

Trail of Blood

By J. M. Carroll

LECTURE FIVE--RELIGION IN THE UNITED STATES

1. Through the Spanish and others of the Latin races, the Catholics as religionists, came to be the first representatives of the Christian religion in South and Central America. But in North America, except Mexico, they have never strongly predominated. In the territory of what is now the United States except in those sections which were once parts of Mexico they have never been strong enough, even during the Colonial period to have their religious views established by law.

2. Beginning with the Colonial period, in the early part of the seventeenth century, the first settlements were established in Virginia, and a little later in that territory now known as the New England States. Religious, or more properly speaking--irreligious persecutions, in England, and on the continent, were, at least, among the prime causes which led to the first settlement of the first United States Colonies. In some of the groups of immigrants which first came, not including the Jamestown group (1607) and those known as the "Pilgrims" (1620), were two groups, one, at least, called "Puritans"--these were "Congregationalists." Governor Endicott was in control of their colony. The other group were Presbyterians. Among these two groups, however, were a number of Christians with other views than theirs, also seeking relief from persecution.

"THE TRAIL OF BLOOD IN AMERICA"

3. These refugeeing Congregationalists and Presbyterians established different Colonies and immediately within their respective territories established by law their own peculiar religious views. In other words, "Congregationalism" and "Presbyterianism" were made the legal religious views of their colonies. This to the absolute exclusion of all other religious views. Themselves fleeing the mother country, with the bloody marks of persecution still upon them and seeking a home of freedom and liberty for themselves, immediately upon being established in their own colonies, in the new land and having the authority, they deny religious liberty to others, and practice upon them the same cruel methods of persecution. **Especially did they, so treat the Baptists.**

4. The Southern colonies in Virginia, North and South Carolina were settled mainly by the adherents of the Church of England. The peculiar views of the Church were made the established religion of these colonies. Thus in the new land of America, where many other Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians have come seeking the privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own consciences, there were soon set up three established churches. No religious liberty for any except for those who held governmental authority. The Children of Rome are following in the bloody footsteps of their mother. Their own reformation is yet far from complete.

5. With the immigrants to America came many scattering Baptists (by some still called "Ana-Baptists"). There were probably some in every American-bound vessel. They came, however, in comparatively small groups, never in large colonies. They would not have been permitted to come in that way. But they kept coming. Before the colonies are thoroughly established the Baptists are numerous and almost everywhere. But they soon began to feel the heavy hands of the three State churches. For the terrible offenses of "preaching the Gospel" and "refusing to have their children baptized," "opposing infant baptism," and other like conscientious acts on their part, they were arrested, imprisoned, fined, whipped, banished, and their property confiscated, etc. All that here in America. From many sources, I give but a few illustrations.

6. Before the Massachusetts Bay Colony is twenty years old, with the Congregational as the State Church, they passed laws against the Baptists and others. The following is a sample of the laws:

"It is ordered and agreed, that if any person or persons, within this jurisdiction, shall either openly condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants, or go about secretly to seduce others from the approbation or use thereof, or shall purposely depart the congregation at the ministration of the ordinance . . . after due time and means of conviction--every such person or persons shall be sentenced to banishment." This law was enacted especially against the Baptists.

7. By the Authorities in this colony, **Roger Williams** and others were banished. Banishment in America in those days was something desperately serious. It meant to go and live among the Indians. In this case Williams was received kindly and for quite a while lived among the Indians, and in after days proved a great blessing to the colony which had banished him. He saved the colony from destruction by this same tribe of Indians, by his earnest entreaties in their behalf. In this way he returned good for evil.

