

Church History - Martin Luther & the Anabaptists

by David Guzik

David Guzik's sermon explores the theological principles of the Reformation, focusing on Martin Luther's impact and the emergence of the Anabaptists.

Duration: 36:55

Scripture: Matthew 5:11, Matthew 13:30, Revelation 7:17, Revelation 21:4

Topics: "Church History", "Communion"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the duty of believers to follow the example of angels who will eventually cast the wicked into everlasting fire. He encourages those who are persecuted and oppressed to hold on, as a day of refreshing and joy will come. The preacher also highlights the importance of communion and simplicity in worship, emphasizing that anyone can partake in communion and remember what Jesus did for them. The sermon also touches on the differences between Martin Luther and the Anabaptists in their approach to implementing biblical truth, with Luther favoring consensus while the Anabaptists were more eager for immediate change.

Transcript

I wanted to cover one more very important theological principle. We talked about some of the theological underpinnings of the Reformation with Martin Luther and the important ideas to Luther. And we talked about them in terms of the solas, which is Latin for what? Alone.

Okay. So you've got sola fides, which is by faith alone. Sola gratia, by grace alone.

Sola Christus, by Christ alone. Sola scriptura, the scriptures alone. In other words, not church authority, not that.

So we talked about that last time, some of the theological foundation for the Reformation. Getting back to these things. Faith alone, grace alone, Christ alone, the scriptures alone.

But there was one other, and please, when I say one other, I mean there were many, many other important theological ideas, but just one more that I'm going to touch on here this morning is this idea that really kind of goes beyond just the solas there, is the idea of the priesthood of all believers. Now, this is a very important concept, and I don't know who exactly coined the term first. That's a common term in

theological or in church circles, this idea of the priesthood of all believers.

And you need to remember that in the days of the Roman Catholic Church, before the Reformation, there was a radical division between the priests and the laity. You had the clergy and you had the laity. And the clergy, the priests, they were the ones who were really right with God.

They were the ones who really loved the Lord, who were really committed to the Lord. And there was a real division between the authority and the life and the attitude between the priests and the people. One huge one, for example, how about the whole vow of celibacy in the Roman Catholic Church, right? I mean, isn't that a pretty big division between priests and laity? If you're a priest, you can't be married.

If you're a priest, then you have authority and you can read the Bible and you can understand the Bible. Believe me, these were the days. You don't read the Bible.

The priest will read the Bible and tell you what it says. It's not for you. In addition, you don't have really free access to God.

Your access to God is through the priest. Do you think that in a Roman Catholic Church, you could go home and celebrate communion just around your dinner table? No way! Communion has to be presided over by the priest. How about confessing your sins to God? Is it enough just to get on your knees and do it yourself? No! You need to go to the priest.

You know, so this whole idea that there is a strong division between the priesthood and the laity, and the other idea, too, is that the priest stands between God and the worshipper. He's the one who brings the worshipper to God. Now, Martin Luther came in and approached this Roman Catholic way of thinking and said, you know what? This is not biblical.

First Timothy, chapter 2, verse 5 says, for there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. In other words, the priesthood of all believers meant that every believer was his own priest before God. You see, instead of abolishing the priesthood, Martin Luther didn't abolish the priesthood, he opened it up.

You know, he'd take a look at a congregation of a hundred people, and he wouldn't say, we don't have any priests here, he'd say, we've got a hundred priests here. Every one of you is a priest. Every one of you has access to God.

Every one of you can confess your sins to yourself. Every one of you can worship the Lord. This meant that the individual was empowered to have his own relationship with God.

And he did not need another priest. You are your own priest. Now, compared to the way that society had thought for centuries, this was a revolution.

If you were going to nominate a man of the millennium, one human being who has walked this earth in the last thousand years, who has had more of an impact on the world than any other single human being, I would say, absolutely, it would have to be Martin Luther. And this idea of the priesthood of all believers is one of the great reasons why, is because in some ways, this emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, or the priesthood of the believer, did more to change society than any other principle that came from the Reformation. There's a real sense in which this idea of the priesthood of all believers laid the foundation for all modern democracy.

You see, because when you say that you can have your own relationship with God, and you can have your own relationship, you know what you're essentially saying? You're saying that you're all equal. You're all on the same ground. Instead of saying, no, the priest is on his own ground, and you're on a different ground.

