differences between his group and the "Ancient Brethren of the Separation". These differences were on Church Government and forms of worship as well as on Baptism.¹² Newman states:

That they should have proceeded along independent lines at Amsterdam was natural, seeing that their numbers were sufficient and that they had so learned and so highly esteemed a minister as Smyth, whose activity would have been hampered if with his congregation he had entered into the fellowship of a church already well organized and fully officered.¹³

Smyth's Connection With The Mennonites, And His
Change Of Views On Baptism. It was in Amsterdam that Smyth became acquainted with the Mennonites and with the theology of Jacob Arminius.¹⁴ He had already become dissatisfied with the position taken by the Church of England on baptism; and his own private study, as well as his contact with the Mennonites, convinced him that infant baptism was not supported by the Scriptures. He expressed his belief in a regenerate

12 Whitley, op. cit., p. 565.

13 Newman, op. cit., p. 377.

14 Vedder, op. cit., p. 203.

church membership when he said:

I must needs say that he is truly called, truly professed, is truly baptized, and so he by reason of his outward true calling, true profession of the true faith, and true baptism is discerned & judged to be inwardly baptized, & that truly a company of men thus called, professing & baptized are saynts.¹⁵

When he became convinced that infant baptism was not scriptural, and that baptism should be only upon one's profession of faith, he saw that he had never been scripturally baptized. Whereupon, in 1608, he baptized himself and became known as the "Se-Baptist".¹⁶ According to the leading historians this baptism was by pouring.¹⁷ He soon renounced his baptism, for he was convinced that the Mennonites were the Apostolic Church and that he had blundered in beginning a new church and a new baptism. He sought admission into a Mennonite church, but was not accepted.¹⁸ It was not until after his death that his followers gained admission into the Mennonite church.

The Division Between Smyth And Helwys. There was a

¹⁵ Whitley, op. cit., p. 383.

¹⁶ Vedder, loc. cit.

¹⁷ Walker, op. cit., p. 465.

¹⁸ John C. Carlile, The Story Of The English Baptists (London: James Clark and Co., 1905), p. 69.

division between Smyth and his two leading followers, Thomas Helwys and John Murton. Following this split the latter two, in 1611, returned to England with a large portion of the church.¹⁹ This became the first permanent Baptist Church on English soil, and was known, because of its Arminian position,²⁰ as a "General Baptist" church. Smyth, Helwys, and Murton are called by Newman "the Fathers of the General Baptist Movement".²¹

2. THE TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES OF JOHN SMYTH ON BAPTISM.

The brief account of the beginning of the General Baptist movement is presented as a background for a fuller and more detailed discussion of the teachings of this group on baptism.

Smyth himself went through a progressive development of at least four distinct views on baptism. First as an Anglican, second as a Separatist, third as a Baptist and fourth as a Seeker.

As An Anglican. At first he was a clergyman in the Church of England. Having been reared in that church and educated for its ministry, it is reasonable to suppose that he held to the traditional doctrines. As shown in the prev-

19 Walker, loc. cit.

20 Ibid., p. 466.

21 Newman, op. cit., p. 377.

ious chapter, under the section on the Church of England, baptism was originally administered in that church by dipping or immersion of infants. Before 1600 it was agreed that in case of the weakness of a child it could be baptized by sprinkling or pouring.²² This soon led to the use of sprinkling and pouring altogether, so that by the time of Smyth's connection with the Church of England as a clergyman, the common practice was to sprinkle or pour infants. Immersion was seldom used, and a personal profession of faith in Christ was not demanded.²³

As A Separatist. In withdrawing from the Church of England and joining The Separatists, Smyth adopted a second view of baptism. This is seen in the controversy which he had with Richard Bernard, vicar of Worksop. Bernard expressed Separatist views but when his benefice was about to be taken from him for so doing, he quickly returned to the Church of England. In reply to Bernard's question as to whether baptism pledged to Christ only, or to the faith of the established church, Smyth replied:

²² Henry S. Burrage, The Act Of Baptism In The Christian Church (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1879), p. 155.

²³ Newman, op cit., p. 381.

We will subscribe neither to the Bishop's faith, nor to the Puritan's faith, but to the faith of Christ indefinitely comprehended in the Holy Scriptures. . . . We approve unto you our faith, church and baptisme to be true, and therefore your faith, church and baptisme is false.²⁴

This controversy between Smyth and Bernard began about 1608 when Smyth wrote a letter to Bernard in which he censured Bernard for his position. Bernard had been critical of the king and the Church of England, but would not go as far as Smyth and others went in the Separation. After Smyth went to Gainsborough as pastor, Bernard criticized him severely. Smyth answered these criticisms and objections, and requested a continuance of the discussion, but Bernard ignored the request. Later Bernard sent a letter to Helwys in which he attacked Smyth and the Separation. To this letter Helwys replied, and then Bernard criticized Helwys' letter in a publication now known as The Separatist's Schisme. This was issued on June 18, 1608. Ainsworth, a Cambridge Separatist who was then at Amsterdam, entered the controversy and answered Bernard. Finally Smyth answered in a writing called Paralleles, Censures, Observations. This was a letter divided into nineteen sections in which Smyth took

²⁴ W. T. Whitley, The Works Of John Smyth (Cambridge: University Press, 1915), Vol. II., p. 24.

into account (1) his original letter, to which he added parallels, (2) Bernard's reply, which he censured, and (3) Ainsworth's answer on which he offered observations.²⁵ In this letter Smyth shows that the earlier preaching of Bernard was strongly reformatory. Smyth charged him with handling the Scriptures in such a way "that every man conceived that he would have been a ring leader to reformation".²⁶

He continues:

For the circumstances being considered, that this Scripture (Daniel 3:16-18) was handled when the king urged Subscription & conformity throughout the whole land, & when divers of the forwardest preachers were silenced, & himself then endangered to lose his vicaridge: that then he should thus preach was enough to have brought him within the compass of petty rebellion, in stirring up the myndes of the people against the Kings proceedings: besides the shew of the text might afford that he compared the King to Nebuchadnezzar: Subscription to the Kings commaundement of worshipping the golden image: Refusal of Subscription, to the Refusal of worshipping the golden image: the parts of Subscription to the golden image: the ministers refusing Subscription to the three persons that refused to worship the golden image: their Resolution & courage to the Resolution of those three: The prelates that urged subscription & conformity, to the accusers of the Iews. . . .²⁷

Smyth then points out that Bernard had changed his position since he preached those sermons. Bernard was afraid he would lose his benefice if he continued to set forth such views,

²⁵ Ibid., p. 768.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 333.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 333f.

therefore he ceased such preaching. In speaking of Bernard's return to the Church of England Smyth states:

By this place (2 Kings. 5.18) Mr. Bern. intended to sinne against his conscience for he did acknowledg this truth wee now professe divers tymes, & was vpon the point of separation with some of his people with him: yet loving the world & prefermēt as Naaman is thought to do he chose rather to stay stil in his vicaridge against his conscience, then to leese it & to follow Christ with a good conscience. . . .28

Smyth admits that he too had a difficult struggle in making his decision to leave the Church of England and follow the Separatists. His struggle seems to have been about the same as that through which Bernard went, but he followed through to what he felt was consistency, while Bernard did not have that courage. In referring to his own decision, Smyth says:

And whereas you object against me . . . that before I came to the truth I wrote against it & was distracted to & fro before I saw it cleered to my judgment & conscience, I must needs acknowledg it so to be. . . .29

Smyth would not admit that he ever failed to do that which he saw to be the truth. He wrote:

Shew me, how & when after the acknowledgment of the truth I fell back as you have done many tymes? that I ever yeelded to the prelates conformity, or Subscription, after I once withstood it? & amōg the rest of your follyes ther is one vntruth that I did kneele downe & praise God for Satisfaction

28 Ibid., p. 334.

29 Ibid., p. 336.

after doubting, Not so: I remayned doubting alwayes till I saw the truth after I once doubted, but during the tyme of my doubting which was 9. months at the least I did many actions arguing doubting, but that I ever fel back from any truth I saw I praise God, I can with a good conscience deny it. . . .30

Bernard had accused Smyth and his followers of holding "Brownistical" opinions when they refused to accept the Church of England belief that baptism is not administered into the faith of Christ only but into the faith of the Bishops as well. Smyth's view of baptism is set forth clearly in his statement on the calling, profession and baptism of the saints:

That although an outward calling, profession, and baptisme to the faith be part of the signes of the Saynts: namely, visible marks outwardly: yet they must be thus qualified, els they are nothing but pictures or images, resembling & shadowing Sanctification superficially: For they must be true and inward also: True calling, profession & baptisme & inward calling, profession, & baptisme, are the infallible tokens of Sanctification and Saynts: The inward must be discerned by the outward, the truth must be judged by the word: He that is so called, so professeth, is so baptised as the word teacheth: that is to say: He that is called and Separated from the world, Antichristianisme, & all false ways knowne vnto him: he that professeth that true faith, taught in the New Testament of Christ, which is but one: he that is baptised into that true faith, after that true manner Christ hath prescribed, I must needs say that he is truly called, truly professed, is truly baptised, and

30 Ibid., p. 337.

so he by reason of his outward true calling, true profession of the true faith, and true baptisme is discerned & judged to be inwardly baptised, & that truly a company of men thus called, professing, & baptised, are Saynts. . . .31

Thus it is evident that he believed the body of saints to be made up of those who had been called of God, had made a profession of their faith and had been baptized according to the New Testament. Calling, profession and baptism were to him inward experiences as well as outward signs. The outward should be only a manifestation of that which was inwardly experienced. By this time, Smyth seems to have reached the position of believers' baptism only, for he speaks of inward belief as the thing which qualifies one. It should be noticed, however, that here he does not mention the administrator, or the manner in which baptism is to be administered. When he first left the Church of England, Smyth did not seem to believe a new baptism necessary, but only a covenant of the believers, for he said:

I hold & maintayne out of the word that a cōpany of faithful people Separated & joyned together by a covenant of the L. are a true Church.32

On the basis of this belief, the group at Gainsborough made a covenant to "walk in all his ways made known or to be made

31 Ibid., p. 383.

32 Ibid., p. 386.

known unto them". Smyth could not have done as he did if he had believed that the power of the church had been given only to the Apostles. He insisted that the power to bind and to loosen was given not just to the Apostles but to the whole multitude of Christians.³³ As a Separatist he did not believe in apostolic succession, for he said:

For if the ministreie, & the holy things with the ministerie, come by succession from the Apostles handes, through the Churches of Rome & the Grecians, & that ther are no ministers, but such as are made by thē & frō thē successively, our whole cause of Separation lyeth in the dust & we must disclaime our Schisme which we have made, & our heresies which we hold: but if it be proved that the true ministerie commeth not by succession from the churches of Rome or the Grecians, & that the holy things are not given to the ministry by successiō, but are give first to the body of the church, the faithful, yea though they be but two or three & that both the ministerie and all the powre that the ministerie hath doth flow from the fountayne Christ Iesus, through the body of the church to the presbytery, then is your church & ministerie false, so are the churches of the East & West much more: & then we & those churches only which raise vp their Ministerie from the Election, Aprobation, & ordination of a faithful people, are the true church of Christ. . . .³⁴

With this conviction, Smyth would not hesitate then to start a new church and a new baptism. He felt that he, as a believer in Christ, was in the true succession of the

33 Ibid., p. 387f.

34 Ibid., p. 393f.

Apostles and had all the power which was given to them. Even a small group of two or three had this same power if they were believers and were separated from the things of the world. He said the church had power to baptize and administer the Lord's Supper only after the officers had been chosen.³⁵ He believed in following the plan given in the New Testament for the worship and service of God. He declared:

God indeed commaundeth vs to pray, heare the word, & communicate in the Sacraments, but he also prescribeth both the persons wherewith, & the manner how we must performe these actions: Prayer, hearing the word & partaking in the Sacraments are actions of communion, & ther is in the performance of them a manner of doing (modus agendi) to be observed; We must therfor respect two things in performing these actions of Religion: First that our communion be such as it ought to be . . . Secondly that the actions of our communion be performed after that holy manner & order as the New Testament of Christ teacheth . . . that baptisme be administered simply as Christ teacheth without Godfathers, the crosse, questions to infants. . . .³⁶

While a Separatist Smyth argued that the Church of England was not the true church of Christ, and tried to prove his argument by showing that it did not have the true baptism. He wrote:

The true churches of the Apostolique institution were by baptisme gathered into the Covenant or New Testament of Christ, The Ecclesiastical assemblies

35 Ibid., p. 419.

36 Ibid., p. 457.

of England are not by their baptisme conunitied into the New Testament of Christ, but only into the constitution, ministry, worship & government, & into that faith & doctrine which is by law established in the Land. Ergo: the Ecclesiastical assemblies of England are not the true churches of the Apostolique institution. The ground of the argument is this: that the Apostles baptized men indefinitely into the whole New Testament of Christ & al the ordinances thereof, which was not stinted or limited at the pleasure of men vnder certaine canons, injunctions, articles, or ecclesiastical constitutions, but was large, even as large as the whole word of truth then inspired or written by the Apostles & prophets: whereas the assemblies of England do neither themselves professe the true faith of Christ conteyned in the New Testament, their faith being stinted & limited vnder certaine devised articles & convocatiō howse Synodical decrees or constitutions, wherevnto al the ministers of the lād are bound to Subscribe & which is the faith of the whole nation: Neither therfor do they baptize into the New Testament of Christ indefinitely & simply, but respectively & definitely into that faith & doctrine which is taught in their stinted book of articles, whereto they subscribe which they believe & teach, & whereof the body of that church is, wherein & whereto they are by baptisme admitted & received. . . .37

Smyth maintained that the Church of England had lost the real meaning of baptism and the other ordinances of the church by limiting religion to a set of articles or constitutions. They did not baptize into the whole New Testament, or all the teachings of Christ, but only into a small set of rules and doctrines. Therefore, he insists that the Church of England cannot have the true baptism.

37 Ibid., pp. 465, 466.

The Church of England was not particular about the administrator of baptism. She followed Rome in the belief that it could be given by anyone who happened to use the correct ceremony and words. Concerning the Sacraments Smyth asked:

What are true Sacraments? Is the breaking of bread, and drinking of wine performed by any persons, after any manner, or washing with water likewise, true sacraments? I think you will not say it: it is therefore necessary that there be a concurrence of other matters: viz: that seing Sacraments are in relation and reference, these references or relations must needs be annexed, els they are not true Sacraments: As a baptized person, must baptize into the true faith of Christ, a person capable of baptism.³⁸

He here affirms his belief that a sacrament does not have its full meaning unless it is performed or administered by the proper person and according to the correct form. He specifically says that before baptism can be rightly administered there must be a person capable of baptism, one who has faith in Christ, and his baptism must be administered by one who himself has been baptized. This would rule out infant baptism completely.

After Smyth had become convinced that the way of Separatism was the true way, he renounced his orders in the Church of England and joined the group at Gainsborough. He wrote to Bernard:

³⁸ Ibid., p. 475.

For I utterly renounce your orders which I had from Wickā prelate of Lincolne, when I was chosen Fellow of Christs College in Cambridg: & I received & do retayne my ministry from that particular church whereof I am pastor: Which hath the whol powre of Christ ministeriall delegated to her from Christ her Husband, when he contracted with her.³⁹

Smyth insisted that God would not accept the worship of those who were not in the true church. Being a true church was partly determined by having the true baptism, therefore one's worship and God's acceptance of that worship are related to one's baptism. This relationship is shown in these words:

So in the New Testament no man or communion of men visiblie can be accepted of the L. but such as are described in the New Testament, uiz men Separated from al the abominations of Antichrist, 2 Cor. 6.17: & gathered into the name of Christ Iesus, Mat. 18.20. & being made Disciples have received baptisme whereby they are counited into Christ, Mat. 28.19. If any communion of men otherwise constituted (viz: Men not Separated, not gathered together, not gathered in Christs name, not made Disciples, not baptized truely with the baptisme of the New Testament.) If any such company of men do worship God ther worship is not accepted of God. . . .⁴⁰

He believed that baptism should be administered only upon one's profession of faith, but this should be into the faith of Christ rather than the faith of the Bishops or the faith of the Church of England. He charged that the Church of

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 492, 493.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 494, 495.

England did not baptize into the faith of Christ but into the faith of the Bishops. He said:

I would know into what Faith they are baptized if not into the Faith of the Church of England, they are members of the Church of England, & they professe the faith of the Church of England, are they not then baptized into that Faith of the church whereof they stand as members, & of which Faith they make profession? Are they baptized into one Faith, and do they professe another faith? Or do you think that the Faith of Christ & the Faith of the Church of England are not one? . . . The prelates & Church of England have one Faith, wherto they Subscribe: The Puritanes and their Faction have another Faith, for they wil not Subscribe to the Prelates Faith: Christ and wee of the Separation have a third Faith, for we wil Subscribe neither to the Bbs. Faith, nor the Puritanes Faith, but to the Faith of Christ indefinitely comprehended in the Holy Scriptures. . . .⁴¹

The intention of the one who administered baptism was for Smyth an important phase of this ordinance. Also, he thought the intention of the parents or the Suretys in case of infant baptism helped one to understand the meaning of baptism for a particular group. In speaking of the aim or intention of those responsible for baptism he said:

Now for the first let us consider the intendement of the baptizer: How the ministers of the Church of England intend their baptisme. How the law of the land intendeth baptisme: How the Service-book intendeth & directeth baptisme: how the parents Susceptors or Suretyes do demaund baptisme & consent to baptisme administered & vpon the conceaving of these particulars the baptisme must be censured: Now if al these intend definitely that Faith which is by law

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 514, 515.

established in the Land, & that the partie is baptized into that Faith which they intend, it wil follow necessarily that baptisme is administered not simply & indefinitely into the faith of Christ, but particularly & definitely into that Faith which the Bbs. and the Church of England do teach and professe. . . .⁴²

He felt that because the baptism was into the faith of the church or the bishop, and not into a personal faith in Christ it was not true baptism.

