

1170

Waldensian first appeared in Lyon, France – named after Peter Waldo but predated him and known earlier as the Paulicians after St. Paul. They were Italian / Spanish Christians who were credo Baptist, believed in separation of church and state and were persecuted by the Catholic church. Eventually they settled in the Swiss Alps. They have been praised for their dedication to the Word of God by John Milton, early american pilgrims, and John Wycliffe.

1320-1384

John Wycliffe (followers: Lollards - preReformers), Catholic priest and theologian professor at the University of Oxford – England. Clashed with the Pope and Church over many doctrines that made him align more with a modern Baptist than a Catholic. Some of his writing show that his view of Baptism was influenced by the Waldensian. Started the first English translation of the Holy Bible in 1382.

1517

Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses on the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. Sparked the Protestant Reformation.

1521

Zwingli, reformer and priest of Zurich, takes in students to teach Greek. Students Felix Manz and Conrad Grebel become strong supporters of Zwingli and his reforms of the Catholic Church.

1523

Zwingli eventually allows the power of the city and state councils to determine Biblical interpretation regarding church/state policy and paedobaptism. However, the mass is agreed to be symbolic in nature by council. Manz and Grebel are frustrated with Zwingli for not upholding Biblical truths regarding baptism and begin to teach people the truths found in scripture.

1523

January 17 – Council of Zurich require all children to be baptized in 8 days based on Jewish circumcision laws.
January 18 – Grebel baptized George Blaurock at Manz home. Blaurock then baptizes everyone else that is present. Swiss Brethren Church is born. The Swiss Brethren were persecuted by almost all Catholics and protestant groups. Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin all disliked the Anabaptist, not only for their credo baptism views, but mainly because of their ideology of the separation of church and state. This group eventually becomes known as the Swiss Brethren.

1534

Henry VIII establishes the Church of England (Anglican / Episcopalian). Many of the Catholic doctrines are maintained. Many Anabaptist go to England to escape persecution from other Christians.

1536

Menno Simons, a Catholic priest in the Low Countries of the Netherlands, leaves the Catholic church to join the Anabaptist. By now most of the founders of the Swiss Brethren had been killed by burning of the stake or drowned (third-baptism). The Swiss Brethren eventually splinter under percussion. Simons followers became known as the Mennonites. Other Anabaptist eventually became known as Hutterites (Jacob Hutter, 1536) and Amish (Jakob Ammann 1693).

1575

30 Anabaptist arrested in London by the Church of England for denying their infants to be baptized by the church.

1607

John Smyth, Anglican Priest – Christ College Cambridge, becomes a separatist after becoming convicted by studying the Word of God on baptism and salvation. Moves his congregation to Amsterdam to escape persecution from the Church of England.

1609

Smyth and his congregation become influenced by the Mennonites. Smyth baptized his congregation and himself.

1610 – Original Baptist – Separatist – General Baptist

Thomas Helwys leads half the congregation back to England to establish the first Baptist church in London near Spitalfields. Many other Baptist churches are planted and established. However, all were underground until 1702 with the Act of Toleration (Dissenters). [Most churches eventually fell into Universalism].

1770 – Fall and Rebirth – General Baptist

Dan Taylor (Methodist pastor converted under John Wesley) starts “New Connection” to correct false doctrine of universalism, bring churches back to early beliefs, and to unify all General Baptist. Church growth and new memberships grew rapidly.

1638 – New Baptist – Puritans – Particular Baptist

Group splits from puritan JLI church (Jacob, Lanthrop, Jesse [Pastors]) under conviction of Believers Baptism. Particular Baptist grew while bringing in many of the puritan beliefs. [Most churches eventual fell into hyper Calvinism)

1792 – Fall and Rebirth – Particular Baptist

As most Particular Baptist churches began to decline due to hyper-Calvinism, Andrew Fuller took notice of the General Baptist and became friends with General Baptist Minister Dan Taylor after many debates on the responsibility of the human will with the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Seeing the need for evangelism, Fuller and William Carey started the Baptist Missionary Society. Similar to the General Baptist, Church growth and new memberships grew rapidly.

1833

General Baptist are allowed to join the Baptist Missionary Society.

1891

General Baptist and Particular Baptist officially combine to create The Baptist Union of Great Britain with only three declaration of Principles – 1. Belief in Jesus 2. Believers Baptist 3. World Evangelism.

Earliest Baptist Confessions

1644 (Particular) – First London Confession [Calvinism]

1660 (General) – The Standard Confession [Provisionalism]

1677 (Particular) – Second London Confession [Calvinism]

- Foundation for Philadelphia Confession (**1742**)

1679 (General) – The Orthodox Creed [Provisionalism]