This idea of the priesthood of all believers was also a way to champion and reinforce individual rights. You have your own rights before God, right? You're your own person before God. You're your own priest.

You don't need a hierarchy, you don't need an institution. I mean, before this, you could imagine a peasant standing before a king, and saying, who am I? You know, I'm nothing, I'm nothing. This guy's a king, I'm nothing.

But now, he could stand before a king and say, listen, this guy's a king, but you know, I'm a child of God. I have my own relationship with God. You know, I have this standing, I have this place.

This idea of the priesthood of all believers, I believe, germinated out and spread out to do an absolutely revolutionary change in Western thinking. It's something we take for granted today because it's just so inbred in us, just like a fish takes water for granted, you know, I mean, it's just there. But it didn't always used to be like this.

This way that we have a faith and a trust and an empowering of the individual, it didn't always used to be like this. Once Luther started making this break with the church, then he just did a very critical re-examination of everything he could think of. I want to tell you that I don't think the Reformation was a complete work.

I think that there were some important areas of doctrine and of church practice that Martin Luther and John Calvin and some of the other great reformers did not really change, did not really address. But I mean, when you consider what they did change, it's absolutely magnificent and massive. And so this was just one of the things that they ran across and really encountered because they saw how the Roman Catholic Church had so greatly corrupted the idea of priesthood.

They say, no, let's get back to what it should be. Every believer is his own priest before God. Now, it's important that I lay that out before we talk about this next aspect of it, the Anabaptists.

Now, when Martin Luther went into hiding after the Diet at Worms, remember that? His great dramatic speech, I think we talked about that our last time together, you know, here I stand, I can do no other. God help me. You know, I mean, what a dramatic, dramatic speech.

And then he leaves the council at Worms. He's virtually kidnapped by people who want to protect him. And they do protect him.

And they hide him out in a fortress, right? And he writes that great hymn, A Mighty Fortress Is Our God. He translates the German Bible. But when he's in this period of time, you know, I'm sorry, I can't call the mine exactly what it is, a year, two years, something like that.

When he's in this period of hiding out, what's happening to his church back at Wittenberg? I mean, he had already started this church where he's preaching the word, where he's telling people about the important foundations of the Reformation, Sola Fides, Sola Gratia, Sola Christa, Sola Scriptura, priesthood of all the believers. I mean, he has set these wheels in motion at Wittenberg, but now he leaves the church for a

couple of years. So what's going on? His work was carried on by a man named Karlstadt.

Karlstadt sought to implement Luther's ideas in Martin Luther's absence. It's not exactly the kind of situation, but let's make this analogy, okay? You know, I go away for two years and the church hears virtually nothing from me. Maybe an occasional letter from me in two years, okay? And during that time, Craig, the assistant pastor, takes over.

Well, he knows I'm coming back, right? I mean, he knows I'm not gone for good. And so, in his mind, he's thinking, listen, you know, I want to lead this church and teach this church and guide this church the way David would do it. I've got to turn it back over to him.

So I know David's philosophy of ministry, I know his teaching, I'm just going to try to implement the things that he would implement in the time he's away. Well, that's exactly what Karlstadt was thinking. I mean, he knew Luther's teaching, he was supportive of it, he was excited about it.

He goes, okay, Martin Luther's taught us all this stuff, how do we carry on and follow after this stuff? One of the things he started was an evangelical communion service. In other words, he said, hey, let's come to the table of the Lord. You know what? You've come and you can remember what Jesus did for you, and maybe you'll come to Christ today by doing that.

Let's just come and have communion together. And you know, you don't need to be a priest to officiate this, right? Let's just come together and remember what Jesus did for us on the cross. Let's all do that together.

And he served communion directly to the people. He said, come on, take a piece of bread. Take a drink out of this cup.

Just simplicity. I mean, honestly speaking, a lot like we might take communion today. Just very simple, very wonderful.

They started holding services in common language. You know, not in the Latin that the church preached in. No, let's just talk about an everyday German.

And he just very strongly preached the idea of justification by faith. And so he's thinking, hey, these are the things Luther would want me to do. I'm doing all this stuff.

Well, Luther had a very important political backer known as Frederick. When Frederick of Saxon saw the things that Karlstadt was doing, he became alarmed. And he asked Luther to return to Wittenberg.