It should be kept in mind that all these references are taken from Smyth's letter to Richard Bernard who did not have the courage to be faithful to his convictions and leave the Church of England for the Separation. These statements from this letter give us the beliefs of Smyth on baptism while he was a member of the Separatist group. He had advanced considerably in his view of this ordinance, but at this period of his life, the development was not complete.

The Separatists agreed that the Church of England was Antichrist, and that a politico-ecclesiastical lord-bishop was the beast spoken of in Revelation. After they rejected the baptism and ordination of the Church of England they were then faced with the question of the value of confirmation at the hands of that church. If the Church of England was Antichrist, what was the value of its baptism? This was the same question which the English had half-a-century earlier asked about the Catholics. They decided

⁴² Ibid., pp. 516, 517.

that though Rome was Antichrist, yet true baptism had been preserved. They argued that the character of the priest did not affect the validity of the act. There arose a discussion about the mark of the beast. Some early reformers thought it was merely a figure of speech; others thought it referred to the tonsure given to all priests, monks and friars. The Separatists concluded that the mark of the beast on the forehead of his followers was the water applied to every child in baptism and the cross signed upon the forehead.⁴³ Smyth came to the conclusion that he must go one step beyond the rejection of infant baptism; he must seek proper baptism for himself and his followers. Whitley, in The Works Of John Smyth says:

Smyth's logic was keen and rapid, nor did he ever recoil from appropriate action. He and his friends now esteemed themselves simply 'Antichristians converted'; their covenanting at Gainsboro was null and void. All united in explicit acknowledgement; pastor and deacons laid down their office, the church disbanded or avowed itself no church, and all stood as private individuals, unbaptized. All being equal, Smyth proposed that Helwys their social leader should baptize them, but he deferred to his spiritual leader. Smyth therefore baptized himself, then baptized Helwys and the others. Thus, and not by the Old Testament ceremony of covenanting they prepared for a New Testament church of people baptized on profession of their repentance and faith in Christ. . . .⁴⁴

⁴³ Whitley, op. cit., p. xci.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. xciii.

Thus it is seen that Smyth developed from the Anglican position on baptism to the Separatist position, then went beyond the views of most Separatists. Next is seen the discussion of Smyth's third stage of development.

As A Baptist. In speaking of Smyth's gradual growth to Baptist principles, Burgess, in John Smyth The Se-Baptist, states:

He declared that if the church of England were really a false church then her baptism must be false. But he went further than this, and repudiated infant baptism as being without warrant in the New Testament. It seemed clear to him that in order to set up a true church according to the New Testament model he and his company would have to begin all over again, and, what is more, would have to begin by baptism.⁴⁵

Other Separatists had seen this same lack of consistency but they feared to follow their conscience, because to do so would bring upon them the unpopular name of Anabaptist. The real problem was to find a true administrator. In the words of Burgess, Smyth "overcame the difficulty of finding an administrator by first baptizing himself and then Thomas Helwys and the rest, each making their particular confessions".⁴⁶ Burgess based this conclusion on Smyth's statement:

⁴⁵ Walter H. Burgess, John Smyth The Se-Baptist (London: James Clarke & Co., 1911), p. 146.

⁴⁶ Burgess, loc. cit.

Now for baptising a mans self ther is as good warrant, as for a man churching himself: for two men singly are no church, joyntly they are a church, & they both of them put a church vpon themselves, so may two men put baptism vpon themselves: for as both those persons vnchurched, yet have powre to assume the church each of them for himself with others in communion. So each of them vnbaptized hath powre to assume baptisme for himself with others in communion. . . . A man cannot baptise others into the church, himself being out of the church: Therefore it is lawful for a man to baptize himself together with others in communion. . . .⁴⁷

Smyth not only rejected infant baptism, but was convinced that only those who could exercise a personal faith in Christ should receive the ordinance. It was late in 1608 when he came to this position.

John C. Carlile, in The Story Of The English Baptists, says:

In 1608 John Smyth and thirty six others announced their conclusion that baptism was a sign of admission to the church for such only as were of competent age to understand it, and not for infants even of the faithful. They further asserted that there was a distinct difference between the Old and New Testaments, that they were not equally bound by the Old as by the New, and that they accepted the theology of Arminius rather than Calvin.⁴⁸

In the Church of England, baptism was used both as a means of forgiving sin and as a sign of admission into the church. But even infants were allowed to belong to the church. Smyth, seeing clearly that this was not the true basis of church membership, sought to restore the New Testament

⁴⁷ Whitley, op. cit., p.660.

⁴⁸ Carlile, op. cit., p.69.

practice of a regenerate church membership. According to his belief that only believers should be baptized, he came to see that his own group was inconsistent and must go a step further in the development of their belief. In A History Of The Free Churchmen Called Brownists, Pilgrim Fathers and Baptists In The Dutch Republic 1581-1701, De Hoop Scheffer thus relates Smyth's experience:

For a year he had been convinced of the invalidity of infant baptism. He had defended the idea of restricting baptism to adults on confession of faith. But he was still at a loss to decide how to commence this practice in the church. If he administered this sacrament in virtue of his office, should he himself then first not be baptized on confession of faith? Was baptism received from one unbaptized valid? To Smyth's mind, the obstacle was to be overcome. They were surrounded by at least three Mennonite churches: that of the Flemish, of the Frisons, of the United High German and Waterlanders. Particularly with the last one, Smyth had already come in contact. From it he borrowed his views on the ministry, nay, even on baptism itself. Why not, for baptism, resort to one of its elders who indeed had been properly and lawfully baptized? Here was the root of the difficulty. Could Smyth do so with a clear conscience? It would be acknowledging this congregation to be the true church of Christ, and this was contrary to his conviction and, therefore, sinful for him to do. There was but one way out.⁴⁹

One can best understand the feeling of Smyth, and also can best understand his views on the meaning of baptism, by

⁴⁹ J. De Hoop Scheffer, History Of The Free Churchmen Called Brownists, Pilgrim Fathers and Baptists, etc. (Ithaca, New York: Andrus and Church, 1922), pp. 112, 113.

studying his writing called The Character Of The Beast,
Or The False Constitution of The Church. This is a state-
 ment of Smyth's arguments used in a controversy with Mr.
 Richard Clifton concerning true Christian baptism. This
 work, printed in 1609, referred to two propositions: first,
 that infants are not to be baptized, and second, that anti-
 Christians converted are to be admitted into the true
 church by baptism. Smyth based his arguments on these
 Scriptures: Rev. 13:16; Rev. 14:9, 10; and Rev. 21:5. His
 own words best describe his experience:

For a man of a Turk to become a Iew, of a Iew to
 become a Papist, of a Papist to become a Protestant
 are al commendable chandges though they al of them
 befall one & the same person in one yeere, nay if
 it were in one month: So that not to chandg Religion
 is evil simply: & therfor that we should fal from
 the profession of Puritanism to Brownisme, & from
 Brownisme to true Christian baptisme, is not simply
 evil or reprovale in it self, except it be proved
 that we have fallen from true Religion: If wee ther-
 for being formerly deceived in the way of Pedobaptistry,
 now doe embrace the truth, in the true Christian
 Apostolique baptisme then let no mā impute this
 as a fault vnto vs: This therfor is the question:
 Whither the baptisme of infants be lawful, yea or
 nay: & whither persons baptized being infants must
 not renounce that false baptisme, & assume the true
 baptisme of Chr: Which is to be administered vpon
 persons confessing their faith & their sinnes: This
 being the controversy now betwixt vs & the Separation
 commonly called Brownists: . . .50

50 Whitley, op. cit., p. 564.

In this passage Smyth outlines the development through which he had passed; from Anglicanism to Puritanism, from Puritanism to Separatism, and from Separatism to a new position. He justifies his change of religion, and states that it is sinful for one not to change when one discovers that he is not following the true way. He declares that he was deceived by the pedobaptistry of the Anglicans, and the Puritans, and that now he has found the true Christian baptism. This is one of his clearest statements on the conviction that baptism should be only for those persons who have confessed their faith and their sins. Smyth was convinced that he had done the right thing by coming out of these other groups, and also was determined to follow all the light of truth which was given to him. He was just as anxious to leave the Separatists as he had been to leave the Anglicans when he was persuaded that their position was false. He stated:

Be it known therfor to all the separation that we account them in respect of their constitution to be as very an harlot as either her Mother England, or her grandmother Rome is, out of whose loynes she came: & although once in our ignorance we have acknowledged her a true chu. yet now being better informed we revoke that our erroneus judgment & protest against her, as wel for her false constitution, as for her false ministry, worship, & government: The true constitution of the ch. is of a new creature baptized into the Father, the Sonne, & the Holy Ghost: The false constitution is of infants baptized: We profess therfor

that all those Churches that baptise infants are of the same false constitution: & al those Chu. that baptize the new Creatures, those that are made Disciples by teaching, men confessing their faith & their sinnes, are of one true constitution. . . .51

He maintained that the Separatists could not be a true church for they retained the same baptism which they received from the Church of England. Continuing he wrote:

Heer in therfor we do acknowledg our error, that we retayning the baptisme of England which gave vs our constitution, did cal our Mother England an harlot, & vppon a false ground made our Separation from her. For although it be necessary that we Seperate from England, yet no man can Seperate from England as from a false Chu. except he also do Seperate from the baptisme of England, which giveth England her constitution: & whosoever doth retaine the baptisme of England doth withal retaine the constitution of England, & cannot without sinne cal England an harlot as we have done: & this we desire may be well minded of al that Seperate frō England: for if they retaine the baptisme of England, viz: the baptisme of infants as true baptisme, they cannot Seperate from England as from a false Chu. though they may Seperate for corruptions. & whosoever doth Seperate from England as from a false church, must needs Seperate from the baptisme of England, as from false baptisme. . . .52

Smyth could not see any reason for separating from England if the false baptism of the Church of England was to be retained in the church of the Separation. Rather than return to the Mother church he desired to go all the way to what he believed was the New Testament position. He wrote:

51 Ibid., p. 565.

52 Ibid., p. 566.

Finally, they that defend the baptisme of infants cannot with any truth or good conscience seperate from England as from a false chu. . . . Therfor the Seperation must either goe back to England, or go forward to true baptisme: & al that shal in tyme to come Seperate from England must Seperate from the baptisme of England, & if they wil not seperate from the baptisme of England their is no reason why they should seperate from England as from a false church. . . .⁵³

In The Character Of The Beast one of Smyth's most explicit statements on infant baptism is found:

Now concerning this point of baptising infants we do professe before the L. & before al men in sincerity & truth that it semeth vnto vs the most vnreasonable heresy of al Antichristianisme: for considering what baptisme is, an infāt is no more capable of baptisme then is any vnreasonable or insensible creature: For baptisme is not washing with water: but it is the baptisme of the Spirit, the confession of the mouth, & the washing with water: how then can any mā without great folly wash with water which is the least & last of baptisme, one that is not baptized with the Spirit, & cannot confesse with the mouth: or how is it baptisme if one be so washed: Now that an infant cannot be baptized with the Spirit is plaine, I Pet. 3:21. Wher the Apostle saith that the baptisme of the Spirit is the question of a good conscience into God, & Heb. 10:22. wher the baptisme which is inward is caled the sprinkling of the hart from an evil consciēce: seing therfor infants neither have an evil consciēce, nor the question of a good conscience, nor the purging of the hart, for al these are proper to actual sinners: hence it followeth that infants baptisme is folly and nothing. . . . John's baptisme was the baptisme of repentance: infants have no repentance: & therfor cannot have the baptisme of repentance.⁵⁴

Smyth's position on infant baptism is seen clearly in his own words:

⁵³ Ibid., p. 567.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 567.

Certayne Reasons Propounded To Mr. Rich. Clifton:
Concerning the two Propositions following:

- I. That infants are not to bee baptized
1. Bicause ther is neyther precept nor example in the New Testament of any infants that were baptized, by Iohn or Christ's Disciples: Only they that did confesse their sinnes, & confesse their Fayth were baptized. Mark 1.4.5 Act. 8.37.
 2. Bicause Christ commaundeth to make Disciples by teaching them: & then to baptize them: Mat. 28, 19. Ioh, 4.1. but infants cannot by doctryne become Christs Disciples: & so cannot by the rule of Christ be baptized.
 3. Bicause if infants be baptized, the carnal seed is baptized & so the seale of the covenant is administered to them vnto whom the covenāt aperteyneth not. Rom. 9.8.55

All these statements by Smyth make it abundantly clear that he thought infant baptism had no basis in the New Testament Scriptures. He interpreted the great commission of Matt. 28:19, 20 to mean that only those who had become Disciples of Christ by a personal faith and had confessed their sins, had any right to receive baptism.

In this controversy with Richard Clifton, Smyth also set forth his opinions on the baptism of Antichristians.

In the second division of his argument he states:

- II. That Antichristians converted are to be admitted into the true church by baptisme.
1. Bicause churches are so to be constituted now after the defection of Antichrist as they were first erected by the Apostles: But in the constitution of churches the Apostles receaved in the members by baptisme: Ergo: So must wee doe now.
 2. Bicause true baptism is but one: but the baptisme of Antichrist is not true baptisme, & so not that one baptisme of Christ: but all members of Christ must have true baptisme.
 3. Bicause as the false church is rejected and the

true erected: the false ministry forsaken, & the true received: so false worship, (& by consequent baptism) must be renounced, & the true baptisme assumed.⁵⁶

Therefore Smyth believed any group had the authority to try to recover the true church and true baptism. In his opinion the Antichrist had come and destroyed all the true churches, and just as the Apostles first instituted churches with believing, baptized disciples, so during his time they could be instituted in the same way.

He believed that outward baptism was simply the sign or symbol of that which had transpired within the heart of an individual, and that if it was administered before the Spirit had worked in the heart, it was not valid baptism. In his opinion, baptism was not the seal of the Spirit but only the manifestation of it. He said:

I say therfor that the seale of the Spirit must go befor the baptisme of water: & as al the ordinances of the New Testament are Spiritual, & yet visible, so is the seale of the New Testament Spiritual, & yet visible: & therevpon men being visibly sealed with the spirit as Cornelius Company was. Act. 10.47. May challendg the baptisme with water, as Peter there teacheth: this visible seale of the New Testament is confession: as in the Old Testament circumcision was their confessiō: & baptisme is not a seale but a manifestation of the seale. . . .⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 574.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 586.

Those of Smyth's day who practiced infant baptism sought to prove that it took the place of circumcision in the Old Testament. The circumcision of the children was a sign of the covenant which God had made with Abraham. Baptism, they argued, is to be administered to children as a sign of God's covenant with the Christians. To this Smyth replied:

Now the place of Col. 2:11.12. which you produce to prove that baptisme cometh in the rome of circumcision, is not so to be construed, but the Apostle teacheth the vertue of Chr. circumcisiō & baptisme, which is mortifying & burying of sinne & resurection from sinne. . . .58

Baptism, to Smyth, signified a death to sin and a burying of the old man of sin. It seems that he had no reference here to the outward form of baptism, for he had not reached the conviction that immersion was the proper form. He referred, rather, to the inward significance of baptism. In the letter to Clifton, Smyth emphasized, by mentioning over and over again, his belief in repentance and faith before the administration of baptism. It is impossible to misunderstand his position when he says:

But to baptism in the New Testament ther is required actual faith & repentance confessed by the mouth, Mat. 3.6. Act. 4.37 & 10.47. . . .59

58 Ibid., p. 586.

59 Ibid., p. 593.

He argued against the baptism of unbelievers and infants by showing that it was not mentioned in the New Testament. On the other hand, one of the best arguments for believers' baptism is the clear description of it in the New Testament.

He wrote:

But for pedobaptisme, ther is no expresse description of the person, condition, or tyme of their baptisme: & for true baptisme: ther is most evidently, & faithfully set downe the persons, condition, & tyme of administering it, viz; persons confessing their sinnes, Mat. 3.6. Wheras persons impenitent were put by, Mat. 3.7-12. compared with Luk. 7.29,30. Persons beleeving. Act. 8.12.13 & vs. 36-38. Persons that had received the holy Ghost, & expressed the same by prophecyng, Act. 10.46-48. Persons penitent, Act. 2.38. Persons that are by teaching made disciples, Mat. 28.19 Ioh. 4.1. Persons borne againe. Ioh. 3.3.60

Richard Clifton argued that the faith of the parent was sufficient for the child. With this belief Smyth could not at all agree. He asserted, concerning the subject of baptism:

The Sacrament of baptisme is profaned when it is administered vppon a wrong subject whatsoever it bee: as to give the Lord's Supper to an infant of two yeer old: So to baptise an infant is a profanation. For as profession & confession of Fayth shall intitle any man to all the ordinances of the chur. & first to baptisme: so absence of confession of Fayth shall debarre every one from all the ordinances of the church in communion.⁶¹

60 Ibid. p. 612f.

61 Ibid., p. 640.

Thus it is seen that Smyth believed a proper subject for baptism to be one who had made a confession of his faith in Christ, and that only this subject had a right to the other ordinance of the church. One must be scripturally baptized before he may rightly partake of the Lord's Supper. To Smyth baptism symbolized unity with Christ, for he spoke of the church as "a covenant betwixt God & the Faithful made in baptism in which Christ is visibly put on".⁶²

Concerning the administrator of baptism, Clifton argued that the sin of the minister did not make void either the word or the sacrament itself. Smyth did not say a great deal about the administrator except that he should be one who himself had been baptized. To the Roman Catholic or the Anglican, the matter of baptism was water. Smyth maintained that water was not the matter of true baptism but only the instrument of it. The matter of baptism is the person upon whom baptism is conferred.