8. **Roger Williams**, later, together with others, some of whom, at least, had also been banished from that and other of the colonies among whom was **John Clarke**, a Baptist preacher, decided to organize a colony of their own. As yet they had no legal authority from England to do such a thing, but they thought this step wiser under existing conditions than to attempt to live in existing colonies with the awful religious restrictions then upon them. So finding a small section of land as yet unclaimed by any existing colony they proceeded to establish themselves on that section of land now known as Rhode Island. That was in the year 1638, ten years later than the Massachusetts Bay Colony, but it was about 25 years later (1663) before they were able to secure a legal charter.

9. In the year 1651 (?) Roger Williams and John Clarke were sent by the colony to England to secure, if possible legal permission to establish their colony. When they reached England, Oliver Cromwell was in charge of the government, but for some reason he failed to grant their request. Roger Williams returned home to America. **John Clarke remained in England to continue to press his plea. Year after year went by. Clarke continued to remain. Finally Cromwell lost his position and Charles II sat upon the throne of England. While Charles is regarded in history as one of the bitterest of persecutors of Christians, he finally, in 1663, granted that charter. So Clarke, after 12 long years of waiting returned home with that charter. So in 1663, the Rhode Island colony became a real legal institution, and the Baptists could write their own constitution.**

10. That Constitution was written. It attracted the attention of the whole wide world. In that Constitution was the world's first declaration of "Religious Liberty."

The battle for absolute religious liberty even in America alone is a great history within itself. For a long time the Baptists seem to have fought that battle entirely alone, but they did not fight it for themselves alone, but for all peoples of every religious faith. Rhode Island, the first Baptist colony, established by a small group of Baptists after 12 years of earnest pleading for permission was the first spot on earth where religious liberty was made the law of the land. The settlement was made in 1638; the colony legally established in 1663.

11. In this colony two Baptist churches were organized even prior to the legal establishment of the colony. As to the exact date of the organization of at least one of these two churches, even the Baptists, according to history, are at disagreement. All seem to be agreed as to the date of the organization of the one at Providence, by Roger Williams, in 1639. As to the date of the one organized at Newport by John Clarke, all the later testimony seems to give the

date at 1638. All the earlier seems to give it later, some years later. The one organized by Roger Williams at Providence seems to have lived but a few months. The other by John Clarke at Newport, is still living. My own opinion as to the date of organization of Newport church, based on all available data, is that **1638** is the correct date. Personally, I am sure this date is correct.

12. As to the persecutions in some of the American colonies, we give a few samples. It is recorded that on one occasion one of John Clarke's members was sick. The family lived just across the Massachusetts Bay Colony line and just inside that colony. John Clarke, himself, and a visiting preacher by the name of Crandall and a layman by the name of Obediah Holmes--all three went to visit that sick family. While they were holding some kind of a prayer service with that sick family, some officer or officers of the colony came upon them and arrested them and later carried them before the court for trial. It is also stated, that in order to get a more definite charge against them, they were carried into a religious meeting of their church (Congregationalist), their hands being tied (so the record states). The charge against them was "for not taking off their hats in a religious service." They were all tried and convicted. Gov. Endicott was present. In a rage he said to Clarke, while the trial was going on, "You have denied infants baptism" (this was not the charge against them). "You deserve death. I will not have such trash brought into my jurisdiction." The penalty for all was a fine, or be well-whipped. Crandall's fine (a visitor) was five pounds (\$25.00), Clarke's fine (the pastor) was twenty pounds (\$100.00). Holmes' fine (the records say he had been a Congregationalist and had joined the Baptists) so his fine was thirty pounds (\$150.00). Clark's and Crandall's fines were paid by friends. Holmes refused to allow his fine paid, saying he had done no wrong, so was well whipped. The record states that he was "stripped to the waist" and then whipped (with some kind of a special whip) until the blood ran down his body and then his legs until his shoes overflowed. The record goes on to state that his body was so badly gashed and cut that for two weeks he could not lie down, so his body could touch the bed. His sleeping had to be done on his hands or elbows and knees. Of this whipping and other things connected with it I read all records, even Holmes' statement. A thing could hardly have been more brutal. And here in America!

