

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Volunteer Needed!
Cradle Roll 2: Volunteer Needed!
6:30 p.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Volunteer Needed!
Cradle Roll 2: Volunteer Needed!
Wed. Evening Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Shirley White
Cradle Roll 2: Volunteer Needed

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of April 30, 2017

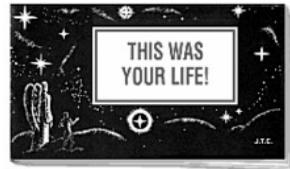
Sunday School ----- 6
Sunday Morning Service ----- 31
Sunday Evening Service ----- 18
Wed. Eve. Service, 05/03/17 ----- 11

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of April 30, 2017

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 575.75
Total Received for Week of 04/30/17: \$ 575.75

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed to operate the church EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00



GIVE OUT A GOSPEL TRACT THIS WEEK!



LISTEN TO -

ABIDINGRADIO.COM

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. **Admit that you are a sinner.**
2. **Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.**
3. **Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.**
4. **You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).**
5. **By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.**



Please Remember To Be Faithful To Give!

As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go **up**. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start **today - OK?** Thank you.

Church Directory

Todd W. White ----- Pastor
Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist
Lois Mae Floyd ----- Pianist/ Organist
Rayna Crawford ----- Greeter
Shayne Hooper, Brian Crawford, Charity Crawford, LeAnna White -- S.S. Teachers
Larry & Mary Byars, ----- Outreach
Bertha Segebart ----- Custodian
Flowers ----- Shirley White, Charity Crawford

SOUTH HEIGHTS BAPTIST'S WEEKLY
REMINDER

Volume XXIII

May 7, 2017

Number 15



IN DEFENSE OF BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL CHRISTIANITY

by Dr. Thomas Cassidy, Pastor
First Baptist Church - Spring Valley, California
(continued from last week)

THE NOVATIANS

The Novatians were named because of the leadership of a man named Novatian (?-258 A.D.). Novatian was saved in about 250 A.D., from a pagan philosophical background. Because he became very ill and expected to die, he was not scripturally baptized, but received "clinic baptism." There is no record that after his recovery he was baptized correctly. This lack of a record does not prove that he was not properly baptized, only that there is no record of it. Novatian was ordained to the ministry of the church at Rome by the Pastor, Fabian.

The edicts of Decius Trajan (250 A.D.) brought severe persecution to the churches. When those who had denied Christ and sacrificed to pagan idols and the "genius of the emperor" sought readmittance to church membership, a great controversy began. Two views were popular. 1) The view of strict discipline held that such people could never again be fit for church membership because of the nature of their apostasy, although the possibility of receiving God's forgiveness was not denied. 2) The second view was that of loose discipline, believing that such people could be restored to church membership following public confession of their sin and a period of probation.

One of the forerunners of Novatian was the Roman pastor **Hippolytus** who was a disciple of **Irenaeus** and was martyred by being drowned in the Tiber river. He was an advocate of strict discipline, and caused a schism in the church of Rome. Novatian was a strong advocate of the strict discipline viewpoint, and upon the death of Fabian in 250 A.D., Novatian rivaled the popular Cornelius (who held to the loose discipline viewpoint) for the vacant position of Pastor. When the people chose Cornelius, Novatian withdrew from the church, taking a large group of people with him. The division was bitter, and a number of false charges were spread about Novation to discredit him. It has been said that the reason for this great division was Novatian's ambition for personal power, and that when he was not selected to be the pastor, he formed a rival church out of spite. Historical records show that the issue was over church discipline, and that in fact Novation was chosen pastor by the withdrawing group against his wishes.

The doctrines of the Novations are well recorded by their own writings. They stood for the purity of church membership, believing that a church should separate itself from all apostasy, impurity, and worldliness. They practiced rigid church discipline, the re-baptism of apostates; baptized by immersion only, without great ceremony, on church authority (as opposed to the authority of a man), of mature believers only. These doctrines led to the first real and lasting division among the ranks of Christendom. The Novation churches would no longer accept the baptism of the "established" churches. The separation occurred in 251 A.D.

The greatest charges brought against the Novations is the assertion that Novatian was not scripturally baptized. To this I would answer: Novation's teaching concerning baptism was that baptism was by church authority and was to be performed by immersion only. He practiced "rebaptism" of all who came from the "established" churches. This suggests, to me at least, that he was correctly baptized, although no evidence has survived to this day. Even if Novatian was never scripturally baptized, he taught that the authority for such baptism was with the church concerned, not with the actual person administering it. Thus Novationist baptism would not have been invalidated.