For the Scripture describeth true baptisme which is the Lords owne ordinance thus: The matter must bee one that confesseth his Fayth & his sinnes, one that is regenerate & borne againe.⁶³

He referred to the form of baptism as a "voluntary delivering up of the party baptized into the name of the Father,

62 Ibid., p. 645.

63 Ibid., p. 648.

Sonne, & Holy Spirit, by washing with water".⁶⁴ He denied that the washing itself was the true form, but the baptizing of the subject into the true faith or the true body.

He said:

The true forme of baptisme cōsisteth in three things, (1) washing with water, (2) a new creature, (3) into the name of Chr. or into the trinity, for I think wee are not tyed to forme of words.⁶⁵

To Smyth, the words used in the ceremony, and the manner of baptizing, were not nearly so important as that the subject be a true believer.

After Smyth had baptized himself and his followers he received much criticism. In justification of his right to begin the true baptism, Smyth said:

So the Anabaptists (as you cal them) doe not set vp a new covenant & gospel, though they set vp a new or rather the old Apostolique baptisme which Anti-christ had overthrowne: & whereas you say they have no warrant to baptisme themselves, I say, asmuch as you have to set vp a true church, yea fully asmuch: For if a true church may bee erected which is the most noble ordinance of the New Testament, then much more baptisme: & if a true church can not bee erected without baptisme, for baptisme is the visible forme of the church, as Disciples are the matter: (Mat. 28.19. Iohn 4.1) Then seing you confesse that a true church may bee erected, you cannot deny (though you doe deny it in opposing the truth) that baptisme may also bee recovered: & seing when all Christs visible ordinances are lost, eyther men must recover

⁶⁴ Loc. Cit.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 654.

them againe or must let them alone: if they let them alone til extraordinary men come with miracles & tongs, as the Apostles did, then men are famelists (for that is their opinion) or if they must recover them, men must beginne so to do, & then two men joyning together may make a church (as you say): why may they not baptize seing they cannot conjoyne into Christ but by baptisme, Mat. 28.19. compared with Mat. 18.10. Gallat. 3.27. . . .66

He would not agree that his baptism was entirely new, but insisted that it was the baptism of the Apostles which had become lost by other groups. Antichrist had overthrown the true baptism, and it was necessary that someone discover and renew that form which the New Testament had set forth. This statement of Smyth is a testimony to the fact that, as far as he knew, there were no other groups practicing believers' baptism. The Separatists, with whom Smyth argued, maintained that they had a right to set up what they believed to be the true church. Smyth held that a true church could not be erected without true baptism; therefore it was necessary and right for someone to recover true baptism. One statement of Smyth in this passage would seem to indicate that he believed baptism to be necessary to salvation. The statement "seing they cannot conjoyne into Christ but by baptisme" can be so interpreted. However, in all the available records of his own works, there are no other references

66 Ibid., p. 659.

which would bear out this interpretation. Rather, all his writings contain an abundance of statements in which he specifically makes a personal faith in Christ, and a new birth, preliminary to baptism. He maintains that only those who confess faith and also confess their sins should be baptized. On the basis of his writings, it seems safe to say that there is no indication of the belief in baptismal regeneration.

Most leading historians state that Smyth administered baptism to himself after he had reached the decision that only believers should be baptized. It seems unnecessary here to try to establish whether he did, or did not, for his own statement furnishes adequate evidence that he did. He writes:

Now for baptising a mans self ther is as good warrant, as for a man churching himself: for two men singly are no church, joyntly they are a church, & they both of them put a church vpon themselves, so may two men put baptism vpon themselves: for as both those persons vnchurched, yet have powre to assume the church each of them for himself with others in communion. So each of them vn-baptized hath powre to assume baptisme for himself with others in communion. . . . A man cannot baptise others into the church, himself being out of the church: Therefore it is lawful for a man to baptize himself together with others in communion. . . .67

67 Ibid., p. 660.

This statement indicates that he did not believe one man alone could recover the true baptism. There should be at least two in communion. This does not mean that each one baptized the other, but that by having at least two persons the covenant could be made and a true church begun.

A final statement from Smyth's letter to Mr. Richard Clifton, or The Character Of The Beast, will help to summarize many of the phases of his belief on baptism.

. . . The L. did never apoint that baptisme should seale up his New Testament to infants, or that infants should by his baptisme be admitted into the body of Antich. & into the church, ministry, worship, & government of Antich. or that his baptisme should set a character indellible vpon parties baptized, or should give grace ex opere operato, al which or most of which are done in Antich. baptisme: but the end of Chr. baptisme is to manifest visibly that confessing his faith & sinnes is sealed by the Spirit vnto the day of redemption, that he hath visibly put on Chr. that he is mortified, crucified, dead, & buried, risen againe, & ascended with Chr. Rom. 6.1-6. & Col. 2.12. Gal. 3.27. Col. 3.1-5. these are the true ends of baptisme instituted by Chr. . . .68

All these direct quotations from Smyth's writings set forth, better than any secondary sources, his beliefs and practices on baptism.

To Smyth's own testimony concerning the baptism of himself are now added the statements of some leading historians. Newman, in A History of Anti-pedobaptism, states:

68 Ibid., p. 675.

It seems almost certain that what actually occurred was this: Smyth first baptized himself and then as a baptized believer proceeded to baptize Helwys and the other members of the company. This is in accordance with the unanimous testimony of contemporaries who had the fullest opportunity to know the facts, and was uncontradicted, so far as we are aware by any member of the party concerned.⁶⁹

In A History Of The Christian Church, Walker says, ". . . He therefore baptized himself by pouring and then the others of his church"⁷⁰. With these testimonies Vedder agrees by saying, in A Short History Of The Baptists, "There can be no doubt that such was the case since an acknowledgement of the fact still exists in his own handwriting"⁷¹. De Hoop Scheffer cites the works of John Robinson (Vol. III. p. 168) to prove this fact. He also cites the records of the Amsterdam Mennonite congregation which contain a list of fifteen men and seventeen women who own to have been baptized in this manner.⁷² Richard Bernard, who was an opponent of Smyth, wrote on page 17 in his Plaine Evidences, published in 1610:

Indeed I was not requested by this childes parents

69 Newman, op. cit., p. 384.

70 Walker, op. cit., p. 465.

71 Vedder, op. cit., p. 203.

72 De Hoop Scheffer, op. cit., p. 114.

to be an undertaker, nevertheless upon so extraordinaire an act. I will be somewhat exorbitant with myself to cal him Mr. John Smith the anabaptisticall se-baptist. He is anabaptisticall for rebaptization and he is a se-baptist because he did baptize himself.⁷³

Smyth denied the charge of Anabaptist, but as far as we know he never denied the charge of being a Se-baptist. Whitley, in The Works Of John Smyth, asserted:

As to a second baptism, Smyth said that if you looked at the act rather than the intention of the act, then John the Baptist, Christ and the Apostles all baptized people who had been baptized repeatedly before . . . If you regarded the intention of the act, no one had been baptized on his own profession of faith in infancy, therefore his recent baptism was not anabaptism.⁷⁴

In The English Baptist Reformation, George A. Lofton writes:

Regarding baptism as the ceremonial constitution of the church, and that being lost, he struck upon the novel idea of baptizing himself and of then baptizing the rest of his company in communion, after each had made his confession of faith in Christ; and it was through the act of baptism that the church was constituted.⁷⁵

The testimony to Smyth's own baptism will be concluded with this statement by Burgess in John Smyth The Se-Baptist:

The fact that John Smyth baptized himself has been established beyond question by those who have looked into the matter in recent years, though it was doubted by some of the old Bap-

⁷³ Ibid., p. 115.

⁷⁴ Whitley, op. cit., p. xcvi.

⁷⁵ Geo. A. Lofton, English Baptist Reformation (Louisville: Chas. T. Dearing, 1899), p. 35f.

tist writers.⁷⁶

It has been seen in this chapter thus far that Smyth passed through at least three successive stages in the development of his belief on baptism. There was first, the Church of England practice of dipping, pouring, or sprinkling, which applied primarily to infants. Second, there was the Separatist position which demanded baptism for believers, but retained the baptism received in the Church of England. And third, Smyth rejected the Church of England baptism and baptized himself and his followers. In this third stage Smyth had reached consistency on several points, and in some ways had come to Baptist baptism; that of baptism for believers only by immersion only. Baptism was received from a proper administrator, one who had already been baptized; it was administered to the proper subjects, those who had professed a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour; it was given for the proper purpose, to symbolize a new life in Christ, as well as his own burial and resurrection. However it fell short in at least one particular and was not true Baptist baptism. It was not administered according to the Baptist interpretation of the New Testament mode. It was indeed

⁷⁶ Burgess, op. cit., p. 152f.

"for believers only" but was not "by immersion only". This first General Baptist church had seen the inconsistency of baptizing infants, and the need for a regenerate church but it did not come to the point of accepting what Baptists of today believe to be the New Testament mode. Newman states, "As it regards the form of the new baptism introduced by Smyth, modern criticism has rendered it highly probable that it was not immersion but affusion".⁷⁷ Burgess, in commenting on the form used, states, "The Mennonite practice of pouring a little water upon the head of the candidate from the hands of the administrator seems to have been followed".⁷⁸ Additional testimony to the fact that this was not immersion is seen in the fact that when Smyth and his followers applied to the Mennonites for admission, the latter group, which did not practice immersion, examined them thoroughly, and stated, "We have not found that there was any difference at all, neither in the one nor the other thing between them and us".⁷⁹ There are those who argue, from a statement made by Leonard Busher in 1614, that Smyth

77 Newman, op. cit., p. 386.

78 Burgess, op. cit., p. 161.

79 Newman, op. cit., p. 387.

did practice immersion. Whitley, in The Works of John Smyth, comments:

There is one brief phrase in the 1646 edition of Busher which would be very surprising in 1614; that baptizing meant dipping for dead; the text refers both to I Cor. xv. 19 and Rom. vi. 4. There is no evidence that Busher at any stage of his life attempted to practice immersion; and as he and Smyth ignored one another, this solitary phrase has no bearing at all on Smyth's theory or practice.⁸⁰

Newman states that "the most competent Mennonite scholar of the present time (Dr. J. G. De Hoop Scheffer) does not hesitate to assert that the universal practice of Mennonites of all parties about 1609 was affusion".⁸¹ Vedder states that "at this point, Smyth did not adhere to immersion but the form of his baptism was affusion".⁸² In A Question In Baptist History, Whitsitt declares that "Immersion baptism does not appear to have been practiced or pleaded for by either Smyth or Helwys, the alleged founder of the General Baptist Denomination in England".⁸³ Whitley affirms, "thus the uniform custom of Smyth's former friends, the silence of his opponents on the spot as to any strange act, the express statement of the Waterlanders as to the similarity of form,

⁸⁰ Whitley, op. cit., p. cxi.

⁸¹ Newman, loc. cit.

⁸² Vedder, op. cit., p. 204.

⁸³ William H. Whitsitt, A Question In Baptist History (Louisville: Chas T. Dearing Co., 1896), p. 11.

make it clear that there was no innovation as to the act performed, but that water was applied to the forehead".⁸⁴

This testimony will be concluded with the statement of Newman in which he asserts:

The absence of any intimation in the controversial literature of the time that Smyth had introduced an innovation as regards the mode of administering baptism, beyond that of Se-baptism, seems quite decisive against the supposition that the believer's baptism that he introduced and insisted upon was immersion.⁸⁵

This leads to the consideration of the fourth and final stage in Smyth's development. This last phase of his belief might more properly be called a regression than a development, for in it he left some of the principles and conclusions which he had enunciated.

As A Seeker. Smyth had made great progress in his return to the New Testament principles, but was not completely satisfied with his decisions. He concluded, about 1609, that he had made a mistake in his Se-baptism, for his own belief was so similar to that of the Mennonites. He was convinced that he and his followers had blundered by not following this already established "Apostolic communion".

⁸⁴ Whitley, op. cit., p. xcv.

⁸⁵ Newman, loc. cit.

It was his desire to undo what he had done and seek admission into the Mennonite church.⁸⁶ This decision on the part of Smyth, along with some errors in doctrine into which he had fallen, led to a dispute and division in the church. Helwys, Murton and a few others excommunicated Smyth and his sympathizers for their errors. The excommunicated group then sought admission into the fellowship of the Mennonites. Carlile, in The Story Of The English Baptists, states that:

In 1609, Smyth and thirty-two of his community applied for admission into the Waterlander Mennonite church, of which Lubbert Gerritts was pastor. They regretted and confessed their error 'that they undertook to baptize themselves contrary to the order appointed by Christ'.⁸⁷

The Mennonite group did not receive them into their membership, and Smyth was never a member of another church. This group was not formally received into fellowship with the Mennonites until 1615, three years after Smyth's death.⁸⁸

In 1611 Helwys and Murton led the other group of this divided church back to England and founded the first Baptist church in England. This church was Arminian in theology, and because it held to the belief in a general

86 Ibid., p. 388.

87 Carlile, loc. cit.

88 Newman, op. cit., p. 391.

atonement for all men, was called by the name General Baptist.⁸⁹

Further insight may be gained into Smyth's views on baptism by a study of his writings after the division between his group and Helwys' group. Both groups were anxious to retain the friendship of the Mennonites, and their controversy led to several Confessions of Faith, or statements of belief. McGlothlin, in Baptist Confessions Of Faith, says that "these were all drawn up in the Netherlands, but their exact dates, origin, history and relations are not entirely clear in most cases".⁹⁰ The earliest Confession was by Smyth, and its twenty articles were written in Latin. The next Confession, consisting of thirty-eight articles, was written in Dutch and was signed by Smyth and forty-one others. Articles twenty-eight, twenty-nine and thirty of this Confession deal with baptism, and are as follows.

28. There are two sacraments appointed by Christ, in his holy church, the administration whereof he hath assigned to the ministry of teaching, namely, the Holy Baptism and the Holy Supper. These are outward visible handlings and tokens, setting before our eyes, on God's side, the inward spiritual handling which God, through Christ, by the cooperation of the Holy Ghost, setteth forth in the justification in the penitent faithful soul; and which,

⁸⁹ Vedder, op. cit., p. 205.

⁹⁰ W. J. McGlothlin Baptist Confessions of Faith (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1911), p. 53.

on our behalf, witnesseth our religion, experience, faith and obedience through the obtaining of a good conscience to the service of God.

29. The Holy Baptism is given unto these in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which hear, believe, and with penitent heart receive the doctrines of the Holy Gospel. For such hath the Lord Jesus commanded to be baptized, and no un-speaking children.

30. The whole dealing in the outward visible baptism of water, setteth before the eyes, witnesseth and signifieth, the Lord Jesus doth inwardly baptize the repentant, faithful man, in the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost washing the soul from all pollution and sin, by the virtue and merit of his bloodshed; and by the power and working of the Holy Ghost, the true, heavenly, spiritual, living water, cleanseth the inward evil of the soul, and maketh it heavenly, spiritual, and living, in true righteousness or goodness. Therefore, the baptism of water leadeth us to Christ, to his holy office in glory and majesty; and admonisheth us not to hang only upon the outward but with holy prayer to mount upward and to beg of Christ the good thing signified.⁹¹

It will be noted that this Confession of Faith does not add any new ideas to those found in the earlier writings of Smyth which have already been quoted. It is, however, a good summary of his convictions on baptism.

A third Confession of one hundred and two articles was set forth and was supposedly written by Smyth. The final views of Smyth are seen in a fourth Confession which was published in English before 1614. Several of the one

⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 61, 62.

hundred articles deal with baptism. In article thirty-nine it is stated that "all mortified persons are also buried with Christ, by the baptism, which is unto His death". Article fifty-five states "that John taught the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, baptizing with water to amendment of life (Matt. iii. II), thus preparing a way for Christ and His baptism (Luke iii. 3, 6), by bringing men to repentance and faith in the Messias". In article seventy it is asserted that "the outward baptism of water, is to be administered only upon such penitent and faithful persons as are (aforesaid), and not upon innocent infants, or wicked persons". Article seventy-one continues, "that in baptism to the penitent person, and believer, there is presented and figured, the spiritual baptism of Christ, (that is) the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and fire: the baptism into the death and resurrection of Christ: even the promise of the Spirit, which he shall assuredly be made partaker of, if he continue to the end". Article seventy-three asserts "that the outward baptism and supper do not confer, and convey grace and regeneration to the participants or communicants: but as the word preached, they serve only to support and stir up the repentance and faith of the communicants till Christ come, till the day dawn and the day-star arise in their hearts". In article seventy-four it is stated "that

the sacraments have the same use that the word hath; that they are a visible word, and that they teach to the eye of them that understand as the word teacheth the ears of them that have ears to hear (Prov. x. 12), and therefore as the word pertaineth not to infants, no more do the sacraments". And finally, article seventy-five states "that the preaching of the word and the ministry of the sacraments, representeth the ministry of Christ in the spirit; who teacheth, baptiseth, and feedeth the regenerate, by the Holy Spirit inwardly and invisibly"⁹².

Thus is set forth the teachings of the General Baptists on baptism under the leadership of Smyth.

