

Trail of Blood

By J. M. Carroll

FOURTH LECTURE--17th, 18th, 19th Centuries

1. This lecture begins with the beginning of the Seventeenth Century (A.D. 1601). We have passed very hurriedly over much important Christian history, but necessity has compelled this.
2. This three-century period begins with the rise of an entirely new denomination. It is right to state that some historians give the date of the beginning of the Congregational Church (at first called "Independents") as 1602. However, Schaff-Herzog, in their *Encyclopedia*, place its beginning far back in the sixteenth century, making it coeval with the Lutheran and Presbyterian. In the great reformation wave many who went out of the Catholic Church were not satisfied with the extent of the reformation led by Luther and Calvin. They decided to repudiate also the preacher rule and government idea of the churches and return to the New Testament democratic idea as had been held through the fifteen preceding centuries by those who had refused to enter Constantine's hierarchy.
3. The determined contention of this new organization for this particular reform brought down upon its head bitter persecution from Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian and Church of England adherents--all the established churches. However, it retained many other of the Catholic made errors, such for instance as infant baptism, pouring or sprinkling for baptism, and later adopted and practiced to an extreme degree the church and state idea. And, after **refugeeing** to America, themselves, became very bitter persecutors.
4. The name "Independents" or as now called "Congregationalists," is derived from their mode of church government. Some of the distinguishing principles of the English Congregationalists as given in Schaff-Herzog *Encyclopedia* are as follows:
 - (1) That Jesus Christ is the only head of the church and that the Word of God is its only statute book.
 - (2) That visible churches are distinct assemblies of Godly men gathered out of the world for purely religious purposes, and not to be confounded with the world.

(3) That these separate churches have full power to choose their own officers and to maintain discipline.

(4) That in respect to their internal management they are each independent of all other churches and equally independent of state control.

5. How markedly different these principles are from Catholicism, or even Lutheranism, or Presbyterianism or the Episcopacy of the Church of England. How markedly similar to the Baptists of today, and of all past ages, and to the original teachings of Christ and His apostles.

6. In 1611, the King James English Version of the Bible appeared. Never was the Bible extensively given to the people before. From the beginning of the general dissemination of the Word of God began the rapid decline of the Papal power, and the first beginnings for at least many centuries, of the idea of "religious liberty."

7. In 1648 came the "Peace of Westphalia." Among other things which resulted from that peace pact was the triple agreement between the great denominations-Catholic, Lutheran and Presbyterian, no longer to persecute one another. Persecutions among these denominations meant war with governments backing them. However, all other Christians, especially the Ana-Baptists, were to continue to receive from them the same former harsh treatment, persistent persecution.

8. During all the seventeenth century, persecutions for Waldenses, Ana-Baptists, and **Baptists** (in some places the "Ana" was now being left off) continued to be desperately severe; in England by the Church of England, as John Bunyan and many others could testify; in Germany by the Lutherans; in Scotland by the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian); in Italy, in France, and in every other place where the papacy was in power, by the Catholics. There is now no peace anywhere for those who are not in agreement with the state churches, or some one of them.

9. It is a significant fact well established in credible history that even as far back as the fourth century those refusing to go into the Hierarchy, and refusing to accept the baptism or those baptized in infancy, and refusing to accept the doctrine of "Baptismal Regeneration" and demanding rebaptism for all those who came to them from the Hierarchy, were called "Ana-Baptists." No matter what other names they then bore, they were always referred to as "Ana-Baptists." Near the beginning of the sixteenth century, the "Ana" was dropped, and the name shortened to simply "Baptist," and gradually all other names were

dropped. Evidently, if Bunyan had lived in an earlier period his followers would have been called "Bunyanites" or "Ana-Baptists." Probably they would have been called by both names as were others preceding him.

10. The name "Baptist" is a "nickname," and was given to them by their enemies (unless the name can be rightfully attributed to them as having been given to them by the Savior Himself, when He referred to John as "The Baptist"). To this day, the name has never been officially adopted by any group of Baptists. The name, however, has become fixed and is willingly accepted and proudly borne. It snugly fits. It was the distinguishing name of the forerunner of Christ, the first to teach the doctrine to which the Baptists now hold.

