



our mission field

Good News Messengers Church



our motivation

an independent, fundamental Christian Bible church

Chester M. Schmeier, Pastor
1436 W Arthur Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53215
Phone 414-383-6522 or 1-877-YRU-REAL
www.gnmc.us

It is very important to understand that true Christians do not find their fundamental heritage in the Reformers, but in a group called the Anabaptists. The label “Anabaptist,” coined by Catholics and Protestants, was given to anyone who spoke against the error of either the forgiveness of sins in water baptism or the forgiveness of sins at the Lord’s Table. Although some Anabaptists were not born-again Christians, those who were truly born again, whose faith was in the suffering of Christ alone, and not in any sacramental “works,” would have been found under this label given to them by the Reformers and the Catholic Church.

Today, members of the Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Reformed churches, or other denominations who believe the Reformers’ sacramental salvation teachings are unregenerate and need to be born again. The Reformers’ rallying cry, “By grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to the Scriptures alone, and for the glory of God alone,” sounds very biblical, but what they really believed is revealed in their own writings and recorded history. Their gospel included the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Table for the forgiveness of sins. Sadly, millions have only exchanged the spiritual bondage of the Catholic Church for the spiritual bondage of the Reformers. In the past, multitudes of Anabaptists were tortured and murdered because they opposed the sacramental plan of salvation.

In our booklet, *The Error of Sacramental Salvation*, you will see examples of Catholics’ and Reformers’ teachings and doctrines from their own writings. The following are excerpts (bold emphasis added) from various history books to give you a few examples of what was really going on during the Reformation. You will see that history, as well as their own writings, make it very clear that the Reformers were nothing more than reformed Catholics and truly were not born-again, fundamental Christians.

A History of the Christian Church, by Williston Walker, on page 429 --- Restricting the name of sacrament to “those promises [of forgiveness] which have signs attached to them,” **Luther** held that scripture recognizes only two such sacraments instituted by Christ himself: baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Page 450 --- . . . The Anabaptists became more and more troublesome. Hence, at the Diets of Speyer (1529) and of Augsburg (1530), the assembled German estates, **both Roman Catholic and Protestant**, applied the old Roman law against heresy to them. Henceforth, membership in any Anabaptist group was punishable by death. Page 459 -- - The struggle, though heroically maintained, was hopeless. The bishop, aided by **Catholic and Lutheran** troops, captured the city on June 25, 1535, and the surviving leaders were put to death by extreme torture.

The Reformation, Will Durant, on page 395 --- While **Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and Knox** agreed with the popes on the absurdity of religious tolerance, the Anabaptists preached and practiced it; . . . Page 397 --- **Protestant and Catholic** cantons showed equal energy in subduing the sect, . . . Page 401 --- Confronted with this spreading revolt, the conservative forces of the empire, **Protestant as well as Catholic**, mobilized to suppress Anabaptism everywhere. . . **Melanchthon and Luther** advised Philip of Hess to put to death all adherents of the sect.

The Reformation Era, by Harold Grimm, on page 268 --- The term “Anabaptizer,” which meant “Rebaptizer,” as we have seen, was invented for the purpose of condemning those who believed in adult baptism, even though they believed in only one baptism and preferred to be called simply “Baptists.” Thus the Anabaptists were severely persecuted by the civil authorities as well as by the **Catholic and Protestant** churches. . . . Accordingly both the **Catholic and Protestant** estates agreed to suppress the Anabaptists at the Diets of Speyer, 1529, and Augsburg, in 1530.

The Renaissance and the Reformation, by Henry S. Lucas, on page 531 -- It would be hard to find in all history a story sadder than that of the Anabaptists. Because they denied the teachings of **Luther [Calvin] and Zwingli, as well as of Catholicism**, they invited persecution. But their denial of any connection between Church and State, and their refusal to have anything to do with the State led secular authorities to view them as insurrectionists. As the world of that day was constituted, separation of Church and State was unthinkable, and in affirming this doctrine they deliberately chose the bloody path of martyrs, their martyrology thus being a most impressive monument of the Reformation. They sacrificed themselves for a principle which could not be accepted. Not until later in the century -- in the United Netherlands under William of Orange -- did they win for the first time any legal rights in any land.

Anabaptist hymns are worthy of study. Written in the vernacular, composed often in halting meter, they nevertheless possessed the spirit of hymnology. They usually deal with martyrdom, and in reading them one often gets glimpses of the dreadful ordeals through which these people were forced to pass. Anabaptism was a crime for which outraged majesty demanded the extreme penalty. Burning, beheading, drowning in sacks, burial alive, mutilation, and branding were common. **Protestant princes often being as savage as the Catholic**. Many of these stirring martyrdoms are preserved in the great martyrologies.

At the end of his chapter on **John Calvin**, page 490, *The Reformation*, historian Will Durant makes this final and very insightful statement, “. . . we will agree that even error lives because it serves some vital need. But we shall always find it hard to love the man [John Calvin] who darkened the human soul with the most absurd and blasphemous conception of God in all the long and honored history of nonsense.”

I am not an ex-Catholic, but an ex-Methodist, saved at the age of 27. My wife is an ex-Lutheran, saved at the age of 45. We were saved because we were open to the truth, but had never heard the true gospel of grace. I encourage you to continue to seek the truth. There are those who are caught up in the Reformers' theology -- teachings far more deceptive than Catholicism -- who are just as lost as we were. Go to your library and check out these and other history books. Carefully read Calvin's Institutes, Luther's Catechism and his many other works. Please do not hesitate to call or write us with questions or comments. May God bless you as you seek the truth.