3. THE TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES OF THOMAS HELWYS AND JOHN MURTON ON BAPTISM.

A Brief Account Of The Life Of Helwys. This chapter will be concluded with a brief account of the teachings of Helwys and Murton, and their relation to the first General Baptist church in England. Little is known of the early life of Helwys. He was the oldest of five children, and when his parents died, he became the executor for the other children. His family was one of means and prominence, and

92 Ibid., pp. 72f.

it was fitting that he receive the best in education. The universities were specializing too much in theology, so Helwys entered Gray's Inn, one of the four Inns of Court which gave special training in the profession of law. Edmund Helwys, the father of Thomas, had sympathy for the Separatist movement. When John Smyth denounced the Church of England as Anti-christian and formed the church at Gainsborough, Helwys was attracted to him, and became a member of this church. He and Smyth were closely associated until the division in Amsterdam several years later, when Smyth was excommunicated for his doctrinal statements and his attempt to join the Mennonites. After the division, Helwys led his followers back to London to form the first General Baptist church on English soil. Upon returning to England, Helwys wrote a letter to King James in which he appealed for full liberty of conscience. King James would not grant civil liberty, and certainly not ecclesiastical or religious liberty. Because of this letter and the position taken by Helwys, he was placed in Newgate prison where he died a few years later at approximately forty years of age.⁹³

Helwys' Confession Of Faith. There are very few available materials which show the doctrinal beliefs of Helwys. These beliefs are revealed by one Confession which he wrote

⁹³ W. T. Whitley, Thomas Helwys Of Gray's Inn and Broxtowe Hall, Nottingham (London: The Kingsgate Press).

when the split came between him and Smyth. This Confession of twenty-seven articles was published in Amsterdam in 1611, and was submitted to the Mennonites. In article ten of the Confession he states that "the church off CHRIST is a compainy off faithful people I Cor. 1.2. Eoh. 1.1. seperated frō the world by the word & Spirit off GOD. 2 Cor. 6, 17. being kint vnto the LORD, & one vnto another, by baptisme. I Cor. 12.13. Vpon their owne confessiō of the faith. Act. 8.37. and sinnes. Mat. 3.6." There is nothing in this statement which differs from the statements made by Smyth. Article thirteen states "that everie church is to receive in all their members by baptisme vpon the confession off their faith and sinnes wrought by the preaching off the Gospel". It is asserted in article fourteen that "Baptisme or washing with Water, is the outward manifestacion off dieing vnto sinn, and walkeing in newnes off life. Roman 6.2, 3, 4. And therefore in no wise apperteyneth to infants".⁹⁴ Thus it will be noticed that, as far as can be determined from these brief statements of Helwys, he differed little, if any, from the views of Smyth on baptism. He held to a regenerate church membership, he thought the church should be separated from the world, he believed that only those who

⁹⁴ McGlothlin, op. cit., p. 88f.

had professed faith in Christ and confessed their sins were fit subjects for baptism, he thought no infants should be baptized, and to him baptism was the outward manifestation of the inward working of the Spirit of God. All these were convictions of Smyth.

The First Book By Baptists. Whitley, in A History Of British Baptists, states that in the first book by Baptists, which was published in 1615, it was affirmed that none could be admitted to the church to partake in ordinances except they be baptized, and that baptism could be given by any disciple who came to the Lord's way.⁹⁵ At this date the church was under the leadership of Helwys. Whitley does not further identify the book to which he refers, but it was probably the book "Religion's Peace" written by Leonard Busher in 1614.

A Statement Concerning John Murton. It is not necessary, nor is it possible, to give a lengthy treatment of John Murton. There is little available information concerning him. In all the works consulted, he was mentioned in

⁹⁵ W. T. Whitley, A History Of British Baptists (London: The Kingsgate Press, 1932), p. 41.

conjunction with Helwys, and it is assumed that his views were practically the same as those of Helwys, as nothing to the contrary could be found.

By 1626 there were five General Baptist churches, and by 1644 there were forty-seven. But according to McGlothlin no other General Baptist confessions were drawn up until after the rise of the Particular Baptists about 1640.

CHAPTER III
TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES ON BAPTISM AMONG THE PARTICULAR
BAPTISTS UP TO 1644

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER III

TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES ON BAPTISM AMONG THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS UP TO 1644

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- A. The beginning of the Henry Jacob Church in 1616.
- B. The division of 1633.
- C. The Spilsbury church.
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CHAPTER III

TEACHINGS AND PRACTICES ON BAPTISM AMONG THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS UP TO 1644

The history of Baptists in England cannot be fully understood without the recognition of the fact that there were two distinct groups. These are called the General Baptists and the Particular Baptists. The General Baptists, so named because of their Arminian belief in a general atonement, began with John Smyth, Thomas Helwys and John Murton. This group was treated in the preceding chapter of this thesis. The second group of English Baptists is called the Particular Baptists because of their Calvinistic belief in a particular or limited atonement. The origin of this group was entirely separate from that of the General Baptists, and the two groups continued to remain separate. The General Baptists, for the most part, became Unitarian; and the fellowship of the two groups was never close. The General Baptist New Connexion was formed in 1770, and it was not until 1891¹ that they united with the Particular Baptists.

This chapter discusses the following topics, (1) A brief history of the rise of Particular Baptists, centering around the Henry Jacob church, and (2) The beginning of

¹ J. H. Shakespeare, Baptist And Congregational Pioneers (London: National Council of Evangelical Free Churches; The Kingsgate Press, 1905), p. 179f.

immersion among the English Baptists.

1. THE RISE OF THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS.

Although the General and Particular Baptists had separate beginnings, the manner of their origin was similar. The General Baptists grew out of a congregation of Separatists gathered by John Smyth; the Particular Baptists grew out of a congregation of Separatists gathered by Henry Jacob.

The Beginning Of The Henry Jacob Church In 1616. In 1616 Henry Jacob, a learned Puritan minister, pastor of an English congregation at Middelburg, Zealand, published a number of works against the English Establishment. A. H. Newman, in an article in the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia Of Religious Knowledge, states that Jacob had conference with the Separatist brethren in the Netherlands and "reached the conviction that duty required him to return to England and to 'venture himself for the kingdom of Christ's sake'²". Some of his members returned with him and they organized anew at Southwark, London. Jacob was chosen and ordained pastor. After about eight years he emigrated to America and John Lathrop became pastor. This church continued to grow rapidly.

² Schaff-Herzog, Encyclopaedia Of Religious Knowledge (New York and London: Funk And Wagnalls Co., 1909), Vol. I., p. 461.

The Division Of 1633. In 1633 a division arose as the result of discussions concerning whether the parish churches were true churches.³ Some of the members held that baptism by the Parish Clergyman was invalid, "not because it was infant baptism, but because it was received in the Church Of England".⁴ A new church of seventeen members was formed; and Newman states that Samuel Eaton with some others received a further baptism.⁵

The Spilsbury Church. John Spilsbury soon became the pastor of this church, but the exact date of the beginning of his work with the church is not known. It is known that by 1638 he was pastor, for at that date another group of six members came from the Jacob church. In the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia Of Religious Knowledge, Newman quoted the members of the Jessey Church as saying:

These also being of the same judgment with Sam Eaton and desiring to depart and not be censured, our interest in them was remitted with prayer made in their behalf, June 8, 1638, they having just forsaken us, and joined with Mr. Spilsbury.⁶

³ H. C. Vedder, A Short History Of The Baptists (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1907), p. 206.

⁴ Shakespeare, op. cit., p. 182.

⁵ Schaff-Herzog, Loc. Cit.

⁶ Loc. Cit.

The Original Jacob-Lathrop Church Divided Again In

1640. Newman continues:

Shortly before or shortly after this secession William Kiffin, then a young man of twenty-two, afterward till 1701 one of the most influential leaders of the Particular Baptists, united with Eaton. The learned and zealous Henry Jessey had become pastor of the Jacob-Lathrop church in 1637. In 1640 the conviction that 'dipping the body into the water' is the only valid baptism forced itself upon a number of the members and the matter was much agitated in antipedobaptist circles. As a result of the conferences on this matter Richard Blount, who understood Dutch, was sent to Holland where the Collegiants of Rhynsburg were practicing immersion, and received baptism at the hands of J. Batte, a teacher among them. This party had arisen about 1619, but its immersion may have been derived from the Polish (Socinian) antipedobaptists. On his return Blount immersed Blacklock, and they two baptised large numbers (1641).⁷

It was the Jacob-Lathrop church, under the leadership of Henry Jessey, that became convinced of the necessity of succession in relation to baptism, and sent to Holland for the proper administration of the ordinance. Spilsbury's group believed that the administrator did not have to be an immersed person in order to begin true baptism. His group began immersing about the same time as the Jessey group, but it was an independent beginning, without the baptized administrator. This is seen in the statement:

Spilsbury insisted that 'baptizedness is not essential to the administrator' of baptism and, with a

⁷ Ibid., p. 461.

number of adherents, discountenanced Blount's method of restoring baptism. As the agitation had been going on for some months before Blount's journey to Holland, it is not unlikely that Spilsbury and his adherents, including Kiffin, had some time before introduced immersion independently. Spilsbury's argument against the necessity of succession in baptism prevailed.⁸

In this statement, Newman points to the fact that it was the church of Spilsbury that first reached the conviction that immersion was the scriptural form of true baptism. About 1641 they began the practice, and it seems to have been this beginning of immersion independently that led to the discussion among the Particular Baptists as to the validity of that baptism. They were convinced of immersion, but did they have the power to begin it themselves, or should they go to some group outside England that did practice it? The church of Spilsbury decided that they had the power to restore it; while the Jessey church believed that they must receive their baptism from one who had been truly baptized. This accounts for Blount's mission to Holland. The last statement given from Newman in the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia Of Religious Knowledge asserts:

By October 1644, the Calvinistic antipedobaptists of London who had adopted immersion as the exclusively valid form of baptism 'had become seven churches'.⁹

⁸ Loc. Cit.

⁹ Ibid., p. 461f.

This has not been an attempt to give a complete history of the Particular Baptists, but this brief statement of their development from a group of Separatists in 1616, under the leadership of Henry Jacob, to a group of seven churches by 1644, will help in the understanding of a fuller discussion of their teachings on baptism. The growth of the Particular Baptists was very rapid after 1644, but until that time the development was slow.

2. THE BEGINNING OF IMMERSION AMONG THE ENGLISH BAPTISTS.

The remainder of this chapter might be divided into other topics, such as The Church of John Spilsbury, The Church of Henry Jessey, and Blount's Mission to Holland. All these, however, are parts of the larger story of the beginning of immersion among the English Baptists; therefore the remainder of this chapter will treat the relation of the story of the revival of immersion as a form of baptism among the Baptists of England. As the story is told, it will reveal the teachings and practices on baptism among the Particular Baptists in England up to 1644.

Crosby's Treatment Of The English Baptists. Thomas Crosby has been called the first Baptist historian. He is widely known for his History Of The English Baptists. Most

10 Vedder, Loc. Cit.

of the Baptist historians since his time seem to have relied heavily upon his work. A great deal of Crosby's work is confusing, especially as to the time element. He does not make a distinction between the General and the Particular Baptists. He recognizes that there was such a division but thinks the difference is not great enough to demand separate treatments.¹¹ Often it is difficult for the reader to know whether he is speaking of the General Baptists or the Particular Baptists. In his history, the activities and teachings of one group he occasionally attributes to the other. For example, in one place he seems to attribute the restoration of immersion in England to Smyth and his followers. When taken as a whole, however, his book clearly credits the Particular Baptists with the restoration of this form of baptism. Vedder states that the documents which have been made accessible since Crosby wrote his history show that he was not always accurate in following his sources.¹²

The Jessey Church Records And The Kiffin Manuscript.

A great deal of the Baptist history of this Period is based on what is known as the Jessey Records. Geo. A. Lofton, in

¹¹ Thomas Crosby, The History Of The English Baptists (London: 1738), p. 173f.

¹² Vedder, Loc. Cit.

his Defense Of The Jessey Records And Kiffin Manuscript, states that the Jessey Records are documents found in a collection of papers entitled "A Repository Of Divers Historical Matters Relating To The English Antipedobaptists, Collected From Original Papers or Faithful Extracts, Anno. 1712".¹³ These records which were found about 1860 by Dr. Geo. P. Gould of London include the Kiffin Manuscript.

These are often called the Stinton Papers, because they were copied by Stinton, to whom Richard Adams, the minister of Devonshire Square Baptist Church, had lent them.¹⁴ Most of the material found in these documents is contained in Crosby's History of English Baptists, and Neal's History Of The Puritans.¹⁵ In the words of Lofton:

The object of these records seems to have been to set forth the origin of the Calvinistic Baptist churches which sprang, with many of the independent churches, from the Jacob congregation organized in 1616. The writer does not herein touch the origin of the General Baptists, 1609-11; and these records are simply an honest effort to reach the beginning of one branch of the English Baptist denomination.¹⁶

Lofton states that the Kiffin Manuscript is:

¹³ George A. Lofton, Defense Of The Jessey Records And Kiffin Manuscript (Nashville: Press of Marshall & Bruce Co., 1899), p. 7.

¹⁴ Shakespeare, op. cit., p. 176.

¹⁵ Lofton, Loc. Cit.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 8f.

a history of two secessions from the Jacob-Lathrop-Jessey church which took place in 1633 and 1638, resulting in the formation of the first Particular Baptist church, under the pastorate of John Spilsbury, at Wapping. It is also the history of another secession in 1639, which finally resulted, in 1644, in a Baptist church under the pastorate of Paul Hobson at Crutched-Friars. It is also the history of the equal division of the Jacob-Lathrop church in 1640 under the pastorates of Henry Jessey and Praise-god Barebone; of the conviction of Blunt, Lucar, Shepherd, and others of the Spilsbury church, with Jessey and others of his church, that immersion only was baptism; of the sending of Blunt to Holland for the regular administration of the ordinance; and of Blunt's return and to the dipping of fifty-three persons about the 1st. and 9th. of January 1641, O. S. (1642, N. S.)--all of which facts, with the names of the persons baptized, are clearly and minutely detailed, and so recorded as history by Crosby.¹⁷

Lofton has shown that Crosby followed very closely the Kiffin Manuscript and other parts of the Jessey Records in reconstructing the account of the origin of the first Particular Baptist Church. He placed the quotations of Crosby by these Records and showed that he (Crosby) must have had them before him at the time of the writing of his history.

Whitsitt's "1641 Theory". In 1896, William H. Whitsitt wrote the work A Question In Baptist History: Whether the Anabaptists in England Practiced Immersion Before the Year 1641. Many of his conclusions were based on the Jessey Church Records. He stated that:

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 19.

In the earlier account (the Jessey Church records) we have the unqualified assertion of the most important document in the history of Particular Baptists that prior to the year 1640 nobody at all had practiced in England the immersion of professed believers.¹⁸

Whitsitt, on the basis of these records and other historical sources, established the fact that immersion began among the Particular Baptists in England in 1641. This became known as the "1641 theory", and led to the well-known Whitsitt Controversy.

Christian's Rejection Of This Theory. In 1899, John T. Christian opposed Whitsitt in a work called Baptist History Vindicated. In this book, Christian is very insistent that the Kiffin Manuscript is a fraud. He goes to great length to try to show its spuriousness. He rejects it primarily on the basis of the fact that Batte, Blount and Blacklock are mentioned in the Manuscript, and no record can be found of them otherwise. He offers this as proof that they did not exist. Christian is inconsistent and illogical in this, however, for only a few pages before his denunciation of the Kiffin Manuscript, he and T. T. Eaton, who wrote the introduction to Christian's book, scoff at the idea that just because immersion was not known by

¹⁸ William H. Whitsitt, A Question In Baptist History (Louisville: Chas. T. Dearing Co., 1896), p. 88.

certain writers to have existed at a given time, this did not prove that it did not exist. Christian's attitude toward the Kiffin Manuscript and the Jessey Church Records is shown in this statement:

Now the only one of the documents which I have discussed that gives any support whatever to the 1641 theory is Gould's Version of the anonymous manuscript 'said', by some unknown person, 'to be written by Mr. William Kiffin'; and the only words of that manuscript which afford any aid and comfort to the said theory is the entry under the date 1640, which immediately follows the quotation given above; and the only words in this 1640 part at all pertinent to that theory are the now famous words in regard to dipping, 'none having then so practiced in England to professed believers'. Thus the 1641 theory rests upon the presence of words in an anonymous manuscript of which the earliest extant copy belongs to the year 1860 and this copy is itself at best a mere copy of a copy !!!¹⁹

Christian, therefore, rejects the conclusion of Whitsitt that immersion was restored in England by the Particular Baptists in 1641. Lofton points out that Christian sought in every way possible to discredit the Jessey Records, but he affirms that the court records of the time confirm rather than contradict the Jessey Records.

Statements Of Other Historians On The Validity Of The Jessey Church Records And On Whitsitt's Theory. John C. Carlile, in The Story Of The English Baptists, accepts

¹⁹ John T. Christian, Baptist History Vindicated (Louisville: Baptist Book Concern, 1899), p. 62.