While the name and initial beginnings of the Novations were in Rome, the teachings quickly spread. In 250 A.D. at Carthage, a similar split occurred prior to that in Rome when a lenient pastor by the name of *Novatus*, and a deacon named *Felicissimus*, withdrew from the church following the hasty election of Cyprian to the office of pastor. At the time, Cyprian held stricter views on the issue of re-admittance, but after the split, Novatus reversed his stand and joined the strict Novatian cause. By 254 these dissenters were complained of as having “infected France with their doctrine.”

Schaff notes that in spite of this strong opposition the Novatian sect, by virtue of its moral earnestness, propagated itself in various provinces of the east and west down to the sixth century. In Phrygia, they combined with the remnants of the Montanists.

Robinson, in his Ecclesiastical Researches, (page 126, Cambridge) states: ***“The Novatians were the earliest Anabaptists; refusing to recognize as valid the ministry and sacraments of their opponents and, claiming to be the true church, they were logically compelled to rebaptize all who came to them from the Catholic church. The party gained great strength in Asia Minor where many Montanists joined it, and, in spite of persecution, the Novatians survived to the 6th or 7th century.”***

Dr. Robinson traces a continuation of them up to the Reformation and the rise of the Anabaptist movement. Great numbers followed his, i.e. Novatian's, example, and all over the empire Puritan churches were constituted and flourished through 200 succeeding years. Afterwards, when penal law obliged them to lurk in corners and worship God in private, they were distinguished by a variety of names and succession of them continued until the reformation.

On the count of the purity of their lives they were called the Cathari, that is, the pure. ***“What is still more,”*** says Mosheim, ***“they rebaptized such as came over to them from the Catholics”*** (Mosheim: Institutes Of Ecclesiastical History I, page 203, New York, 1871). ***“Since they baptized those who came to them from other communions they were called Anabaptists. The fourth Lateran Council decreed that these rebaptizers should be punished by death. ... They were, says Robinson, 'Trinitarian Baptists.' They held to the independence of churches; and recognized the equality of all pastors in respect to dignity and authority.”***

THE DONATISTS

The Donatists were named (again, by their enemies) after Donatus, who died in 355 A.D. He was a north African pastor and one of the leaders of the schism that began in Carthage in 311. A large group in the church protested at the ordination of Caecilianus as Pastor. This ordination was presided over by Felix of Aptunga, a man who had wavered badly during the Diocletian persecutions. Both Felix and Caecilianus were considered to be “traditores” - men who had surrendered the Scriptures to be burned in Imperial persecutions.

The protesting group ordained Majorinus as their pastor, then,

following his death shortly hereafter, they ordained Donatus in 316. Donatus at first appealed to Emperor Constantine, but to no avail. The Emperor ordered their suppression - a move which fired them into a great separatist movement which covered the whole of North Africa and lasted until the Moslem conquest of that region.

The doctrines of the Donatists were very similar to the Novations in that they believed in church purity; separation of church and state; scriptural baptism; independence of the local churches; and freedom of conscience.

The charges made against the Donatists are few, but need to be addressed:

1. The Donatists were accused of being Circumcelliones. The Circumcelliones were a fanatical group of Christians in North Africa, existing around the same time as the Donatists, who sought a martyr's death as a means of grace, often provoking this death wish through violent behavior. Mosheim writes: ***“...nor were their lives less exemplary than that of other Christian societies, if we accept the enormous conduct of the Circumcelliones which the greater part of the sect regarded with the utmost detestation and abhorrence.”***

2. It has also been said that the Donatists arose only through a personality conflict, but history teaches us that a very important issue was, in fact, at stake - the qualifications of bishops.

3. It has also been charged that the Donatists practiced infant baptism. The writings of both Augustine and Optatus - both strong opponents of the Donatists - disprove this charge. Both writers charge that the Donatists insisted on rebaptism of those who came to them from the “established” churches, and further insisted on baptism of believers only by total immersion.

The Council of Milevi in 416 A.D. passed the following edict against the Donatists: ***“Whosoever denies that newly-born infants are to be baptized ... let him be accursed.”*** This edict proves that the Donatists denied the practice of infant baptism.

4. It has been charged by others that the Donatists sought a Church - State relationship. This accusation is based on Donatus' appeal to Constantine in 316 and a later appeal to the Emperor Julian in 384. These appeals were to the Emperor in his capacity as protector of life and property, and sought the lifting of decrees against them. The Donatists are credited with the following statement: ***“What has the emperor to do with the church? What have the bishops to do with the palace? What has Christianity to do with the kings of the world?”*** (J.W. Griffith, A Manual Of Church History, Volume II, page 40).