When Luther returned, he rebuked Karlstadt. And he saw the changes that Karlstadt had made and he said, no, no way. And he put down those changes and he preached a blistering series of sermons denouncing Karlstadt and the changes he made.

In Luther's mind, he was coming back to restore order. Like Frederick of Saxon, his political patron wanted him to do. Let me, I'm going to read you a passage from Luther's table talk where he talks about Karlstadt.

Again, this is Martin Luther's perspective on this. This is what he was seeing. He says, Karlstadt opposed me merely out of ambition.

For he flattered himself that on earth there was not a more learned man than he. And although in his writings he imitated me, yet he played strange tricks with my manner. He wanted to be the great man.

And truly, I would willingly have left honor to him so far as it had not been against God. For, I praise my God, I was never so presumptuous as to think myself wiser than another man. When at first I wrote against indulgences, I designed simply to have opposed them, thinking that afterwards other would come and accomplish what I had begun.

In other words, Luther's saying, you know what, Karlstadt just had a big head, he was just operating out of pride. But you see, what this really points to is, I think, a much bigger issue than just what Luther's talking about, about Karlstadt's pride. It points to a larger issue that troubles many people today.

How do you implement biblical truth? How do you do it? How do you put biblical truth into practice? You know what Karlstadt's perspective was on it? Karlstadt's perspective was, let's get it on. I mean, look what the Bible says. Let's just do it.

Come on, let's go. Let's change it right now. Luther, even though Luther was a guy who in his thinking and in his speech and his debating was very strong, very vigorous, when it came to changing, Luther was a guy who wanted to move by consensus.

He said, you know what, let's change the people's hearts first. Let's wait until everyone is taught to agree and then things will just move that way. Two very different perspectives, right? Well, who's in charge? Luther's in charge.

So he boots Karlstadt for basically carrying out Luther's agenda too energetically. Right? I mean, they basically agreed on the same agenda. Let's get back to the Bible.

Let's not be bound by tradition. Let's get back to the Word. Let's do that.

But Luther was critical of Karlstadt because Karlstadt carried out Luther's ideas too energetically. In Luther's mind, Karlstadt was proud and he was dangerous. He was a fanatic, carrying out his ideas too fanatically.

And so the Reformation developed along two lines. It started with Luther, but then it split into two lines. Then you have what's called the magisterial reformers and then you have the radical reformers.

Let's look at it this way. You got the establishment reformers and then you got the revolutionaries. Now Luther figured, isn't this revolutionary enough? We've broken it from the Pope, Karlstadt would look at him and say, no way.

It is not enough of a revolution. We've got to do everything biblical. We've got to do everything just like the Bible says.

And we're not going to back down from any of it. Now who were the magisterial or establishment reformers? Well, Lutherans, right? Followers of Martin Luther. Calvinists, that's the Swiss Reformation.

Aspects of the reformers in France. And the Anglicans in England. So these are all under the banner of the magisterial reformers.

These are the establishment reformers. The Anabaptists were actually not a coherent group. By their very nature, there were just pockets and groups and this and that.

It was a scattered, eclectic movement. I mean, you had leaders of the Anabaptists that would pop up from time to time. But this was almost like an underground movement saying, hey, let's do this radically.

Let's go for it all the way. And so the Anabaptists were scattered all over Europe. And again, much of the difference between the magisterial and the radical reformers, between the establishment and the revolutionaries, is in the way that they saw, follow closely on this now, on the way that they saw the church.

I would say that the biggest dividing line between the radicals and the establishment, the revolutionaries and the establishment reformers, was in their answer to this question, what is the church? Now, every one of the magisterial reformers, all the establishment guys, they believed that the church and the state should work together. Now, the Roman Catholic Church had the same idea, right? The Pope and the Emperor worked together in the Holy Roman Empire, right? Now, what did this go back to? This goes back to Constantine, doesn't it? I mean, when the Emperor became a Christian, and the Roman Empire government, the civil service, becomes Christianized, suddenly there's this union between church and state, right? And they work together. And sometimes it seems to be to tremendous benefit.

What if it came down from Sacramento or from Washington today? You know, we're going to teach Christianity in all the public schools. You know, we're going to pay pastors to come in and tell our kids about the Lord. And you know what? The government is going to start paying pastors, period.

Church, you don't have to support your pastor. We believe in what the church is doing. The government's going to pay the pastors.