²⁰ Lofton, op. cit., p. 12f.

the validity of the Kiffin Manuscript. The part of this Manuscript over which so much controversy has existed is as follows:

1640, 3rd. mo.- The church became two by mutuall consent, just halfe being with Mr. P. Barebone, and ye other halfe with Mr. H. Jessey. Mr. Richd Blunt, wth him, being convinced of Baptism, yt also it ought to be by dipping in ye body into ye water, resembling Burial and rising again (Col. ii. 12 and Romanes vi.4), had sober conference about it in ye church, and then wth some of the forenamed who also were so convinced, and after prayer and conference about their so enjoying it, none having then so practiced it in England to professed Believers, and hearing that some in ye Netherlands had so practised, they agreed and sent over Mr. Richd Blunt (who understood Dutch) with letters of commendation, and who was kindly accepted there, and returned with letters from them: Jo. Batten, a teacher there, and from that church to such as sent him.

1641.- They proceed on therein, viz., those persons yt ware perswaded Baptism should be by dipping ye body had mett in two companyes, and did intend so to meet after this, all those agreed to proceed alike together; and then manifesting (not by any formal words) a covenant (wch Word was scrupled by some of them, but by mutuall desires and agreement each Testified) those two companyes did set apart one to baptise the rest; so it was solemnly performed by them. Mr. Blunt baptised Mr. Blacklock, yt was a teacher amongst them, and Mr. Blunt being baptised, he and Mr. Blacklock Baptised ye rest of their friends yt ware so minded, and many being added to them, they increased much.²¹

In The English Baptist Reformation, Lofton agrees thoroughly with Whitsitt's "1641 theory", and states in his preface:

²¹ John C. Carlile, The Story Of The English Baptists (London: James Clark & Co., 1905), pp. 83, 84.

This work adds nothing to, nor takes anything from, Dr. Whitsitt's thesis of '1641'. It only sustains that thesis; and it is only a question of time when all unbiased scholarship will accept the fact that the Baptists of England restored immersion in 1641.²²

J. D. Hoop Scheffer, in his work History of the Free Churchmen Called Brownists, Pilgrim Fathers and Baptists in the Dutch Republic, 1581-1701, subscribes to the theory that immersion began among the English Baptists in 1641, and that Blount was sent to Holland and was baptized by immersion by Jan Batten. He also points out that from this time the fellowship between the Baptist group and the Dutch Mennonites was broken because the former looked upon the Mennonites as unbaptized people because they had not been immersed.²³

Walter H. Burgess subscribes to the "1641 theory" in his book John Smith The Se-Baptist, Etc. Crosby gives the material found in the Jessey Church Records and the Kiffin Manuscript in The History Of The English Baptists, therefore he believed in its validity. A. H. Newman's account of the Calvinistic Baptist churches in England, given in his A Manual Of Church History, (Vol. II, p. 288f) shows that he accepts these records. H. C. Vedder's Short History Of Bap-

²² George A. Lofton, English Baptist Reformation (Louisville: Chas. T. Dearing, 1899), preface p. vi.

²³ J. De Hoop Scheffer, History Of The Free Churchmen Called Brownists, Pilgrim Fathers and Baptists In The Dutch Republic 1581-1701 (Ithaca, New York: Andrus and Church), p. 180.

tists relies upon the authenticity of these documents.

Some Authors Who Reject The Jessey Church Records.

There are some writers of Baptist history who refuse to recognize these documents. Reference has already been made to Christian's refusal to accept their authenticity. Naturally all those who seek to trace Baptist succession historically will not accept them, nor will they agree that immersion was restored in 1641. Other historians who agree with Christian in refusing to accept the fact that immersion was restored in England in 1641 are Thomas Armitage, who wrote a History Of The Baptists, G. H. Orchard, who wrote A History Of Baptists In England, and many others.

Thus, on the basis of the testimony of leading Baptist historians, the validity of the Jessey Church Records and the Kiffin Manuscript is assumed, though there are some writers who still doubt their authenticity.

John T. Christian's Objections Stated. Christian quotes various authors of other denominations to prove that sprinkling did not begin until 1641 and that immersion was the common form of baptism in England until that date. As an argument from the Episcopalians to support his view, he cites Wall's History of Infant Baptism (vol. II, p. 403), which says:

So, (parallel to the rest of their reformations) they reformed the font into a basin. This learned Assembly could not remember that fonts to baptize in had been always used by the primitive Christians, long before the beginning of popery, and ever since churches were built; but that sprinkling as the common use of baptizing was really introduced (in France first, and then in other popish countries) in times of popery. . . . And for sprinkling, properly called, it seems that it was in 1645 just then beginning, and used by very few. It must have begun in the disorderly times of 1641.²⁴

Wall, in this passage, refers to the Westminster Assembly of 1643, and their decision to make sprinkling the official mode of baptism in the Presbyterian church. It should be noted that this statement from Wall refers to "sprinkling, properly called". He does not say that the usual form of baptism was immersion. In the Church of England, in Roman Catholicism, in Lutheranism, among the Anabaptists, and among the Mennonites, affusion or pouring was commonly practiced; and compared to pouring, sprinkling was a new type of baptism. Christian refers to several documents which indicate the practice of placing stone fonts in the churches; and he cites examples of laws passed whereby the ministers should baptize publically in these fonts. But in not one of these documents quoted is it stated that the fonts were used for dipping or immersion. Christian seems to use font as a synonym for the modern baptistry, and he takes for

²⁴ Christian, *op. cit.*, pp. 75, 76.

granted that baptism is always immersion. He seeks to prove that immersion was the common form of baptism in England during the seventeenth century because the Greek Lexicons say that baptizo means only to dip. Practically every Greek Lexicon in use today (1950) states the same thing, but that does not assure the practice of immersion in all denominations. Therefore, his argument is not valid. In many places Christian states that sprinkling was started in England by the Presbyterians about 1645, and that sprinkling before that date was practically unknown. He says, "the Westminster assembly is responsible for the introduction of sprinkling in England"²⁵. But in his discussion of the practices on baptism about 1610, he says, "The form of the Puritans was undoubtedly sprinkling"²⁶. This date (1610) was more than thirty years before the Westminster Assembly. If the Anabaptists, the Church of England, and others, practiced immersion all during the first half of the seventeenth century, as Christian claims, the question arises as to the source of the Puritan practice of sprinkling. The Puritans came directly out of the Church of England, and in none of their writings do they declare the belief in any different

²⁵ Christian, op. cit., p. 90.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 103.

teaching on baptism. Christian gives an account of the imprisonment of Edward Barber. He wrote, "Edward Barber declares that he was imprisoned for denying the sprinkling of infants. The date of his imprisonment was June 20, 1639". If the Church of England universally practiced immersion (as Christian tries to prove earlier) one wonders why they would imprison a man for denying the sprinkling of infants when they too denied it. His own statement shows that someone practiced the sprinkling of infants before 1645, and that they believed in it so strongly that they would imprison a man for denying it. He refers to the fact that "The Rev. John Canne, in April, 1641, was a 'baptized man'; this is conceded to mean an immersed man". This is an example of the way Christian jumps to conclusions. Canne would have been called a 'baptized' man whether he had been immersed, sprinkled or poured. This also could mean that he had been re-baptized by sprinkling or pouring. Burrage states that Canne was still a Brownist or Separatist in 1640, and not a Baptist as stated by the Broadmead Church Records.²⁷ Because of the many inconsistencies found in Christian's work, and his lack of agreement with the outstanding Baptist historians, it is assumed that Christian cannot always be relied upon for an accurate statement of history.

²⁷ Champlin Burrage, Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society, Vol. III., p. 214.

Thus, his statements concerning immersion seem to be invalid.

The objections to the Jessey Church Records, as set forth by Christian and others, have been included in this thesis. However, the writer of this thesis rejects the objections offered, and on the basis of the testimony of the leading historians cited, accepts the validity of these documents.

The Development Of The Particular Baptists To The Belief In Immersion. According to the available records, it seems that these Particular Baptists used pouring or affusion as their form of baptism up until about 1640. From 1616 they were convinced of the necessity of believers' baptism, and all those who had been baptized in infancy in the Established Church were rebaptized by pouring. The conviction that the mode of baptism should be immersion only came upon the Particular Baptists slowly. There are no records to show that Henry Jacob believed or practiced immersion in his church. In fact, he gathered his church out of a group of Separatists who had received baptism in the Church of England, and it seems that no new baptism was required. Like the church under Smyth at Gainsborough, they covenanted together to start a church of believers only. These believers were satisfied with their previous

baptism. It was not until 1633 that there was a division in the church over the question of baptism. Some of the members felt that the parish churches were not true churches. Then the realization came that they had accepted the baptism of these parish churches. If the Church of England was a false church, then their baptism must be false. This was the same conclusion reached by Smyth about twenty-five years earlier. Thus, a small group of seventeen persons withdrew from the Jacob-Lathrop church and formed a new church. These received a further baptism, but there is no evidence that it was immersion. By 1638 Mr. John Spilsbury had become the pastor of this division of the church, with another group of six members coming in that year from the Jacob-Lathrop church. These also received a new baptism.

Immersion Restored In Two Ways. By 1640 there were two groups of Particular Baptists; those who belonged to the church of John Spilsbury, and those who belonged to the original Jacob-Lathrop church. Both Jacob and Lathrop had left the church and had made their way to America. In 1640 the church which they had left was without a pastor. By 1640 both groups had reached the conviction that baptism should be by dipping or immersion. Spilsbury and his group did not rely on succession, and they believed that they had

the right to begin immersion themselves.²⁸ From the available records it seems that this group of Spilsbury's was the first to begin immersion, about 1641, and can be rightly called the first Particular Baptist church in England. The other church, formerly led by Lathrop, was divided over the matter. By mutual consent, half of the congregation went with Mr. P. Barebone and the other half with Mr. Henry Jessey. Jessey was at the time of the division convinced that dipping was the Scriptural form of baptism, but he did not submit to it himself until 1645.²⁹ Barebone's group believed that immersion was the Scriptural form, and unlike the Spilsbury church, they believed in succession. They did not think they had the right to begin the correct form of baptism independently, and sought for a proper administrator.³⁰ This was not easy to find, for, according to the Jessey Church Records, there were "none having then so practiced it in England to professed believers".³¹ They had heard that some in the Netherlands held to this practice, and they agreed to send one of their number, Richard Blunt,

28 Lofton, op. cit., p. 30.

29 Crosby, op. cit., pp. 310, 311.

30 Carlile, Loc.Cit.

31 Loc. Cit.

to the Netherlands to receive the proper administration of baptism. With letters of commendation, Blunt went to Holland and was baptized by immersion, probably by John Batten, who was a teacher in that church. Upon Blunt's return to England, he baptized Mr. Blacklock who was a teacher among them, and both Blunt and Blacklock baptized all others who were of the same belief. In this way the practice of immersion was begun in the Jacob-Lathrop-Barebone church.³²

Crosby accepts the account of the Kiffen Manuscript, and asserts that the majority of the English Baptists agreed with the view of Spilsbury who said that anyone had the authority to baptize. Crosby wrote:

But the greatest number of the English Baptists, and the more judicious, looked upon all this Blunt's mission to Holland as needless trouble, and what proceeded from the old popish doctrine of right to administer the sacraments by an uninterrupted succession, which neither the Church of Rome nor the Church of England, much less the modern dissenters, could prove to be with them. They affirmed, therefore, and practised accordingly, that after a general corruption of baptism, an unbaptized person might warrantably baptize, and so begin a reformation.³³

Spilsbury's position has been defended by Tombes, who, according to Crosby, said:

³² Loc. Cit.

³³ Crosby, op. cit., p. 103.

If no continuance of adult baptism can be proved, and baptism by such persons is wanting, yet I conceive what many protestant writers do yield, when they are pressed by the Papists to shew the calling of the first reformers; that after an universal corruption, the necessity of the thing doth justify the persons that reform, tho' wanting an ordinary regular calling, will justify in such a case, both the lawfulness of the minister's baptizing, that hath not been rightly baptized himself, and the sufficiency of that baptism to the person so baptized; and this very thing. . . . you may perceive that this is no new truth; that an unbaptized person may in some case baptize another, and he baptize him, being baptized of him.³⁴

Crosby gives this account of the problem which confronted these English Baptists:

'Tis certain that when some of the English Protestants were for reviving the antient practice of immersion, they had several difficulties thrown in their way about a proper administrator, to begin that method of baptizing. Those who rejected the baptism of infants, at the beginning of the reformation in England, had the same objection made against them; as Bishop Burnet observes. 'One thing', says he, 'was observed, that the whole world in that age, having been baptized in their infancy, if that baptism was nothing, then there was none truly baptized in being, but all were in the state of mere nature. Now it did not seem reasonable, that men who were not baptized themselves, should go and baptize others; and therefore the first heads of that sect, not being rightly baptized themselves, seemed not to act with any authority, when they went to baptize others'. . . . In the like manner did they now argue against the reviving of the practice of immersion, which had for some time been disused: If immersion be the essential form of that ordinance, then there is none truly baptized: and can an unbaptized person be a proper administrator; or can a man

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 104, 105.

be supposed to give that to another, which he has not first received himself? This difficulty did not a little perplex them; and they were divided in their opinions how to act in this matter, so as not to be guilty of any disorder or self-contradiction. Some indeed were of the opinion that the first administrator should baptize himself, and then proceed to the baptizing of others. Others were for sending to those foreign protestants that had used immersion for some time, that so they might receive it from them. And others again thought it necessary to baptism, that the administrator be himself baptized, at least in an extraordinary case; but that whoever saw such a reformation necessary, might from the authority of scripture lawfully begin it.³⁵

Lofton, in Defense Of the Jessey Records and Kiffin Manuscript, agrees that Spilsbury's group did not seek someone else to baptize them, for he said:

This greatest body of Baptists in 1641 declared that Blunts going to Holland was 'needless trouble' and based upon the 'doctrine of interrupted succession'; and hence they proceeded to restore baptism and begin their reformation by unbaptized administrators such as Spilsbury, without sending over to Holland for it. In this way many of the prominent, and almost all of the Baptists of 1641 were immersed, and it was only fifty three of any sort that we know were baptized by Blunt's succession method.³⁶

Whitsitt, in A Question In Baptist History, states:

Every fact is in harmony with the position that believers' immersion, after it had been sometime disused, was introduced into England again in 1641. Immersion had not been practiced for a lengthy season in the Church of England; it was unknown among the Anabaptists of England, who had all come over from Holland in the sixteenth century; it was not prac-

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 96, 97.

³⁶ Lofton, op. cit., p. 30.

ticed by the Mennonites or the followers of John Smyth, Thomas Helwys and John Murton; it was introduced, according to the Jessey Church Records, in 1641 by two companies, one of which belonged to the Jessey church and the other to the church of Spilsbury; the monuments of the change from sprinkling and pouring to immersion are very numerous, and some of them (as for instance the name Baptist) are very well known; it was testified to almost immediately by Mr. Praisegod Barebone, a highly competent witness, who stood so close to the Baptists that he is claimed as a Baptist minister by so good an authority as the Baptist Encyclopaedia; the fact is likewise affirmed by the Baptist Edward Barber, who glories that it was given to him 'to divulge this glorious truth' to a world that lay in ignorance, and divers other Baptist writers have just as little hesitation in conceding the point; it is also definitely asserted by some very prominent and worthy men of other religious Denominations who were conversant with the circumstances and possibly as capable of telling the truth about them as were their Baptist fellow Christians.³⁷

Thus it is seen that these two groups of Particular Baptists arrived, almost simultaneously, at the conclusion that baptism should be administered by immersion; but they sought different methods of restoring it. Spilsbury's group believed that any group of Christians could restore a New Testament practice which had been disused, and they started immersion in their own group. One division of the Jacob-Lathrop church, under the leadership of Mr. P. Barebone, sought to find a true administrator, and sent one of their number to Holland for immersion. Practically all the Mennon-

³⁷ Whitsitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 144, 145.

ites in Holland used affusion, but there was at least one exception. The congregation at Rynsburg, sometimes called the Collegiants, adopted immersion in 1619.³⁸ It was to this group of Mennonites, often called Anabaptists, that Blunt went for the administration of baptism.

Henry Jessey's Progressive Development To The Belief In Immersion. All the available sources indicate that Henry Jessey, who led the other half of the Jacob-Lathrop church, did not agree with Blunt's mission to Holland. Even in 1640 Jessey was convinced that dipping was the Scriptural form of baptism, but for some reason he did not follow all the way and submit to immersion. It seems that while he did not accept immersion in 1640, he believed in it from that date until he was immersed in 1645.

Crosby shows that by repeated secessions from Jessey's church to the Baptists, especially the large one in 1641, Jessey was led to investigate the subject more fully, and became convinced that immersion was true baptism. He states that in 1642 Jessey not only proclaimed publicly his conviction that immersion was true baptism, but from that time he practiced it upon children. In the conferences of 1643-44 on

³⁸ Vedder, op. cit., p. 190.

baptism, Jessey was finally convinced against infant baptism and in 1645 adopted believers' baptism and was immersed.³⁹

Lofton wrote that "evidently Jessey was convinced with Blunt, 1640-41, that dipping was baptism, but he did not believe in sending over the sea for administrators".⁴⁰ Hanserd Knollys undoubtedly had a great deal of influence over Jessey, for in 1643 Knollys, who was a member of the Jessey church, had a controversy with the pastor over the baptism of his child. Knollys and his wife withdrew from this church and were immersed.⁴¹

In describing Mr. Jessey's change, Ivimey states in his History Of The English Baptists:

His first conviction was about the manner of baptizing; for he soon discovered that sprinkling was a modern corruption, brought into use without any just reason either from Scripture or antiquity; and therefore in the year 1642, the church being assembled, he freely declared to them that immersion, or dipping the whole body under water, appeared to him to be the right manner of administering baptism; that this mode was the import of the original word baptizo; that it agreed with the examples of baptism recorded in Scripture; and that it best represented the spiritual mysteries signified by it, the death and resurrection of Christ, and our dying to sin and rising again to newness of life. And therefore he proposed that in future baptism should be administered after this

³⁹ Crosby, op. cit., pp. 310, 311.