5. It has also been charged that the Donatists formed their own church “hierarchy.” Jarrel states: ***“Long, an Episcopalian historian: 'The Donatists rejected the Catholic liturgy and set up for themselves a more congregational way.’”*** Reports of Donatist pastor's meetings indicate large numbers of pastors in attendance, something that would be foreign in a hierarchical arrangement.

The Donatists suffered great persecution, and were the first Christians to feel persecution at the hands of the State-Church. In 377 Gratian published edicts against Donatists, depriving them of their buildings and prohibiting their assemblies. They were noted for the fact that they patiently bore suffering for Christ, and did not retaliate with any persecutions of their own against Catholics.

By the end of the 4th Century, their teachings had spread abroad to Italy and Spain. The Donatists were often also called Puritans and Anabaptists.

THE BRITONS

The old British churches were of great antiquity, originating around the close of the apostolic age, and remaining isolated from the mainstream of religious change. With the impending collapse of the Roman Empire, Britain was abandoned and its Roman garrisons sent home to Rome in 410 A.D. The churches, along with much of the population, were soon pushed back into Wales and Western Britain by the invading Saxons around 449 A.D. It is about this time that a Briton Christian named Patrick took the Gospel to Ireland (***Patrick was a Baptist, not a Catholic!***).

Patrick was born in Scotland in 387, his father was a deacon in the local Briton church. In 403 Patrick was kidnapped and taken into slavery in Ireland. In 410 he escaped from Ireland and returned home. In 432, Patrick returned to Ireland with 12 men to evangelize the Irish. Many were converted and baptized under his ministry. He died in 465, on the mission field, in Ireland.

The issue over the date of the Resurrection demonstrates that the Britons received their Christianity from Syria, possibly from the Montanists, and not from Rome. They rejected Catholic baptism, and obviously practiced congregational rule. Although these ancient churches were consigned to obscurity, they still played a role in subsequent events.

THE CELTIC CHURCHES OF IRELAND

These churches came about largely through the efforts of Patrick who preached in Ireland from 432 until 465. It is interesting that between 544 and 565. These Celtic churches in Ireland were revived through the ministry of the Welsh churches, which were the remnants of the old churches of the Britons, largely through the preaching of such men as “Saint” David.

In 521, a man named Columba was born to parents belonging to one of these Celtic churches. In 563 he began to do missionary work among the Picts in Scotland. To do this, he established a base on the island of Iona in the Hebrides group off the west coast of Scotland (half way between Scotland and Ireland). From this mission station, missionary teams evangelized Scotland and England, then Normandy, Friesland, Denmark, and parts of Germany. Columba died in 597.

Following his example, other mission bases were founded by missionaries from Iona, including one in Northumbria on the island of Lindisfarne (holy island in Gaelic), established by Aidan. This Northumbrian mission evangelized the Saxons from the north. ÷

NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

‘ LIKE MANY BAPTISTS, PROMINENT CCM ARTIST CHARACTERIZES BIBLICAL REPROVERS AS “HATERS”

Darlene Zschech, one of the most influential CCM artists, calls biblical reprovers “haters,” which is the position taken today by many Baptists. In a recent interview, Zschech was asked about her appearance with the Pope at the 2015 Vatican conference on the Renewal of the Holy Spirit, to which she replied, ***“I caught so much flak for going and doing that. ... I don't go into these places to talk about people's theology. I go wherever I'm invited to exalt Christ and to lift up His name. What I've found all over the world is that every time you do that, yes, there are going to be haters, and you're going to get people who don't understand, but I have a commissioning and a very refined purpose in my heart that knows that Jesus works anywhere that He is announced”*** (Interview with Darlene Zschech by Doug Doppler, Mar. 25, 2017, www.worshipmusician.com).

To this CCM artist, it is “hate” to reprove sin and error. If a Bible believer reproves her for being a pastor or for charismatic heresies or for being conformed to the world or for yoking together with false gospellers, all of which are clearly forbidden in Scripture, they are “haters” in her book.

This is precisely the thinking of large numbers of Baptists, and the problem can be laid directly at the feet of the pastors. It is frightful that massive numbers of Baptist pastors do not properly educate and warn their people.

Recently I was informed of a wife of a Sunday School teacher in an Baptist church who loves ***The Shack*** and recommends it to others in the church. When a concerned member confronted the teacher about the false god and gross heresies presented in the book, he laughed it off, saying it is no big deal and it's not his business what his wife reads. The “pastor” of this church typically avoids such controversies in his preaching and personal ministry.

Jeremiah tells us that this is not a new problem -

“I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings”
(Jeremiah 23:21-22).



**GIVE OUT A GOSPEL
TRACT THIS WEEK!**