And you know, all these different things that the government would do to help Christianity. Now, you know what? They might do it. And let's say for a generation, it goes great.

Oh, man, it's just revival, although it's fantastic. How long do you think that lasts without getting terribly corrupted? It doesn't take long, does it? Then all of a sudden, yeah, they're still teaching religion in the public school. All of a sudden, now it's filled with false doctrine.

And yeah, they're paying the pastors, right? But what do they make the pastors do in order to pick up the paycheck? You see, this idea going way back was that the church and the state should work together. In other words, when a baby is born in your city, where do you take your baby to be recognized as a citizen? You take them to the church where they get baptized and their baptismal record at the church, that's like City Hall. That's your citizenship.

And it's just, it's the state church. The state and the church work together. That's how... Now, this is how it is in the Roman Catholic thinking.

And might I say this, if I'm ill-informed on this, I wish... As far as my understanding is of this, there is no substantial difference between the way the Roman Catholics saw the relationship between the church and the state and the establishment reformers saw it. I don't think there was any substantial difference in the way that Martin Luther saw the relationship between the church and the state and the Pope saw the relationship. They just thought it was the wrong church working with the state, right? The problem wasn't the church and the state working together, the problem was it was the wrong church.

It should be the Lutheran church instead of the Roman Catholic church. But church and state should still work together. Now, you get over here to the radicals, to the revolutionaries, and what do they say? They say, what does the church have to do with the state? Let the state do whatever it wants to do.

We're the church. We don't look for any favors from the state. We pray for no persecution from the state, but we sure don't look for any favors.

We just don't have anything to do with it. Let the state do whatever it wants. You know, when it comes time to punish a heretic, how it would happen over here and in the Roman Catholic church, among the magisterial reformers, how it would work is the church would try them and then they would turn them over to the state.

And then the state would punish them or execute them. The Anabaptists say, forget that noise. Man, we're just the church.

What does the state have to... We don't look for the state to enforce our doctrine. There's just no relation here. You see, the magisterial reformers agreed with the Roman Catholic idea that the state and the church should work together to make a Christian society.

The only dispute between this side was whether it should be the Protestant church or the Catholic church working with the state. In the minds of the magisterial reformers and the Roman Catholics, the church was the whole community. To be a citizen in good standing meant that you attended church.

You were born into the church. Radical reformers, no. You know what they saw the church as? They saw the church as a called-out assembly of believers.

This is the way that the establishment saw it. They took a look at a city and the ruler of that city would be a Christian. And so they'd say, well, the people in this city, they're Christian.

This is a Christian city. The Anabaptists said, no, no way. The Christians are individual... The church are individuals called out from that community.

Not the community as a whole. The magisterial reformers thought that you were born into the church. The revolutionary reformers said that you had to be born again into the church.

And so they were known as Anabaptists. Now, do you know what Anabaptist means? It means second baptism. Because even though there was no real consistency or coherency among all the Anabaptists, because this was an underground movement.

Let's recognize this. It was an underground movement, often severely persecuted. Yet almost all of them shared the belief of what we call today believer's baptism.

In other words, it's inappropriate to baptize babies. You baptize somebody when they believe on Jesus Christ for themselves. That was one thing that pretty much all of them held in common.

Now, believing this shows the important difference between the church. Why do you baptize a baby? And what does baptism mean when you baptize? When you baptize a baby, are you trying to say that that baby has believed on Jesus Christ? No. What you're saying is that that baby has been born into a Christian family and therefore that baby is saved.

Therefore, baptism, when you're baptizing babies, baptism is mainly a sign of membership in the church. They would call it a sign of the covenant. You're part of the covenant people.

That's your sign of membership in the church. You've been baptized. Where the Anabaptists, those who believe in believer's baptism say, no, that's not what baptism is about.

Baptism is about an illustration of the cleansing that I've received in Jesus Christ, about my death and resurrection with Jesus Christ. It's a proclamation of my personal belief in Jesus Christ. That's what baptism is.

Now, what's interesting about this is why would they call them second Baptists? Because almost all of these people were baptized as babies, right? They grew up in a culture where everybody was baptized as a baby. But when they came of age, they said, you know what? I want to be baptized because I believe. And so they'd be baptized.

Now, their critics called it a second baptism. As far as the Anabaptists were concerned, it was a first baptism, right? But their critics called it a second baptism. This is how they said it.