⁴⁰ Lofton, op. cit., p. 25.

⁴¹ A. C. Underwood, A History of The English Baptists (London: The Baptist Union Publication Dept., The Kingsgate Press, 1947), p. 59.

manner. Mr. Jessey accordingly, for two or three years after this, baptized children by dipping them in the water.⁴²

Ivimey continues:

About the year 1644, the controversy on the subjects of baptism was revived, and several debates were held in the congregation about it. Before Mr. Jessey avowed his sentiments on the side of adult baptism, he had a meeting with Dr. Goodwin, Mr. Phillip Nye, Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs, Mr. Walter Cradock, and several others: but obtaining no satisfaction, he was baptized in June 1645, by Mr. Hansard Knollys.⁴³

Whether one follows the Spilsbury group or the Jacob-Lathrop-Barebone group, he discovers the same fact: both groups began the practice of immersing believers in 1641. If one follows the Jessey group, he discovers the fact that this group began immersing in 1645. There were some Anabaptists in England who had come from the Continent, but they did not use immersion as a form of baptism. Whitsitt states:

Among contemporary writers not one has been found who could report an indubitable instance of the immersion of a believer prior to the year 1641 among the Anabaptists of England.⁴⁴

A Statement About Roger Williams And Immersion. A brief statement is made about Roger Williams, although he

⁴² Joseph Ivimey, A History Of The English Baptists (London: Burditt and Morris, 1811), pp. 179, 180.

⁴³ Ibid, p. 180.

⁴⁴ Whitsitt, op. cit., p. 145.

does not belong to this group. He came from England to America in 1631; and in 1639 was baptized by Ezekial Holliman, a member of his church; then Williams baptized ten others, to form the first Baptist church on American soil.⁴⁵ Williams probably had some contact with the Baptists of England prior to 1631, but it is evident that he never advanced to the position of immersion. At first he held the common idea of baptism, along with other Puritans and Separatists, that it could be rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling. He believed that infants should be baptized. Later in his life he came to accept believers' baptism, but he did not insist on immersion as the form.

Whitsitt states:

Mr. Williams prior to 1639 was with a people whose sympathy for immersion was notably defective, and who at the Westminster Assembly in August 1644, did all that lay in their power to abolish the rite altogether. He had contentions with his brethren in Massachusetts on divers other points, but there is no account of his ever contending with their position on this point. And finally, the Anabaptists with whom he united his fortunes for a period of four months had not then adopted immersion in England, and there is no reason to suppose that Mr. Williams travelled in advance of them in this regard.⁴⁶

Vedder agrees that it has not been established conclusively that the form of baptism used by Williams and Holliman was immersion.

⁴⁵ Vedder, op. cit., p. 291.

⁴⁶ Whitsitt, op. cit., p. 160.

Whitsitt's Reasons For Believing That Immersion Was Introduced Into England in 1641. The following seven reasons are given by Whitsitt showing that immersion was introduced into England in 1641: (1) The Jessey Church Records and their account of Blunt going to Holland for immersion. (2) The Confession of Faith of 1644 which prescribes immersion. (3) The name Baptist did not come into use until after 1641. Before, they were called Anabaptists because their form of baptism was merely a repetition of that practiced by others. When they changed the form to immersion they soon took on the name Baptist. (4) The Baptismal Controversy after 1641 showing that immersion alone is baptism. (5) Up to 1641 no churches divided over baptism. After 1641 churches divided over immersion. (6) About 1641 the relationship of the followers of Helwys and Murton to the Mennonites was broken off because of immersion. (7) The alarm occasioned by the effect of the ordinance upon the health of those who submitted to it.

Lofton's Summary Of The "1641 Theory". In Lofton's English Baptist Reformation is found this summary of the "1641 theory" and the validity of the Jessey Church Records:

- (1) John Taylor, 1641, connects Spilsbury and Eaton according to their association in the Jessey Church Records, and shows their introduction of immersion in 1641.
- (2) R. B., 1642, affirms that until lately 'there were

- no baptized persons (immersionists) in the world'.
- (3) Spilsbury, 1642, characterized 'dipping' as the 'old' but 'new found, way'.
 - (4) Barebone, 1643, gives the age of the 'totall dippers' of England as 'two or three yeares old, or some such short time'.
 - (5) Cornwell, 1645, claims that the Baptists under the 'discovery' and 'commandment' of Christ had resumed 'dipping'.
 - (6) Henry Denne, 1645, calls the delivery of the doctrine of baptism by the church a 'new born babe'.
 - (7) Edwards, 1646, puts the origin of 'dipping' among the English Baptists within the 'four years past'.
 - (8) Jessey, 1650, confirms the substance of the Kiffin Manuscript, in its 1640-41 paragraphs by an evident reference to Blunt 'going over the sea' for baptism; and he also confirms the 'No. 4' document of the Jessey Records.
 - (9) Kaye, 1653, asks and answers the question: 'how comes it to pass that this doctrine of baptism dipping hath not been before revealed?'
 - (10) Watts, 1656, points back '13 or 14 yeare agoe' as the date at which the English Baptists began to immerse.
 - (11) The biographer of Jessey, 1671, distinctly mentions the 1640 division of Jessey's church and the facts embraced in the 'No. 4' document, both contained in the Jessey Church Records.
 - (12) Hutchinson, 1676, directly points out the deputation to Holland for a 'proper administrator' in 'reviving' the 'truth' of immersion first received from Holland.
 - (13) The Bampfild Document, 1681, and the Kiffin Manuscript agree in the statement that immersion in England had been 'disused' and that up to the time of its revival by the Baptists there 'were none' who had so practiced to be found-- the date 1641 being fixed by the Kiffin Manuscript.
 - (14) All the other writers of the 17th. century, who touch the subject, imply the recent introduction of immersion by the Baptists of England, about the year 1641.
 - (15) Crosby, 1733, declares that before its restoration by the Baptists of England, 'immersion, had for some time been disused' and he evidently adopted the statements of both the Kiffin and the Bampfild documents and implied the 1641 date of the former, according to the facts.

- (16) Ivimey, 1811, though not certain of the date, and disposed to dodge the issue, confirms the 1641 restoration, according to the Jessey Church Records.
- (17) Geo. Gould, 1860, recognizes the Kiffin Manuscript and Jessey Records as we now have them as valid documents.
- (18) Evans, 1864, clearly agrees with Crosby and Ivimey in the credibility of these documents and the fact of restoring immersion by the Baptists, 1640-41.
- (19) Barclay, 1871, and Rauschenbusch, 1899, fully identify John Batte as the 'teacher' who immersed Blunt.
- (20) Dr. A. H. Newman, 1897, a competent and thorough-- a scholarly investigator, declares that the Jessey Records (including the Kiffin MS) 'bear every mark of genuineness' and 'are thoroughly consistent with each other'.⁴⁷

Controversy Over Baptism From 1641-1644. From 1640 onward many books and pamphlets relating to baptism were printed in England. Also, many Confessions of Faith were set forth by the Baptists from 1644 onward, and these Confessions give great emphasis to the teachings of the Baptists on baptism. The results of this controversy over baptism from 1641-1644 will be seen in the next chapter where the Baptist Confessions of faith are studied. These Confessions reveal the fact that baptism played a large part in all the doctrinal discussions through the remainder of the century. The position of baptism by immersion only for

⁴⁷ Lofton, English Baptist Reformation, op. cit., pp. 114, 115.

believers only was reached by the Particular Baptists by 1641, but this position was attained only after a period of growth and development.

By 1644 there were at least seven Particular Baptist churches in England, and in that year their first Confession of Faith was issued.

CHAPTER IV
TEACHINGS ON BAPTISM SEEN IN THE BAPTIST CONFESSIONS
OF FAITH AND OTHER WRITINGS FROM 1644 TO 1689

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER IV

TEACHINGS ON BAPTISM SEEN IN THE BAPTIST CONFESSIONS OF
FAITH AND OTHER WRITINGS FROM 1644-1689

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CHAPTER IV

TEACHINGS ON BAPTISM SEEN IN THE BAPTIST CONFESSIONS OF FAITH AND OTHER WRITINGS FROM 1644-1689

By 1644 there were seven Particular Baptist churches in England. A brief statement concerning their rise and development is given in the preceding chapter. After the restoration of immersion in England by the Particular Baptists in 1641, and the adoption of immersion by the General Baptists a few years later, there was a great deal of discussion on baptism for the next several decades. For several years those who had come out of the Established Church of England had insisted that infant baptism was not in accord with Scriptural teaching, and they insisted on the baptism of believers only. There were many debates on baptism between 1600 and 1640, but these were all concerned with the subject and the meaning of baptism, and not with the mode. There were also many discussions on baptism from 1640 to 1644, and the first Baptist Confession of Faith in 1644 shows some of the results and decisions of these controversies.

1. A BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

The political situation in England helped to account for the excessive growth of Baptists after 1640 and the setting forth of Confessions of Faith after 1644. James I.,

who believed in the philosophy of the divine right of kings and their absolute authority over the people, ruled England with an iron hand. Very little political or ecclesiastical liberty was granted. When his son, Charles I., came to the throne in 1625, the same political and ecclesiastical policy of James was perpetuated. Charles went beyond James in the assertion of absolute authority. He disregarded Parliament and the constitutional rights of the people, and used force in accomplishing his purposes. For many years the Puritans and Baptists had advocated civil and religious liberty, and these groups received very little favor from Charles. William Laud was the chief counsellor of Charles in ecclesiastical and civil matters. Laud sought to restore England to the fold of the Roman papacy, for he was thoroughly convinced of High Church principles. In 1635 he sought to impose upon the Scotch Presbyterians all the ceremonies of the Anglican church. The Presbyterians rebelled, signed the new covenant in 1638, and made their position even more secure in Scotland.¹

Charles and Laud sought to silence the Puritans in their preaching of Calvinism. Newman states that there was "appended to the Prayer Book a prohibition of 'all further

¹ A. H. Newman, A Manual Of Church History, Vol. II., pp. 282-284.

curious search' about the great questions that divided Calvinists from Arminians"².

For several years Charles did not convoke the Parliament, but ruled without any help from the people. In 1640 he called for a meeting of the Parliament in order to secure aid in putting down the religious uprising in Scotland. The Parliament was not sympathetic with the demands made by Charles, and because of its demand for reform and for constitutional liberty, it was dissolved after meeting only three weeks. This is called the Short Parliament. The Long Parliament was convoked in November of 1640, and this group asserted its authority by beginning a civil war; the results of which were the conviction and execution of Laud, the overthrow of the king, and the abolition of the Episcopal Establishment.³ The Scotch Presbyterians joined the English Puritans in accomplishing these measures. The Presbyterians agreed to help the Puritans provided the adoption of Presbyterianism in England should be admitted. This is how Presbyterianism came into power in England, and its power was forcibly manifested in the Westminster Assembly of 1643.

This overthrow of the king and his tyrannical govern-

2 Ibid., p. 284.

3 Ibid., p. 285.

ment, and the political leadership of those who were in sympathy with those who leaned toward Calvinism, made the position of the Baptists more secure. They found a new freedom in religious assemblies, preaching, and the writing of books and pamphlets. There was a much freer discussion of religious differences, as is seen in the controversies on baptism between the Baptists and others. Because of this freedom, all the Protestant groups in England could set forth their views in Confessions of Faith. In 1644 the first Confession of Faith of the Particular Baptists of England was written, and following this one, both the General and Particular Baptists issued other statements of their views. The remainder of this chapter is a study of the teachings on baptism found in these Confessions.

2. TEACHINGS ON BAPTISM AS SEEN IN THE CONFESSIONS OF FAITH.

The Confessions treated here are: (1) The Particular Baptist Confession of 1644, (2) The General Baptist Confession of 1651, (3) The Particular Baptist Confession of 1656, (4) The General Baptist Confession of 1660, (5) The Particular Baptist Confession of 1677, (6) The General Baptist Confession of 1678, and (7) The Particular Baptist Confession of 1689. Also, the other available writings of the period which deal with Baptist teachings on baptism are examined.

The chief source of information for this chapter is the Confessions of Faith. These have been collected and set forth in one volume by W. J. McGlothlin in his Baptist Confessions Of Faith. In this work, McGlothlin has set in chronological order the most important Confessions of Faith issued by Baptists.

In the preface to his work, McGlothlin states:

The Baptist Confessions were among the last to be produced, coming out of the latter part of the Reformation period, and even more recent times. Most of them were formulated in England after Catholicism had practically ceased to be a religious force in that country; they are, therefore, drawn against the background of English Protestantism.⁴

McGlothlin is of the opinion that these Confessions are statements of what certain groups of Baptists believed at a given time "rather than a creed which any Baptist must believe at all times in order to hold ecclesiastical position or be considered a Baptist".⁵ McGlothlin agrees with the conclusion reached in the preceding chapter that the Baptists did not immerse until 16⁶41. Concerning the discussion on baptism he says:

To the controversy over the proper 'subject' of baptism which had been agitated on the continent for a century and had been raging in England for

⁴ W. J. McGlothlin, Baptist Confessions Of Faith, Preface p. xi.

⁵ Loc. Cit.

⁶ Ibid., p. 168.

twenty-five years, is now added one on the mode of baptism, which begins in 1641 and soon becomes violent.⁷

The Particular Baptist Confession of 1644. According to McGlothlin, the Baptists drew up their first Confession of Faith:

In order to distinguish themselves from both the Anabaptists and the General Baptists, refute the slanders and remove the misunderstandings of which they were the innocent victims, they determined to draw up and publish a statement of their views.⁸

Accordingly, the seven Particular Baptist congregations united in 1644 in publishing the first Baptist Confession of the Calvinistic type. "It is the first Confession of history to prescribe a single immersion as the form of baptism".⁹

Articles thirty-nine, forty and forty-one of this Confession deal with baptism. The Baptists insisted on having the proper subjects for baptism, and Article thirty-nine deals with the subjects of baptism. It states:

That Baptisme is an ordinance of the New Testament, given by Christ; to be dispensed onely upon persons

7 Ibid., p. 169.

8 Loc. Cit.

9 Loc. Cit.

professing faith, or that are Disciples, or taught, who upon a profession of faith, ought to be baptized.¹⁰

This Article makes it clear that this ordinance of the New Testament is to be administered only to certain subjects; those who have professed faith in Christ, or have become Disciples of Christ. A personal faith in Jesus Christ is the requisite condition for receiving baptism. Not only were these Baptists concerned with the subjects of baptism but they insisted on using the proper mode. Article forty discusses the mode of baptism. It asserts:

The way and manner of the dispensing of this Ordinance the Scripture holds out to be dipping or plunging the whole body under water: it being a signe, must answer the thing signified, which are these: first, the washing the whole soule in the bloud of Christ: Secondly, that interest the Saints have in the death, buriall, and resurrection; thirdly, together with a confirmation of our faith, that as certainly as the body is buried under water, and riseth againe, so certainly shall the bodies of the Saints be raised by the power of Christ, in the day of the resurrection, to reigne with Christ.¹¹

This Article of the Confession is clear in its teaching that immersion is the proper form of baptism. This belief in immersion is based on the teaching of the Scripture. The Confession specifies that the whole body shall be dipped

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 185.

¹¹ Loc. Cit.

under the water. Baptism is a symbol, or sign, and should signify as nearly as possible the thing represented. Baptism symbolizes the washing of the soul in the blood of Jesus Christ, the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and it confirms the belief of the subject that just as the body is buried under the water and rises again, so shall the bodies of the saints be raised in the day of the resurrection by the power of Christ. The Baptists had been accused of baptizing candidates in the state of nakedness, and they sought to clear themselves of these charges, for in the margin of Article forty these words are found:

The word baptizo, signifying to dip under water, yet so as with convenient garments both upon the administrator and subject, with all modestie.¹²

Vedder states:

English Baptists were accused by their opponents of baptizing converts in a state of nakedness, and doing other scandalous things, hence the statement in parentheses was necessary, and the 1651 edition of the confession adds these words: 'Which is also our practice, as many eye-witnesses can testify'.¹³

A third requisite for proper baptism was a valid administrator. Article forty-one deals with the administrator of the ordinance of baptism. It states:

¹² Loc. Cit.

¹³ H. C. Vedder, A Short History Of The Baptists, p. 211.

The persons designed by Christ, to dispense this ordinance, the Scriptures hold forth to be a preaching Disciple, it being no where tyed to a particular church, officer, or person extraordinarily sent, the commission injoyning the administration, being given to them under no other consideration, but as considered disciples.¹⁴

This article sets forth the belief that any Disciple or any believer in Christ may administer the ordinance of baptism.

Because of the criticism of Daniel Featley, who in 1645 published his book The Dippers Dipt, the Confession was rewritten and a few changes made in some of the articles. It remained the same in its essential teachings, however. The Quakers arose in 1646 under the leadership of George Fox, and their peculiar beliefs, as well as their criticisms of the Baptists, caused the latter group to set forth their Confession in several editions.¹⁵

The General Baptist Confession of 1651. The first General Baptist Confession of Faith was drawn up by a larger group than that which composed the first Particular Confession, for as McGlothlin states:

Thirty congregations in Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and adjoining counties, sent two representatives each to a meeting to draw up a statement of their views. This is the first General Baptist Confession to speak for more than one church.¹⁶

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 185.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 189f.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 94.