13. Painter, another man, "refused to have his child baptized," and gave as his opinion "that infant baptism was an anti-Christian ordinance." For these offenses he was tied up and whipped. Governor Winthrop tells us that Painter was whipped "for reproaching the Lord's ordinance."

14. In the colony where Presbyterianism was the established religion, dissenters (Baptist and others) seemed to fare no better than in the Massachusetts Bay Colony where Congregationalism was the established religion.

In this colony was a settlement of Baptists. In the whole settlement were only five other families. The Baptists recognized the laws they were under and were, according to the records, obedient to them. This incident occurred:

It was decided by authorities of the colony to build a Presbyterian meeting house in that Baptist settlement. The only way to do it seemed by taxation. The Baptists recognized the authority of the Presbyterians to levy this new and extra tax, but they made this plea against the tax at this time-- "We have just started our settlement. Our little cabins have just been built, and little gardens and patches just been opened. Our fields not cleared. We have just been taxed to the limit to build a fort for protection against the Indians. We cannot possibly pay another tax now." This is only the substance of their plea. The tax was levied. It could not possibly be paid at that time. An auction was called. Sales were made. Their cabins and gardens and patches, and even their graveyards, were sold--not their unopened fields. Property valued at 363 pounds and 5 shillings sold for 35 pounds and 10 shillings. Some of it, at least, was said to have been bought by the preacher who was to preach there. The settlement was said to have been left ruined.

A large book could be filled with oppressive laws. Terrifically burdensome acts of taxation, hard dealing of many sorts, directed mainly against the Baptists. But these lectures cannot enter into these details.

15. In the southern colonies, throughout the Carolinas and especially Virginia, where the Church of England held sway, persecution of Baptists was serious and continuous. Many times their preachers were fined and imprisoned. From the beginning of the colonial period to the opening of the Revolutionary War, more than 100 years, these persecutions of Baptists were persisted in.

16. We give some examples of the hardships of the Baptists in Virginia, and yet strange as it may now seem Virginia was the next place on earth after Rhode Island to adopt religious liberty. But that was more than a century away. But the hardships--as many as 30 preachers at different times, were put in jail with the only charge against them-- "for preaching the Gospel of the Son of God." James Ireland is a case in point. He was imprisoned. After imprisonment, his enemies tried to blow him up with gunpowder. That having failed, they next tried to smother him to death by burning sulphur under his windows at the jail. Failing also in this, they tried to arrange with a doctor to poison him. All this

failed. He continued to preach to his people from the windows. A wall was then built around his jail so the people could not see in nor he see out, but even that difficulty was overcome. The people gathered, a handkerchief was tied to a long stick, and that stuck up above the walls so Ireland could see when they were ready. The preaching continued.

17. Three Baptist preachers (Lewis and Joseph Craig and Aaron Bledsoe) were later arrested on the same charge. One of them, at least, was a blood relative of R. E. B. Baylor, and possibly of one or more other Texas Baptist preachers. These preachers were arraigned for trial. Patrick Henry, hearing of it and though living many miles away and though a Church of England man himself, rode those miles horseback to the trial and volunteered his services in their defense. Great was his defense. I cannot enter into a description of it here. It swept the court. The preachers were freed.

18. Elsewhere than Rhode Island, religious liberty came slowly and by degrees. For example: In Virginia a law was passed permitting one, but only one, Baptist preacher to a county. He was permitted to preach but once in two months. Later this law was modified, permitting him to preach once in each month. But even then, in only one definite place in the county, and only one sermon on that day, and **never** to preach at night. Laws were passed not only in Virginia but in colonies elsewhere **positively forbidding any Mission work**. This was why Judson was the first foreign missionary--law forbade. It took a long time and many hard battles, in the Virginia House of Burgesses, to greatly modify these laws.

