

## PERSECUTION OF THE REBAPTIZERS BY THE PROTESTANTS

Christians who were rebaptizers, refusing infant baptism, were perpetual objects of bitter and relentless persecution especially from A.D. 426 well into the Seventeenth Century. Fifty million of these Christians died martyr deaths. Rebaptizers predate the Catholic Church. These Christians were called by many different names, all given to them by their enemies. The most common name given them was Ana-Baptists. They rejected the manmade doctrine of Infant Baptism and demanded rebaptism. Historically in America, the Baptists did earnestly contend for absolute religious liberty. From the beginning of the colonial period to the opening of the Revolutionary War, more than 100 years, persecution of Baptists by Protestant groups persisted. These Protestant groups include Lutherans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Anglicans (Church of England). Rhode Island 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 were leaders in bringing this blessing to the nation.

The Catholic persecutions are well documented, but many are unaware of the persecutions by the Protestants. Rebaptizers were hunted, tortured, and killed by the Protestants just as certainly as they were by the Catholics.

For their crime of believer's baptism, Anabaptists were heavily persecuted during the 16th century and into the 17th, by both Roman Catholics and Protestants. Both took an attitude of intolerance and persecution toward all dissenters from their creed. Protestants were Catholics who mainly revolted from Roman Catholicism because of monetary issues concerning paying indulgences. By purchasing an indulgence, which is not Biblical, an individual could supposedly reduce the length and severity of punishment required for payment for their sins. By buying an indulgence for a loved one, they would supposedly go to heaven and not burn in hell.

So Protestants were Catholics who discarded the rule by Catholicism yet retained much of their beliefs and attitudes of intolerance.

In 1648 the "Peace of Westphalia" was a peace pact of the Catholic, Lutheran, and Presbyterian to no longer persecute one another. However, the Baptists were to continue to receive from them the same former harsh treatment, and persistent persecution.

**Doctrines of the Rebaptizers:**

**Christ is Head and Founder of the Church. Colossians 1:18 Matthew 16:18**

**The Church's only rule of faith and practice is the Bible. 2 Timothy 3:15-17**

**The Church's government should be pure democracy where all members are equal.**

**Matthew 20:24-28; 23:5-12**

**The Church's members are only saved people. Ephesians 2:1-22 1 Peter 2:5**

**The Church's ordinances are Believers' Baptism followed by the Lord's Supper.**

**Matthew 28:18-20**

**The Church's officers are Pastors and Deacons. 1 Timothy 3:1-16**

**The Church's work is to teach people to cooperate with Spirit conviction which leads to saving faith, baptize regenerate believers by immersion, and teach them to obey the commands of Jesus.**

**Matthew 28:16-20**

**The Church's financial plans involve only tithes and offerings, not taxation, nor sales.**

**1 Corinthians 9:14**

**The Church's independence means separation of Church and State meaning the State does not dictate to, tax, or rule the Church. Matthew 22:21 2 Corinthians 10:4**

**The relationship of various churches is separate and independent in their responsibilities to God yet cooperative in their work. 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**

**The relationship of the Church to the world is absolute religious liberty for all while preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all who will hear. Romans 10:1-21**