11. I quote a very significant statement from the Schaff- Herzogg *Encyclopedia*, under "History of Baptists in Europe," Vol. 1, page 210, "The Baptists appeared first in Switzerland about 1523, where they were persecuted by Zwingle and the Romanists. They are found in the following years, 1525-1530, with large churches fully organized, in Southern Germany, Tyrol and in middle Germany. In all these places persecutions made their lives bitter."

(Note--that all this is prior to the founding of the Protestant churches--Lutheran, Episcopal, or Presbyterian.)

We continue the quotation--

"Moravia promised a home of greater freedom, and thither many Baptists migrated, only to find their hopes deceived. After 1534 they were numerous in Northern Germany, Holland, Belgium, and the Walloon provinces. They increased even during Alva's rule, in the low countries, and developed a wonderful missionary zeal." (Note--"Missionary Zeal." And yet some folks say that the "**Hardshells**" are primitive Baptists.)

Where did these Baptists come from? They did not come out of the Catholics during the Reformation. They had large churches prior to the Reformation.

12. As a matter of considerable interest, note the religious changes in England as the centuries have gone by:

The Gospel was carried to England by the Apostles and it remained Apostolic in its religion until after the organization of the Hierarchy in the beginning of the fourth century, and really for more than another century after that. It then came under the power of the Hierarchy which was rapidly developing into the

Catholic Church. It then remained Catholic--that was the state religion, until the split in 1534-1535, during the reign of Henry VIII. It was then called the Church of England. Eighteen years later, 1553-1558, during the reign of Queen Mary ("Bloody Mary") England was carried back to the Catholics, and a bloody five-years period was this. Then Elizabeth, a half-sister of Mary, the daughter of Anna Boleyn, came to the throne, 1558. The Catholics were again overthrown, and again the Church of England came into power. And thus things remained for almost another century, when the Presbyterian Church came for a short while into the ascendancy, and seemed for a while as if it might become the State Church of England as well as that of Scotland. However, following the time of Oliver Cromwell, the Church of England came back to her own and has remained the established church of England ever since.

13. Note the gradual softening down of religious matters in England from the hard and bitter persecutions of the established church for more than a century.

(1) The first toleration act came in 1688, one hundred and fifty-four years after the beginning of this church. This act permitted the worship of all denominations in England except two--the Catholics and the Unitarians.

(2) The second toleration act came in 1778, eighty-nine years still later. This act included in the toleration the Catholics, but still excluded the Unitarians.

(3) The third toleration act came in 1813, thirty-five years later. This included the Unitarians.

(4) In 1828-1829 came what is known as the "Test Act" which gave the "dissenters" (the religionists not in accord with the "Church of England") access to public office and even to Parliament.

(5) In 1836-37 and 1844 came the "Registration" and "Marriage" acts. These two acts made legal baptisms and marriages performed by "dissenters."

(6) The "Reform Bill" came in 1854. This bill opened the doors of Oxford and Cambridge Universities to dissenting students. Up to this time no child of a "dissenter" could enter one of these great institutions.

14. Thus has been the march of progress in England toward "Religious Liberty." But it is probably correct to state that real religious liberty can never come into any country where there is and is to remain an **established church**. At best, it can only be toleration, which is certainly a long way from real religious liberty. As long as one denomination among several in any country is

supported by the government to the exclusion of all others this favoritism and support of one, precludes the possibility of absolute religious liberty and equality.

15. Very near the beginning of the eighteenth century there were born in England three boys who were destined to leave upon the world a deep and unfading impression. These boys were **John and Charles Wesley, and George Whitfield.**

John and Charles Wesley were born at Epworth (and here comes a suggestion for the name Epworth League), the former June 28, 1703, and the latter March 29, 1708. George Whitfield was born in Gloucester, December 27, 1714. The story of the lives of these boys cannot be told here, but they are well worth being told, and then retold. These three boys became the fathers and founders of Methodism. They were all three members of the Church of England, and all studying for the ministry; and yet at that time, not one of them converted (which at that time was not unusual among the English clergy. Remember, however, that in those days, the parent frequently, if not usually, decided on the profession or line of the life to be followed by the boy). But these boys were afterwards converted, and genuinely and wonderfully converted.