19. Evidently, one of the greatest obstructions to religious liberty in America, and probably all over the world as to that, was the conviction which had grown into the people throughout the preceding centuries that religion could not possibly live **without governmental support**. That no denomination could prosper solely on voluntary offerings by its adherents. And this was the hard argument to meet when the battle was raging for the disestablishment of the Church of England in Virginia, and also later in Congress when the question of religious liberty was being discussed there. For a long time the Baptists fought the battle almost alone,

20. Rhode Island began her colony in 1638, but it was not legally chartered until 1663. There was the first spot where Religious Liberty was granted. The second place was Virginia in 1786. Congress declared the first amendment to the Constitution to be in force December 15, 1791, which granted religious liberty to all citizens, Baptists are credited with being the leaders in bringing this blessing to the nation.

21. We venture to give one early Congressional incident. The question of whether the United States should have an established church or several established churches, or religious liberty, was being discussed. Several different bills had been offered, one recommending the Church of England as the established church; and another the Congregationalist Church, and yet another the Presbyterian. The Baptists, many of them, though probably none of them members of Congress, were earnestly contending for absolute religious liberty. James Madison (afterwards President) seemingly was their main supporter. Patrick Henry arose and offered a substitute bill for them all, "That **four churches** (or denominations) **instead of one be established**"--the Church of England, or Episcopal, Congregationalist, Presbyterian, and the Baptist. Finally when each of the others saw that IT could not be made the sole established church, they each agreed to accept Henry's compromise. (This compromise bill stated that each person taxed would have the right to say to which denomination of these four his money should go.) The Baptists continued to fight against it all; that any combination of Church and State was against their fundamental principles, that they could not accept it even if voted. Henry pleaded with them, said he was trying to help them, that they could not live without it, but they still protested. The vote was taken--it carried nearly unanimously. But the measure had to be voted on three times. The Baptists, led by Madison and possibly others continued to fight. The second vote came. It also carried almost unanimously, swept by Henry's masterful eloquence. But the third vote had yet to be taken. Now God seemingly intervened. Henry was made Governor of Virginia and left Congress. When the third vote came, deprived of Henry's irresistible eloquence, the vote was lost.

Thus the Baptists came near being an established denomination over their own most solemn protest. This is not the only opportunity the Baptists ever had of becoming **established** by law, but is probably the nearest they ever came to it.

22. Not long after this, the Church of England was entirely disestablished in America. No religious denomination was supported by the Central Government (a few separated State governments still had establishment), Church and state, so far as the United States was concerned, were entirely separated. These two, Church and State, elsewhere at least, had for 1,500 years (since 313) been living in unholy wedlock. Religious Liberty was, at least here in the United States, resurrected to die no more, and now gradually but in many places slowly, it is spreading throughout the world.

23. But even in the United States, the Church and State idea died hard. It lingered on in several of the separate States, long after Religious Liberty had been put into the Constitution of the United States. Massachusetts, where the

Church and State idea first found a lodging place in America, has, as already stated, finally given it up. It had lived there over two and one-half centuries. Utah is the last lingering spot left to disfigure the face of the first and greatest nation on earth to adopt and cherish "Religious Liberty." Remember there can be no real and absolute Religious liberty in any nation where the Government gives its support to one special religious denomination.

24. Some serious questions have many times been asked concerning the Baptists: Would they, as a denomination, have accepted from any nation or state an offer of "establishment" if such nation or state had freely made them such an offer? And, would they, in case they had accepted such an offer, have become persecutors of others like Catholics or Episcopalians, or Lutherans or Presbyterians, or Congregationalists? Probably a little consideration of such questions now would not be amiss. Have the Baptists, as a fact, ever had such an opportunity?

Is it not recorded in history, that on one occasion, the King of the Netherlands (the Netherlands at that time embracing Norway and Sweden, Belgium, Holland, and Denmark) had under serious consideration the question of having an established religion? Their kingdom at that period was surrounded on almost all sides by nations or governments with established religions--religions supported by the Civil Government.