In this Confession reference is made to baptism in Articles forty-seven, forty-eight, and forty-nine. Article forty-seven states that "the Baptisme which the Lord Jesus commanded his disciples to teach, ought to be known by every one, before they submit themselves, or obey it; Acts. 2:38.41."¹⁷ The teaching of this Article would eliminate infant baptism, for it specifies that the one who receives it should know about its significance.

Article forty-eight refers to the manner or mode of baptism. It states:

That the way and manner of baptising, both before the death of Christ, and since his resurrection and ascension, was to go into the water, and to be baptised; Math. 3.6. Math. 1.5. and 8.9.¹⁸

Although the word immersion is not used in this Confession, the implication seems clear that immersion was the form of baptism accepted.

There is no indication that the General Baptists believed baptism to be essential to salvation, but they taught that men should not refuse it, for Article forty-nine states "That when Baptisme is made known, or any other action of obedience, then for men to refuse it, they are

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 103f.

¹⁸ Loc. Cit.

said to reject the counsel of God against themselves;
 Luke 7:30."¹⁹

The Particular Baptist Confession of 1656. The next completely new Confession by the Particular Baptists was issued in 1656 by a group of representatives from sixteen churches in the counties of Somerset, Wilts, Devon, Gloucester, and Dorset. These churches had formed an association as early as 1653. Thomas Collier had been elected in 1655 to the office of 'General Superintendent and Messenger to all the Associated Churches'. He no doubt composed this Confession. Nothing in it is contradictory to the earlier Confession issued by the Particular Baptists of London.²⁰

Article twenty-four of this Confession deals with baptism and is as follows:

That it is the duty of every man and woman, that have repented from dead works, and have faith towards God, to be baptized (Acts 2:38; 8:12, 37, 38.), that is dipped or buried under the water (Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:12.), in the name of our Lord Jesus (Acts 8:16.), or in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19.), therein to signify and represent a washing away of sin (Acts 22:16.), and their death, burial, and resurrection with Christ (Rom. 6:5; Col. 2:12.), and being thus

19 Loc. Cit.

20 Ibid., p. 201.

planted in the visible church or body of Christ (I Cor. 12:3.), who are a company of men and women separated out of the world by the preaching of the gospel (Acts 2:41; 2 Cor. 6:17.), do walk together in communion in all the commandments of Jesus (Acts 2:42.), wherein God is glorified and their souls comforted (2 Thes. 1:11, 12; 2 Cor. 1:4.).²¹

From this Article it is seen that this 1656 Confession of Faith sets forth the belief that baptism is a duty for every man or woman who has repented. Baptism is for men and women, or those of age, and not for infants. It is to be received only after individuals have repented from dead works, and have exercised their faith toward God. The form or mode of baptism specified in this Confession is immersion, or dipping. It calls for a burial under the water. This is based on the words of Paul in Romans 6:3, 4, where he says, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life". There were some groups of Christians who taught that baptism should be in the name of Jesus Christ; while others taught that it should be in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. This Confession states that baptism may be either in the name of Christ or in the

²¹ Ibid., p. 206f.

name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Whereas some groups, for example the Roman Catholics, taught that baptism washes away sin, these Baptists teach in this Confession of Faith that baptism represents a washing away of sin in the soul. It is not administered to wash away sin, but merely to signify that through the blood of Christ, and through repentance and faith, sin has been washed away. Baptism symbolizes not only the death to sin and the rising to a new life in one's soul, but it is the symbol of the death, burial, and the resurrection of Christ. Likewise, it shows that one has been planted in the visible church or the body of Christ. In this Confession is set forth a comprehensive definition of a church: A company of men and women separated out of the world by the preaching of the gospel, who walk together in communion in all the commandments of Jesus, wherein God is glorified and their souls comforted.

The General Baptist Confession of 1660. The standard Confession of the General Baptists was drawn up in March, 1660. Representatives from various parts of England met in London and composed the General Assembly of the General Baptists, which claimed to represent about twenty thousand members. This Confession was likely composed by Thos. Grantham. It was reaffirmed by the General Assembly of

22
1663. McGlothlin states:

It represented the entire body of General Baptists in England, and is the first of the General Baptist Confessions to prescribe dipping or immersion as the essential form of baptism. If Smyth and his immediate followers did originally practise affusion, as seems most probable, it is not known when the General Baptists began the practice of immersion. The Calvinistic Baptists (or, perhaps we should say Anabaptists) began immersion as early as 1640 or 1641, and incorporated immersion as the only acceptable form of baptism in their first Confession in 1644. This action would naturally influence the General Baptists, and it has been supposed that they gradually adopted immersion until it was made the only acceptable mode in this Confession of 1660.²³

Article eleven of this Confession deals with baptism and states:

That the right and only way, of gathering churches (according to Christs appointment, Mat. 28.19, 20.) is first to teach, or preach the Gospel, Mark 16.16 to the Sons and Daughters of man; and then to Baptise (that is in English to Dip) in the name of the Father, Son, and holy Spirit, or in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; such only of them, as profess repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, Acts. 2:38. Acts 8:12. Acts 18:8. and as for all such who preach not this Doctrine, but instead thereof, that Scriptureless thing of sprinkling of infants (falsely called Baptisme) whereby the pure word of God is made of no effect, and the New Testament-way of bringing in members, into the church by regeneration, cast out; when as the bond-woman & her son, that is to say, the Old Testament-way of bringing in children into the church by generation, is cast out, as saith the Scripture, Gal. 4:30, 22, 23, 24. Mat. 2.8, 9. All such we utterly deny,

22 Ibid., pp. 109, 110.

23 Ibid., p. 110.

forasmuch as we are commanded to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them, Ephes. 5.11.²⁴

This General Baptist Confession of Faith, like the previous Particular Baptist Confessions, insists on immersion as the form of baptism, and states that those who have repented of their sins and made a profession of faith in Christ are the proper subjects. Infant baptism is utterly denounced.

The Particular Baptist Confession of 1677. There are not many major differences between the Particular Baptist Confession of 1677 and the former Particular Baptist Confessions. McGlothlin thinks that this Confession was formulated in order to show the large agreement of the Baptists with Presbyterians and Congregationalists. This Confession is a revision of the Westminster Confession, which had also been adopted by the Congregationalists after making necessary adaptations.²⁵

The General Baptist Confession of 1678. In 1678, the General Baptists drew up their so-called "Orthodox Creed", by which they sought "to unite and confirm all true Prot-

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 115, 116.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 123.

estants in the fundamental articles of the Christian religion against the errors and heresies of Rome".²⁶ It is supposed to have been written by Thos. Monk, and was signed by fifty-four "messengers, elders, and brethren from Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and adjoining counties, Jan. 30, 1678".²⁷

In this "Orthodox Creed", or General Baptist Confession of 1678, reference is made to baptism in Articles twenty-seven and twenty-eight. Article twenty-seven deals with Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and states:

Those two sacraments, viz. Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, are ordinances of positive, sovereign, and holy institution, appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ, the only lawgiver, to be continued in his church, to the end of the world; and to be administered by those only who are rightly qualified, and thereunto called, according to the command of Christ.²⁸

It is seen by this Article of the Confession that baptism was instituted by Jesus Christ, and was given to his church, and not to some individual. It is to be administered by those who are rightly qualified and called according to the command of Christ.

Article twenty-eight deals with the "Right Subject

26 Loc. Cit.

27 Loc. Cit.

28 Ibid., pp. 144, 145.

and Administration of Holy Baptism", and states:

Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized, or dipped, a sign of our entrance into the covenant of grace, and ingrafting into Christ, and into the body of Christ, which is his church; and of remission of sin in the blood of Christ, and of our fellowship with Christ, in his death and resurrection, and of our living or rising to newness of life. And orderly none ought to be admitted into the visible church of Christ, without being first baptized; and those which do really profess repentance towards God, and faith in, and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only proper subjects of this ordinance, according to our Lord's holy institution, and primitive practice; and ought by the minister, or administrator, to be done in a solemn manner, in the name of the father, son, and holy ghost, by immersion or dipping of the person in the element of water; this being necessary to the due administration of this holy sacrament, as holy scripture sheweth and the first and best antiquity witnesseth for some centuries of years. But the popish doctrine which they teach and believe, that those infants that die without baptism, or have it not actually, or in desire, are not, nor cannot be saved, we do not believe. Nor yet their practice of admitting persons only upon an implicit faith of the church, nor their superstitions and popish ceremonies of salt, and spittle, and breathing on the face of the party baptized, together with their chrisoms and hallowed lights. Neither do we believe, that infants dying in infancy, without baptism, go to purgatory or limbus infantum, as they erroneously teach. Nor do we believe, that the pope of Rome, or any other persons whomsoever, have power to alter, or change, this ordinance of Christ, as they have done by this superstitious and such like idolatrous inventions and practices of the Romish church, all which superstitions of theirs, are contrary to Christ's institution, or the Apostles practice of holy baptism.²⁹

²⁹ Loc. Cit.

This Article of the Confession states that baptism is an ordinance ordained by Jesus Christ, and is to be administered by dipping or immersion. Baptism is a sign of entrance into the covenant of grace and of the ingrafting of the believer into Christ. This ordinance also signifies entrance into the body of Christ, the church, and it symbolizes the remission of sins in the blood of Christ. The Confession does not make baptism necessary for salvation, nor does it attribute to baptism the power of washing away sins. Baptism is only a symbol of that washing away of sin which the blood of Jesus Christ accomplishes. This ordinance also is the symbol of the believer's fellowship with Christ in his death and resurrection. Likewise, it pictures the believer's death to sin and his rising to a new life. The only proper subjects of baptism are those who have repented of their sins and professed faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism is administered to the believer in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost. More than once the Confession states that baptism is to be administered by dipping or immersion. It affirms that the first and best antiquity for some centuries of years witnesses to the practice of immersion. This does not refer to several centuries just passed, and does not mean that immersion had been the practice for these past several centuries. Rather, it refers

to the fact that immersion was the practice for the first several centuries after the New Testament days. This Confession denounces the popish doctrines concerning the relations of infants to baptism. It also repudiates the superstition which is revealed in the ceremonies used in the Catholic administration of baptism. This Confession shows that these Baptists did not believe that unbaptized infants would be lost.

The Particular Baptist Confession of 1689. The year 1689 was a significant one for England. On February 13, 1689, William and Mary became the King and Queen of England. On May 24, 1689 the Act of Toleration was passed. The most important thing from the standpoint of this study is that this was an outstanding year for the English Baptists, for in 1689 one of the greatest Confessions of Faith ever issued by the Baptists was set forth.

McGlothlin thus states the circumstances surrounding the formation of this Confession:

On July 22, 1689, William Kiffin, Hanserd Knollys, John Harris, George Barrett, Benjiman Keach, Edward Man, and Richard Adams united in a circular letter to all the Calvinistic Baptist churches of England and Wales, inviting them to send from each church two messengers, one of whom should be the minister, to a meeting to be held in London beginning September 3, to consider the low estate of the churches, and especially to devise means for raising up a more numerous and better equipped ministry. The response

was gratifying. Messengers from one hundred and seven churches in England and Wales met in London, September 3, and continued in session until September 12. Among the many important things done by this first Assembly was the approval of this Confession, (1677), a second edition of which had appeared in 1688, and the recommending of its perusal both by other Christians and by their own members.³⁰

This has been called the most influential and important of all the Baptist Confessions.³¹ For about one hundred years it was the standard Baptist Confession of Faith in England. This Confession deals with Baptism in Articles twenty-eight and twenty-nine. Article twenty-eight states:

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of positive, and sovereign institution; appointed by the Lord Jesus the only Law-giver, to be continued in his church to the end of the world. These holy appointments are to be administered by those only, who are qualified and thereunto called according to the commission of Christ.³²

Article twenty-nine states:

Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized, a sign of his fellowship with him, in his death, and resurrection; of his being engrafted unto him; of remission of sins; and of his giving up unto God through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life. Those who do actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience, to our Lord Jesus, are the only proper subjects of this ordinance. The outward element to be used in this ordinance is water, wherein the party is to be baptized, in the name of the

³⁰ Ibid., p. 217f.

³¹ Ibid., p. 219.

³² Ibid., p. 269f.

Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Immersion, or dipping of the person in water, is necessary to the due administration of this ordinance.³³

This Confession reveals the fact that in 1689 there was little change in the Baptist position on baptism from the statements made in earlier Confessions. This Confession seems to have been more of a reaffirmation of the older statements of faith than the setting forth of a new Confession.

All these Confessions of Faith agree on the following beliefs on baptism: (1) Baptism is one of the two ordinances instituted by Christ, (2) Baptism is to be administered only to those who have repented of sin and believed in Jesus Christ, (3) Baptism is not essential to one's salvation, but is a symbol or sign of his fellowship with Christ, of Christ's death, burial and resurrection, and of the believer's death to sin and rising to a new life, (4) The mode of baptism is dipping or immersion, (5) Infant baptism is excluded altogether, and (6) Baptism is to be administered in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

3. BAPTIST TEACHINGS ON BAPTISM AS SEEN IN OTHER WRITINGS FROM 1644-1689.

³³ Loc. Cit.

In addition to the Baptist Confessions of Faith issued between 1644 and 1689, seven of which have been examined, there were a few other writings in this period which reveal the teachings and practices of the Baptists on baptism.

The Writings Of Thomas Grantham. One of the greatest apologists for the Baptists was Thomas Grantham, whose work The Loyal Baptist or An Apology For Baptized Believers, is typical of much of the writing of this period. In this book, which was published in 1674, is seen a collection of many tracts or pamphlets which Grantham wrote. In the section on The Fourth Principle of Christ's Doctrine Vindicated, he argues against the necessity of laying on of hands, or of confirmation, as practiced in the Roman Church and the Anglican Church.³⁴ He accepts these as valid New Testament practices, but does not believe they were absolutely necessary to make baptism valid. He denounces the fact that the Catholics made a Sacrament (Confirmation) out of the simple Apostolic practice of laying on of the hands. He points out that the laying on of hands should be only for baptized believers, men and women.³⁵

³⁴ Thomas Grantham, The Loyal Baptist (London:1674), p. 4.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 10.

In the book, The Loyal Baptist, is found another treatise written by Thomas Grantham in 1676 and called The Querist Examined, or Fifty Anti-Queries Seriously Propounded to The People Called Presbyterians. This work was occasioned by the publication of Fifty Queries set forth by the Presbyterians in the work of Richard Baxter, in which they sought to support infant baptism. The Presbyterians had argued for infant baptism from tradition, while the Baptists insisted that there was no proof that all infants were baptized in the early days of Christianity; and certainly the New Testament did not teach its necessity. Concerning The Baptists' choice of the way which they would follow in regard to baptism Grantham states:

And surely when two ways are before us, the one certain, altogether clear, the undeniable footsteps of Christ and his true followers, being legible therein; and the other so doubtful, that no man can be confident that any disciples of Christ in the Apostles days have trode one step therein; Its our wisdom to take the way that is certain, and not to decline it for that which is so doubtful: Surely this is the very case between us.³⁶

In this debate between the Presbyterians and the Baptists, it is seen that the Presbyterians believed Baptism and the Lord's Supper both necessary for salvation. The Baptists asked, why then were not the infants admitted

³⁶ Ibid., p. a 2.

to the Lord's Supper without their consent, as well as to Baptism? The Presbyterians argued infant baptism on the basis of the Covenant made with Abraham, which Covenant included the infants. Just as the Hebrews circumcised the infants, so should the Christians baptize them, as a sign of God's covenant of grace. The Baptists maintained that they dedicated their children to God, although they did not make this dedication in the form of baptism.

The Presbyterians believed that the infants could not be saved without baptism; while the Baptists insisted that Christ's death assured salvation for them.³⁷

In the Postscript of the Querist Examined, Grantham includes his arguments against infant baptism, which same arguments he had recently used against the Church of England. These are summed up as follows: (1) Infant baptism is contrary to the command of Christ, (2) Infant baptism is not of divine institution, (3) Infant baptism is not agreeable to the commission from the perpetuity of Baptism, (4) Infant baptism is not agreeable to the practice of the Apostolical churches, (5) Infant baptism is not the baptism of repentance for remission of sins, and (6) Infant baptism is as unreasonable as to baptize persons when they are asleep or dead.³⁸

37 Ibid., p. 1f.

38 Ibid., p. 43.

When the Baptists of England adopted immersion as their form of baptism, they were severely criticized for it, and were charged with many harmful and sinful practices. In the second division of these Queries, many of these charges are found. The question is asked, "Your ordinary practice of Baptizing by Dipping over Head in cold water (which you use as necessary) is it not a breach of the Sixth Commandment, 'Thou Shalt Not Kill'?"³⁹ Grantham answered the charge by saying:

Was not Christ baptized of John into Jordon? . . . Was not that cold water? . . . Do you not boldly out-face the Holy Ghost by your sprinkling, John 3. where he tells us the reason why John baptized in Aenon, was, because there was much water? And why went Phillip and the Eunuch both down into the water, if your crossing and sprinkling were a due form of baptizing? Does not Diodate (and many of your learned men) tell us, that (Rom. 6:4.) Baptism was a Dipping in water, according to the ancient ceremony? Were the ancient Christians Murtherers? When will you blush at your desperate vanities? Nay, do not you grant that Dipping was the use of the church in Scripture-times, only you ask us whether it was constantly used?⁴⁰

The Baptists were also charged with breaking the Seventh Commandment, "Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery"; because they were accused of dipping persons naked, or nearly naked. Grantham answered this charge by saying:

39 Ibid., p. 59.

40 Ibid., p. 60.

Is not the having one Garment on only next to naked? And yet may it not be decent enough to be Baptised in one Garment? But why do you so basely suggest that it is our practice to Baptize naked? Is not our constant Practice known to be otherwise? Are not both men and women attired in decent Garments among us when Baptised? Why do you thus ungraciously Scandalize an Innocent People?⁴¹

Thomas Grantham in 1680 published his Controversie About Infants Church-Membership And Baptism, in which he showed the certainty of the salvation of all those who die in infancy. The Baptists had been accused of excluding infants from the grace of God and leaving them in the Kingdom of the Devil. This writing, in which Grantham asserted the helief in the salvation of all infants, is his answer to that charge. Grantham seeks to show "that all infants are in a visible state of Salvation, and so of the Universal Church of God, and cannot be put out of that blessed state, til by their voluntary departure from God by choosing sinful ways, they destroy themselves"⁴². Grantham summed up his belief in the salvation of all infants in the following statements: (1) Because they cannot damn themselves, (2) Because no man can damn infants, (3) The Devil cannot damn infants, (4) God will not damn infants, (5) Christ will not damn poor infants, (6) Christ died for all infants,

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 61.