Okay, this is what they said. They say, baptism shall be given to all those who have learned repentance and amendment of life and who believe truly that their sins are taken away by Christ and to all those who walk in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and wish to be buried with him in his death so that they may be resurrected with him and to all those who, with this significance, request it, that is baptism, of us and demand it for themselves. This excludes all infant baptism, the highest and chief abomination of the Pope.

In this, you have the foundation testimony of the apostles, and then you list scripture references. This we wish to hold simply yet firmly with assurance. So they said, no, we reject the notion of infant baptism.

And guess what? Who still held to the idea of infant baptism? Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans. All the establishment reformers still believed in infant baptism. Why? I believe it was mostly because of the way they saw the church.

The way they saw what the church was all about influenced the way they thought what baptism was all about. From some of the writings of Menno Simmons... You ever hear of the Mennonites? The Mennonites are the modern descendants of one of the most prominent Anabaptist leaders, a guy named Menno Simmons. They get their name from his first name, Mennonites.

And he was one of the more prominent Anabaptist leaders. Look at what he says here. He says, we are not regenerated because we have been baptized, but we are baptized because we've been regenerated by faith in the word of God.

Regeneration is not the result of baptism, but baptism is the result of regeneration. This indeed cannot be controverted by any man or disproved by the scriptures. The scriptures know of only one remedy, which is Christ with his merits, death and blood.

Hence, he who seeks the remission of sins through baptism rejects the blood of the Lord and makes water his idol. Therefore, let everyone have a care, lest he ascribe honor and glory and die to Christ in the outward ceremonies and bills of elements. In other words, they said, well, you have to baptize babies.

You know why? Because if they die and they're not baptized, then they're going to hell. Then I say, what are you nuts? You think that baptism doesn't save? It's the blood of Jesus Christ that saves you. You're making an idol out of baptism by saying that it in and of itself is a requirement for salvation.

Since then, we do not find in all scripture a single word by which Christ has ordained the baptism of infants or that his apostles taught and practiced it. We say and confess rightly that infant baptism is but a human invention, an opinion of men, a perversion in the ordinance of Christ. I mean, they believed it very, very strongly here.

He says, I know that Luther teaches that faith is present in infants just as in a believing, sleeping man. You see, Luther taught that infants have faith even though they can't express it. Just like a person, a Christian who's asleep has faith, right? Even though they can't express it because they're asleep.

That was Luther's spin on this. His justification for why he could baptize infants. He said, to this I reply first, that if there was such a sleeping faith in little unconscious infants, which is, however, nothing more than human sophistry, it would notwithstanding be improper to baptize such children so long as they would not verbally confess it and show the required fruits.

For the holy apostles did not baptize any believers while they were asleep as we've shown in our former writings. That's great. It's really classic the way he deals with that.

So you get the idea. I mean, this was a big issue to them. But you shouldn't think that this was the only issue dividing them.

Not at all. There were a lot of issues that divided the establishment reformers from the revolutionary reformers. So you have this significant division between the establishment reformers and the revolutionary reformers.

And let me tell you, the revolutionary reformers were indeed revolutionary. They wanted to change society for the good of the common man. Now, one of the real interesting results of this had to do with politics.

Because these ideas of the relationship between the church and the state, they just don't affect the church. They also affect the state. And suddenly, when you got people thinking, hey, you know what? I'm my own man.

I'm a priest myself. I answer to God myself. The state doesn't tell me I'm a Christian.

I know I'm a Christian. Well, a lot of this worked into a lot of aspects of, well, it developed into something known as the Peasants' War. Thomas Munzer was a priest and a former follower of Luther.

He became a leader of peasant uprisings in central Germany in 1525. Now, the peasants called on the power of Luther's teaching. And they demanded more just economic conditions from... I mean, these were people who were virtually slaves by the landowners.

And they were going to make a stand. Now, they said, listen, we're priests. We're men.

We have dignity. We deserve to be treated better than this by the landowners. But Luther condemned the peasants.

And these people and their leaders felt like Luther had chopped them off at the knees. But Luther looked at these people... You know what? You know how Luther saw it? Luther looked at these people and he said, you know what? These people are nuts. They're taking it too far.

And they're going to ruin everything. Everything. All that we've worked for.