16. These men seemed to have no desire to be the founders of a new denomination. But they did seem to greatly desire and earnestly strive for a revival of pure religion and a genuine spiritual reformation in the Church of England. This they tried in both England and America. The doors of their own churches were soon closed against them. Their services were frequently held out in the open, or in some private house, or, as especially in the case of Whitfield, in the meeting houses of other denominations. Whitfield's great eloquence attracted markedly great attention everywhere he went.

17. The definite date of the founding of the Methodist Church is hard to be determined. Unquestionably Methodism is older than the Methodist Church. The three young men were called Methodists before they left college. Their first organizations were called "Societies." Their first annual conference in England was held in 1744. The Methodist Episcopal Church was officially and definitely organized in America, in Baltimore in 1784. Their growth has really been marvelous. But, when they came out of the Church of England, or the Episcopal Church, they brought with them a number of the errors of the mother and grandmother churches. For instance, as the Episcopacy, or preacher-church government. On this point they have had many internal wars and divisions, and seem destined to have yet others. Infant Baptism and sprinkling for baptism,

etc., but there is one great thing which they have, which they did not bring out with them, a genuine case of spiritual religion.

18. September 12, 1788, there was born in Antrium, Ireland, a child, who was destined in the years to come, to create quite a religious stir in some parts of the world, and to become the founder of a new religious denomination. That child was Alexander Campbell. His father was a Presbyterian minister. The father, Thomas Campbell, came to America in 1807. Alexander, his son, who was then in college, came later. Because of changed views, they left the Presbyterians and organized an independent body, which they called "The Christian Association," known as "The Brush Run Church." In 1811, they adopted immersion as baptism and succeeded in persuading a Baptist preacher to baptize them, but with the distinct understanding that they were not to unite with the Baptist Church. The father, mother, and Alexander were all baptized. In 1813 their independent church united with the Red Stone Baptist Association. Ten years later, because of controversy, they left that association and joined another. Controversies continued to arise, and they left that association. It is fair to say that they had never been Baptists, nor had they so far as any records I have seen, to show, ever claimed to be.

19. It could hardly be fair to Christian history, and especially to Baptist history, to say nothing in these lectures about John Bunyan. In some respects, one of the most celebrated men in English history and even in world history--John Bunyan, a Baptist preacher--John Bunyan, twelve years in Bedford jail--John Bunyan the author while confined in jail, of the most celebrated and most widely circulated book, next to the Bible, in the whole world. "Pilgrim's Progress"--**John Bunyan**, one of the most notable of all examples of the bitterness of Christian persecution.

And the story of Mary Bunyan, John Bunyan's blind daughter, ought to be in every Sunday School library. For many years it was out of print. I think it is now in print again. I almost defy any man or woman, boy or girl, to read it and keep dry eyes.

20. Another thing about which at least a few words should be said in these lectures in concerning Wales and the Welch Baptists. One of the most thrilling stories in Christian history is the story of the Welch Baptists. The Baptists of the United States owe far most to the Welch Baptists than the most of us are conscious. Some whole Baptist churches, fully organized, have migrated in a body from Wales to the United States. (Orchard, p. 21-23; Ford, chapt. 2.)

21. The story of the beginning of Christian work in Wales is strikingly fascinating and from history it seems to be true. That history begins in the New Testament (Acts 28:30-31; II Tim. 4:21). The story of Claudia and Pudens--their visit to Rome--their conversion under Paul's preaching, and carrying the gospel back to Wales, their homeland, is thrillingly interesting. Paul did this preaching in Rome as early as A.D. 63. Soon after that Claudia, Pudens, and others, among them two preachers, carried the same gospel into England and especially into Wales. How mightily the Welch Baptists have helped the Baptists in America can hardly be estimated.