

Quotes from non-Baptists on Baptist succession

Written by Josh Winslett

Monday, 13 June 2011 19:31 - Last Updated Wednesday, 19 February 2014 18:15

Here are some quotes about Baptist succession from some non-Baptists.

From Lutheran historian Johann Lorenz Mosheim:

"The true origin of that sect which acquired the denomination of Anabaptists by their administering anew the rite of baptism to those who came over to their communion, and derived that of Mennonites from the famous man to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity, is hidden in the depths of antiquity, and is, of consequence, extremely difficult to be ascertained."

"Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed, in almost all the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Maravia, Switzerland, and Germany, many persons, who adhered tenaciously to the following doctrine, which the Waldenses, Wickliffites, and Hussites, had maintained, some in a more disguised and others in a more open and public manner; viz. 'That the kingdom of Christ, or the visible church which He established upon earth, was an assembly of true and real saints, and ought therefore to be inaccessible to the wicked and unrighteous, and also exempt from all those institutions which human prudence suggests, to oppose the progress of iniquity, or to correct and reform transgressors.'"

From Dr. Ypeij, Professor of Theology in the University of Groningen and Rev. J.J.

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Dermot, Chaplain to the King:

"We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times, Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and who, long in the history of the church, received the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the apostles, and, as a Christian society, has preserved pure the doctrine of the gospel through all ages. The perfectly correct, external and internal economy of the Baptist denomination tends to confirm the truth disputed by the Romish Church, that the Reformation, brought about in the sixteenth century, was in the highest degree necessary; and, at the same time, goes to refute the erroneous notion of the Catholics, that their communion is the most ancient." (My Church by J.B. Moody, pp. 311)

From Zwingli, a Protestant companion of John Calvin:

"The institution of the Anabaptists is no novelty, but for 1300 years has caused great trouble in the church."

From Hosius, Bishop of Cordova, assisted as legate of Pope Sylvester:

"Were it not that the baptists have been grievously tormented and cut off with the knife during the past twelve hundred years, they would swarm in greater number than all the Reformers." (Hosius, Letters, Apud Opera, Pages 112-113)

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John Clark Ridpath, doubtlessly the greatest historian the world has ever produced and a Methodist by denomination:

"I should not readily admit that there was a Baptist church as far back as 100 A.D., although without doubt there were Baptist churches then, as all Christians were then Baptists."

Sir Isaac Newton:

"The Baptists are the only body of known Christians that have never symbolized with Rome."

From Alexander Campbell, the father of the Campbellites:

"I would engage to show that baptism as viewed and practiced by the Baptists, had its advocates in every century up to the Christian era...and independent of whose existence (the German Anabaptists), clouds of witnesses attest the fact, that before the Reformation from popery, and from the apostolic age, to the present time, the sentiments of Baptists, and the practice of baptism have had a continued chain of advocates, and public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced." (In his debate with Mr. Macalla)

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From Robert Barclay, a Quaker:

"We shall afterwards show the rise of the Anabaptists took place prior to the Reformation of the Church of England, and there are also reasons for believing that on the Continent of Europe small hidden Christian societies, who have held many of the opinions of the Anabaptists, have existed from the times of the apostles. In the sense of the direct transmission of Divine Truth, and the true nature of spiritual religion, it seems probable that these churches have a lineage or succession more ancient than that of the Roman Church (Barclay, *The Inner Life of the Societies of the Commonwealth*, 11, 12, London, 1876)."

From Charles Spurgeon, British Particular Baptist preacher (ok, so he was an English Baptist but I really like this quote):

"We believe that the Baptists are the original Christians. We did not commence our existence at the Reformation, we were Reformers before Luther or Calvin were born; we never came from the Church of Rome, for we were never in it, but we have an unbroken line up to the apostles themselves. We have always existed from the very days of Christ, and our principles, sometimes veiled and forgotten, like a river which may travel underground for a little season, have always had honest and holy adherents. Persecuted alike by Romanists and Protestants of almost every sect, yet there has never existed a Government holding Baptist principles which persecuted others; nor I believe any body of Baptists ever held it to be right to put the consciences of others under the control of man. We have ever been ready to suffer, as our martyrologies will prove, but we are not ready to accept any help from the State, to prostitute the purity of the Bride of Christ to any alliance with the government, and we will never make the Church, although the Queen, the despot over the consciences of men."

~JW

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