⁴² Ibid., p. 6.

therefore they shall not be damned, (7) All dying infants are written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, therefore no dying infants are damned, (8) All dying infants are in the Covenant of Grace, therefore no dying infant shall be damned, (9) No man can prove that any infant ever was, or ever shall be damned in Hell Torments; therefore no dying infant shall be damned, and (10) To hold infants to be damned, is contrary to all good reason.

Grantham concluded his statement about infant baptism thus:

And here I again declare, that this Error of holding Infants damned without Baptism, was the ground of that innovation of Pede-baptism. . . . Wherefore take away this false ground by showing the Salvation of all dying Infants, and then Infant-Baptism vanisheth.⁴³

In the Second Part of his Apology For The Baptized Believers, published in 1684, Grantham renews the grounds of infant baptism, and answers fourteen arguments given by Mr. Nathaniel Taylor. The Baptists had been charged with believing that they alone would be saved, because they believed themselves to have the correct form of baptism. Grantham answered by saying:

Yet we do not therefore arrogate to our selves alone the Christian Name, nor exalt ourselves in our imaginations above others; but do believe and hope, that the Number of the saved

⁴³ Ibid., p. 21f.

ones will be gathered out of all sorts of Christians, who heartily love God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and live holily and charitably among men, though they be diversified in respect of ceremonies, by reason of the place and Government where they live: . . .⁴⁴

In this work, Grantham maintained that true baptism is antecedent to Church-Communion. He listed three reasons why the Baptized Believers cannot conform to the ceremonies of the Church of England: (1) Their practice of Infant Baptism, (2) Their Discipline, and (3) Their Imposing of Ceremonies. Concerning the baptism of the Church of England Grantham states:

She believes, holds, and maintains, that crossing or Sprinkling is a lawful way of Baptizing; when indeed it is no Baptizing at all. Insomuch as those that use that mode, dare not speak as they act, saying, 'I Sprinkle thee in the Name, etc.' their conscience bearing them witness, that the sacred act of baptizing in the Name, &c. cannot be expressed in the word 'Sprinkling'. They therefore believing what they know is not true in this matter, must needs err in Faith, as well as in their practice. And this Error has in a manner destroyed the way of baptizing used by John Baptist, Christ and His Apostles. Thus tho we grant, that the Church of England is no less zealous for the Doctrine of Baptism than our selves, yet it is apparent to us, that she hath accidentally lost this holy ordinance, both in respect of the Subjects and manner of it, and in the due use and End of it, which was not appointed (nor fitted) to receive new-born Infants into the Church Militant. And by this unwarrantable change she has defaced the State, and lost the praise of a true Church, I. Cor. 11.2. because she has not kept this ordinance, as it was delivered by Christ and his Apostles; but hath rather surpressed it, and much

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 1f.

oppressed those that labor to restore it to its due use and practice in all Churches, which is a great aggravation of all these her Errors in Faith and Practice, concerning Sacred Baptism.⁴⁵

This is a valuable testimony of one of the early English Baptists that the Church of England did not practice dipping, as some contend; and also that the true form of baptism was being restored. He does not mention any date or particular group in connection with the restoration of immersion, however he is clear on the fact that it was a new practice in England.

The writings of Grantham contain a detailed discussion of the meaning of the word "baptize" in the New Testament, and he shows that sprinkling cannot answer for the command of the New Testament or to the requirement of reason.

Grantham argued against the necessity of succession. He sought to prove that the Romanists and the Church of England did not have a true succession of Faith, and therefore their ordination and their baptism were false. As a Baptist, he did not believe it necessary to trace Baptist succession back to the days of the Apostles, and he thought anyone who claimed to have the same power which the Apostles had was presumptuous.

A Mr. Petto wrote Infant-Baptism Of Christ's Appointment, and Mr. Giles Firmin wrote The Plea Of The Children Of

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 5f.

Believing Parents. In 1687, Grantham answered both these works in the same writing, and showed from the teaching of the Scripture that Infant Baptism is invalid.

In 1689 Grantham wrote Truth And Peace, or The Last And Most Friendly Debate Concerning Infant Baptism. In this work he repeats many of the statements made before concerning the invalidity of the baptism of infants, and shows that true baptism is by the immersion of believers.

The Broadmead Church Records. The Broadmead Church Records, published by Von Braght, and edited by E. B. Underhill, is a work intended primarily to give the history of one church in Bristol. These records state that the Broadmead church gradually developed to the position of immersion and the rejection of infant baptism. It was not until 1653 that one of their members, Timothy Cattle, was baptized by Henry Jessey in London, and then Cattle baptized others in the Broadmead church.⁴⁶ Though a history of only one church, The Broadmead Church Records give an indication of the changes in doctrine and practice which were taking place in many churches in England.

Keach's Catechism. This chapter of this thesis will

⁴⁶ E. B. Underhill, The Broadmead Church Records (London: J. Haddon, Castle Street, Finsburg, 1848), p.. 42.

be concluded by setting forth a summary of Baptist teachings on baptism as seen in Keach's Catechism. D. C. Haynes, in The Baptist Denomination, prints what he says is commonly called Keach's Catechism. It is based on the Baptist Confession of Faith published in 1677, which was signed by Benjiman Keach and others. The portions of the Catechism dealing with baptism are as follows:

Question 96. What is Baptism?

Answer. Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized a sign of his fellowship with him, in his death, and burial, and resurrection, of his being ingrafted into him, of remission of sins, and of his giving up himself unto God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life.

Question 97. To whom is baptism to be administered?

Answer. Baptism is to be administered to all those who actually profess repentance towards God, faith in and obedience to, our Lord Jesus Christ; and to none other.

Question 98. Are the Infants of such as are professing believers to be baptized?

Answer. The infants of such as are professing believers are not to be baptized because there is neither command nor example in the holy Scriptures, or certain consequence from them, to baptize such.

Question 99. How is baptism rightly administered?

Answer. Baptism is rightly administered by immersion, or dipping the whole body of the person in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, according to Christ's institution, and the practice of the Apostles, and not by sprinkling or pouring of water, or dipping some parts of the body, after the tradition of men.

Question 100. What is the duty of such as are rightly baptized?

Answer. It is the duty of those who are rightly baptized to give up themselves to some particular and orderly church of Jesus Christ, that they may walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.⁴⁷

It has been seen in this chapter that the Baptist Confession of Faith issued by the Baptists in 1644 was the first one to specify single immersion as the true form of baptism. All the Baptist churches of this period did not accept this position immediately, but the belief in baptism for believers only by immersion only was a gradual development among them. The statement of faith seen in Keach's Catechism reveals that by the end of this special period of study, 1689, practically all the Baptists of England had grown to this position on baptism.

⁴⁷ D. C. Haynes, The Baptist Denomination (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., 1856), pp. 88, 89.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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A. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.

In this thesis it has been attempted to set forth the Baptist teachings and practices on baptism in England from 1600 to 1689. Believers' baptism is one of the most cherished Baptist principles. The author has used as the criterion for "Baptist baptism" the statement "baptism for believers only by immersion only".

Those Baptists who believe in the necessity of historical succession try to trace Baptists back to the New Testament through the Anabaptists, the Lollards, the Waldenses, the Paulicians, the Petrobruscians, the Donatists, the Montanists and others. They insist that all these groups have always practiced immersion, and that in this succession there has never been any change of belief or practice concerning baptism.

Other Baptists believe in a succession of truth, and maintain that although it is impossible to trace absolute historical succession back to the New Testament, there have always been those who believed and practiced some of the New Testament principles. This group believes that it is of more importance to show that present-day

Baptist churches are like the New Testament church, than to trace historical connections. The author belongs to this latter group, and has attempted to show that the Roman Catholics have a more absolute historical continuity than any other Christian group known, yet they are as far away from the New Testament as any Christian group known.

Because there were various groups all through history who attempted to put into practice New Testament principles, there was a development in most of the beliefs and practices of these groups. This was true of the Baptist position on baptism. If there were in every century groups who believed in "baptism for believers only by immersion only", and practiced this principle, this investigator was not able to find their histories recorded.

History shows that immersion was the form of baptism administered to believers for some time following the New Testament period. But by the fourth century infant baptism was being practiced, and by the sixth century there was hardly anything but infant baptism. This was still administered by immersion. By the thirteenth century, immersion had almost altogether been replaced by pouring or affusion. By 1600 there seem to have been few, if any, groups in England who practiced immersion, although the Prayer Books and Liturgies allowed it.

Because English Baptists arose in the seventeenth century, and because they restored immersion as a form of baptism and administered it to believers only, that period, 1600-1689, was chosen for special study.

B. CHAPTER SUMMARIES.

Chapter I sets forth the beliefs and practices on baptism of other groups around 1600, and these beliefs and practices are compared to the Baptist Principle. It was assumed by the author that Baptist teachings could be better understood when seen against the background of the teachings of other groups. Therefore, this Chapter deals with the Roman Catholics, the Greek Catholics or the Eastern Church, the Church of England, the Lutherans, the Anabaptists, the Mennonites, the Calvinists or the Presbyterians, and the Puritans and Separatists.

Around 1600 the Roman Catholics taught the following things about baptism: (1) Baptism is one of the seven sacraments, (2) Baptism is necessary for one's salvation, (3) Baptism may be administered by any person who has the proper intention and uses the correct words, (4) Baptism can be administered by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling, (5) The water used in baptism effects spiritual ablution or cleansing, (6) Baptism may be single or trine, (7) The sign of the cross should accompany baptism, (8) Baptism is administered to infants, (9) Baptism is the doorway to the

church, and (10) In baptism, the important thing is not the administrator, not the subject, not the mode, but the intention of the administrator and the words of the ceremony. ?

Around 1600, the Greek Catholics or the Eastern Church taught the following things about baptism: (1) Baptism is necessary for salvation, for it washes away original sin, (2) Baptism consists of both an act and the proper words, (3) Baptism is administered by trine, or three-fold, immersion, and (4) Baptism is administered to infants.

Around 1600, the Church of England taught the following things about baptism: (1) Baptism is one of two sacraments instituted by Christ, (2) Baptism is necessary for salvation, (3) Baptism is administered by immersion, sprinkling, or pouring, (4) The most commonly used modes of baptism are pouring and sprinkling, (5) Immersion is seldom used, (6) Baptism is administered to infants, and (7) Baptism is the seal of the confessions of faith and repentance made by the sponsors for the infants.

Around 1600, the Lutherans taught the following things about baptism: (1) Baptism is one of the two sacraments appointed by Christ, (2) True baptism takes effect when the outward washing of water is joined with the words of Christ, (3) The outward washing of water is a symbol of the washing away of sin by the blood and Spirit of Christ, (4) Baptism should be in the name of the Father, the Son,

and the Holy Spirit, (5) Baptism must accompany belief before one's salvation is assured, (6) Infants are to be baptized because they have original sin, and because they are a part of the Covenant made to the people of God, and (7) Baptism is usually by pouring or affusion, but may be by immersion.

Around 1600, the Anabaptists taught the following things about baptism: (1) Baptism should be administered only to those who repent of sin and make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, (2) All those baptized in infancy should be re-baptized, (Thus the name "Ana-Baptist"), (3) The only valid administrator for baptism is one called of the Lord and appointed by the church, (4) Baptism should always be administered before the congregation, and (5) Baptism may be performed by pouring or sprinkling. Immersion may be used but it is not necessary.

Around 1600, the Mennonites taught the following things about baptism: (1) Baptism should be administered only to believers, (2) All those baptized in infancy should be re-baptized, and (3) Immersion is not necessary for the proper administration of baptism.

Around 1600, the Calvinists or Presbyterians taught the following things about baptism: (1) Baptism is one of the two ordinances instituted by Christ, (2) Baptism is an external washing of water, by which a certain internal

ablution from sin is signified, (3) Baptism does not work nor confer regeneration, faith, the grace of God, and salvation, but only signifies them, (4) Regeneration does not take place at baptism but at a more advanced age, (5) Baptism is administered to the infants of believing parents, (6) The ordained minister should administer baptism, and if he is not available, the infant should be permitted to die without baptism, (7) Baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon a person, and dipping is not necessary, and (8) Baptism is to be administered only once.

Around 1600, the Puritans and Separatists taught the following things about baptism: (1) Baptism is to be administered to infants, (2) Baptism is necessary for salvation, (3) Baptism is a sacrament, and is administered as a sign of the covenant, (4) Baptism is administered by sprinkling or pouring, and (5) Baptism is a seal or sign of death to sin, and burial with Christ. (This was the result of Calvinistic influence.)

The examination of the doctrinal statements of all these groups reveals that none of them practiced the Baptist principle of baptism.

Chapter II shows the rise of the General Baptists under the leadership of John Smyth, Thomas Helwys and

John Murton. The stages in the development of Smyth's views are traced from Anglican to Separatist, Separatist to Baptist, and Baptist to Seeker. This chapter relates the conviction of Smyth that baptism should be for believers only; and sets forth the account of his Se-baptism. The story is told of the beginning of the first English Baptist church under Helwys and Murton. The following things are shown about the General Baptists' teachings and practices on baptism: (1) John Smyth passed through at least four distinct stages of development in arriving at his final views on baptism, (2) He was convinced that a regenerate church was the only true church, (3) He believed that only those who professed faith in Christ should be baptized, (4) He utterly denounced infant baptism and called it the mark of the beast, (5) When he reached the position of believers' baptism he renounced the baptism he received in the Church of England, (6) Finding no administrator who had himself received believers' baptism, he baptized himself, (7) This baptism was by pouring, or affusion, (8) As far as was discovered, Smyth was never convinced that immersion was necessary for valid baptism, (9) In the latter part of his life, he renounced the decisions he had made, repudiated his self-baptism, and sought admission into the Mennonite church, (10) Helwys and Murton, though they separated from Smyth,

seem to have held the same positions on baptism which he maintained; however, they did not repudiate their baptism, as did Smyth, and (11) They practiced believers' baptism, but it was not by immersion.

Chapter III traces the development of the Particular Baptists, beginning with their rise in 1616 under the leadership of Henry Jacob. Notice is given to the divisions of 1633, 1638 and 1640; and special attention is called to the churches of John Spilsbury and Henry Jessey. It is shown that the Particular Baptists were convinced by 1640 that baptism not only should be for believers only, but should be administered by immersion only. A small group believed in the necessity of succession, and sent one of their number, Richard Blunt, to Holland for the proper administration of the ordinance. The Rhynsburgers, or Collegiants, in Holland had adopted immersion about 1619. Blunt was immersed in 1641 and on his return to England he baptized about fifty members of his church in that same manner. The majority of the Particular Baptists did not agree with this method of restoring immersion, for they maintained that any group could restore any New Testament practice which had been lost. Therefore, under the leadership of Spilsbury, they began immersing independently. This was the first group of Baptists in England to prac-

tice completely the principle of baptism for believers only by immersion only.

Chapter IV shows the teachings on baptism among both the General and Particular Baptists from 1644 to 1689, as revealed by their Confessions of Faith and other writings. These writings show that the Particular Baptists taught the following things about baptism: (1) Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament instituted by Jesus Christ, (2) Baptism is to be administered only to those who profess repentance towards God, faith in and obedience to Jesus Christ, (3) Baptism signifies to the believer his fellowship with Christ, his death to sin and resurrection to a new life in Christ, Christ's burial and resurrection, the ingrafting of the believer into Christ, and the remission of sins, (4) Baptism is not to be administered to infants, (5) Baptism is rightly administered by immersion, or dipping the whole body of the believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and (6) It is the duty of all those who are baptized to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless.

C. CONCLUSIONS.

On the basis of the facts discovered in this study, the author has reached the following conclusions: (1) There is much misunderstanding and confusion among Baptists as to

what was believed and practiced by their spiritual forefathers, (2) It is more important to find in present-day Baptist churches a correspondence with New Testament principles, than to try to prove continual historical succession, (3) There has been a historical development to the present Baptist position on baptism, for the principle of baptism for believers only by immersion only has not always been asserted, (4) The General Baptists were the first Baptists in England to insist on baptism for believers only, (5) The Particular Baptists in England were the first Baptists to insist on baptism for believers only by immersion only; and they restored the practice of immersion in 1641, and (6) The writer believes that more attention should be given to the study of Baptist history, both in the Baptist Colleges and Seminaries of the south, so that Baptist preachers and others might have a better understanding of the Baptists' historical development. This would help greatly in removing much of the mist of ignorance which enshrouds such a multitude of Christians. If the light of this understanding does not shine in the mind of the minister, the church will continue to walk in the darkness.

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