It is stated that the King of Holland appointed a committee to examine into the claims of all existing churches or denominations to see which had the best claim to be the New Testament Church. The committee reported back that the Baptists were the best representatives of New Testament teachings. Then the King offered to make the Baptist "the established" church or denomination of his kingdom. The Baptists kindly thanked him but declined, stating that it was contrary to their fundamental convictions and principles.

But this was not the only opportunity they ever had of having their denomination the established religion of a people. They certainly had that opportunity when Rhode Island Colony was founded. And to have persecuted others--that would have been an impossibility if they were to continue being Baptists. They were the original advocates of "Religious Liberty." That really is one of the fundamental articles of their religious faith. They believed in the absolute separation of church and state.

25. So strong has been the Baptist conviction on the question of Church and State combination, that they have invariably declined all offers of help from the State. We give here two instances. One in Texas and the other in Mexico. Long

years ago in the days of Baylor University's babyhood, Texas offered to help her. She declined the help though she was in distressing need. The Texas Methodists had a baby school in Texas at the same time. They accepted the State help; that school finally fell into the hands of the State.

The case in Mexico occurred in this wise: W. D. Powell was our missionary to Mexico. By his missionary work he had made a great impression for the Baptists upon Governor Madero of the State of Coahuila. Madero offered a great gift to the Baptists from the State, if the Baptists would establish a good school in the State of Coahuila, Mexico. The matter was submitted by Powell to the Foreign Board. The gift was declined because it was to be from the State. Afterwards Madero gave a good large sum personally. That was accepted and Madero Institute was built and established.

SOME AFTER WORDS

1. During every period of the "Dark Ages" there were in existence many Christians and many separate and independent Churches, some of them dating back to the times of the Apostles, which were never in any way connected with the Catholic Church. They always wholly rejected and repudiated the Catholics and their doctrines. This is a fact clearly demonstrated by credible history.
2. These Christians were the perpetual objects of bitter and relentless persecution. History shows that during the period of the "Dark Ages," about twelve centuries, beginning with A.D. 426, there were about fifty millions of these Christians who died martyr deaths. Very many thousands of others, both preceding and succeeding the "Dark Ages," died under the same hard hand of persecution.
3. These Christians, during these dark days of many centuries, were called by many different names, all given to them by their enemies. These names were sometimes given because of some specially prominent and heroic leader and sometimes from other causes; and sometimes, yea, many times, the same people, holding the same views, were called by different names in different localities. But amid all the many changes of names, there was one special name or rather designation, which clung to at least some of these Christians, throughout all the "Dark Ages," that designation being "Ana-Baptist." This compound word applied as a designation of some certain Christians was first found in history during the third century; and a **suggestive fact** soon after the origin of Infant Baptism, and a more suggestive fact even **prior** to the use of the name **Catholic**. Thus the name "Ana-Baptists" is the oldest **denominational** name in history.

4. A striking peculiarity of these Christians was and continued to be in succeeding centuries: They rejected the man-made doctrine of "Infant Baptism" and demanded rebaptism, even though done by immersion for all those who came to them, having been baptized in infancy. For this peculiarity they were called "Ana-Baptists."

5. This, special designation was applied to many of these Christians who bore other nicknames; especially is this true of the Donatists, Paulicians, Albigenses and Ancient Waldenses and others. In later centuries this designation came to be a regular name, applied to a distinct group. These were simply called "Ana-Baptists" and gradually all other names were dropped. Very early in the sixteenth century, even prior to the origin of the Lutheran Church, the first of all the Protestant Churches, the word "ana" was beginning to be left off, and they were simply called "Baptists."

6. Into the "dark ages" went a group of many churches which were never in any way identified with the Catholics. Out of the "dark ages" came a group of many churches, which had never been in any way identified with the Catholics.

The following are some of the fundamental doctrines to which they held when they went in: And the same are, the fundamental doctrines to which they held when they came out: And the same are the fundamental doctrines to which they now hold.

FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES

1. A spiritual Church, Christ its founder, its only head and law giver.
2. Its ordinances, only two, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They are typical and memorial, not saving.
3. Its officers, only two, bishops or pastors and deacons; they are servants of the church.
4. Its Government, a pure Democracy, and that executive only, never legislative.
5. Its laws and doctrines: The New Testament and that only.
6. Its members. Believers only, they saved by grace, not works, through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.

7. Its requirements. Believers on entering the church to be baptized, that by immersion, then obedience and loyalty to all New Testament laws.
8. The various churches--separate and independent in their execution of laws and discipline and in their responsibilities to God--but cooperative in work.
9. Complete separation of Church and State.
10. Absolute Religious liberty for all.

Partial list of books used in preparing lectures on "the Trail of Blood"

History of Baptists in Virginia, Semple
Baptist Succession, Ray
Baptists in Alabama, Holcomb
History of the Huguenots, Martin
Fifty Years Among the Baptists, Benedict
Fox's Book of Martyrs
My Church, Moody
The World's Debt to Baptists, Porter
Church Manual, Pendleton
Evils of Infant Baptism, Howell
Reminiscences, Sketches and Addresses, Hutchinson
Short History of the Baptists, Vedder
The Struggle Religious Liberty in Virginia, James
The Genesis of American Anti-Missionism, Carroll
The True Baptist, A. Newton
A Guide to the Study of Church History, McGlothlin
Baptist Principles Reset, Jeter
Virginia Presbyterianism and Religious Liberty in Colonial and Revolutionary Times, Johnson
Presbyterianism 300 Years Ago, Breed
History of the Presbyterian Church of the World, Reed
Catholic Belief, Bruno
Campbellism Examined, Jeter
History of the Baptists in New England, Burrage
History of Redemption, Edwards
Principles and Practices of Baptist Churches, Wayland
History of the Liberty Baptist Association of North Carolina, Sheets
On Baptism, Carson

History and Literature of the Early Churches, Orr
History of Kentucky Baptists, Spencer
Baptist History, Orchard
Baptist Church Perpetuity, Jarrell
Disestablishment, Harwood
Progress of Baptist Principles, Curtis
Story of the Baptists, Cook
Romanism in Its Home, Eager
Americanism Against Catholicism, Grant
The Faith of Our Fathers, Cardinal Gibbons
The Faith of Our Fathers Examined, Stearns
The Story of Baptist Missions, Hervey
Baptism, Conant
Christian "Baptism," Judson
Separation of Church and State in Virginia, Eckenrode
The Progress of Religious Liberty, Schaff
Doctrines and Principles of the M. E. Church
The Churches of the Piedmont, Allix
The History of the Waldenses, Muston
The History of Baptists, Backus
The Ancient Waldenses and Albigenses, Faber
The History of the Waldenses of Italy, Combs
History of the Baptists, Benedict
Baptist Biography, Graham
Early English Baptists, Evans
History of the Welsh Baptists, Davis
Baptist History, Cramp
History of the Baptists, Christian
Short History of the Baptists, Vedder
The Plea for the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Jones
Religions of the World, Many writers
History of the Reformation in Germany, Ranke
Church History, Kurtz
Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the USA
Doctrines and Discipline, African M. E. Church, Emory
Church History, Jones
History of the Christian Religion and Church, Neader
Ecclesiastical History, Mosheim
History of the Christian Church, Gregory
History of the Church, Waddington
Handbook of Church History, Green

Manual of Church History, Newman
History of Anti-Pedobaptists, Newman
Catholic Encyclopedia (16 vols.)
The Baptist Encyclopedia, Cathcart
Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Brown
Encyclopedia Britannica
Origin of Disciples, Whittsitt
Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Schaff-Herzog
Book of Martyrs, Foxe
Baptist History, Schackleford

The End