It's like, I didn't lay my neck on the line at the Diet of Worms to have these guys chop it off down the way. I think that's how Luther was thinking. Because these guys are just going too far.

And so Luther said, no, no, no, no, no. I only encourage you to free yourselves from the spiritual authority of these leaders. Never from the actual economic or political influence of them.

Listen, it meant a lot for one man from a peasant's background himself, Martin Luther. For one man to say to the Roman Catholic Church, stuff it. I don't need you.

I'll go my own way. Other people started thinking, you know what? I can do that too. It started a real revolution.

The peasants were angry with Martin Luther when he didn't support them. Luther got angry right back. You didn't want to get Martin Luther angry.

And he wrote a highly charged pamphlet that said, listen to this title, against the murderous and thieving hordes of peasants. Some historians estimate that 300,000 peasants were involved in this open rebellion. And the war has been called the last great medieval peasant revolt and the first modern revolution.

But they were all wiped out. They were all, well, not killed, but their movement was completely defeated. So Luther defended the establishment in the peasant rebellion.

The Anabaptist leaders felt incredibly betrayed by Luther. And all of this, they just, it just started to be a big division. There was a substantial division.

You know, these guys, Luther felt that these guys were dangerous, that they were going to ruin everything, that they were proud, that they were arrogant. These guys felt, hey, we got betrayed by Luther. We're just following your principles.

And remember, buddy, Sola Scriptura? Remember, that's what we're talking about here. And no doubt, these guys started feeling superior. You know, hey, we're more faithful than you are, Luther.

And it went back and forth. But I tell you, there's pretty good evidence that Luther and other establishment reform leaders retreated from positions that they had. It's kind of like this.

Okay, here's the Roman Catholic Church. This is a very crude diagram, please. You know, and here is, you know, the most radical Anabaptist.

Okay, and you got this continuum. Well, you know, Luther started back here, and he makes his way down this line, and then he stops, and he sees what the people are doing down here. So then Luther pulls back some.

But then these people here, they take where Luther went, and they keep running with it. So pretty soon, you got a pretty substantial division between these two, right? They're both away from here. But here, the

Magisterial Reformers are in the middle, the Anabaptist leaders far down the way.

Now, the Anabaptists owe Luther and Calvin crazy. Because Luther and Calvin did not want to be known as separatists. Luther and Calvin wanted it known, hey, the Roman Catholic Church kicked us out.

We didn't separate from them. They separated from us. Anabaptists, they don't care.

They say, hey, yeah, we walked out on them. We don't care. And for this very reason, for these kind of things, the Anabaptists were not a monolithic movement.

They were made up of various factions, various groups. And some of them were kind of wacky, believe me. Some of them got end times fever, and were convinced that the Messiah was coming back to some German city.

There were a whole bunch of Anabaptists. Oh, the Messiah is coming back. You know, and so they set a date and everything, and they prepared it and this and that.

Huge disappointment and this and that. Just horrible, fanatic stuff, some of it. Other Anabaptists were just great.

You know, I mean, it was a very diverse movement. Luther denounced the Anabaptists as schwärmer, which means fanatics or enthusiasts. And again, they really did get it.

Now, here's the problem with the Anabaptists, is that they certainly weren't Roman Catholics, right? And they weren't in line with the establishment reformers either. They got persecuted from both of them. And they endured often terrible persecution, showed a lot of remarkable courage.

Listen, this is from the writings of Menno Simmons again. He says, now, if our persecutors are Christians, as they think and accept the Word of God, why do they not heed and follow the Word and the commandment of Christ? Why do they root up the tares before the time? And why do they not fear lest they root up the good wheat and not the tares? Why do they undertake the duty of angels, who at the proper time shall bind the tares and bundles and cast them in the furnace of everlasting fire? And then he says, this is a remarkable paragraph. It says, however lamentably we may be persecuted, oppressed, smitten, robbed, burned at the strait, drowned in the water by that hellish pharaoh and his cruel unmerciful servants, yet soon shall come the day of our refreshing and all the tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and we shall be arrayed in the white silken robes of the righteous, follow the Lamb, and with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob sit down in the kingdom of God and possess the precious, pleasant land of eternal and perishable joy.

Praise God and lift up your heads, ye who suffer for Jesus' sake. The time is near when you shall hear, Come ye blessed, and you shall rejoice with him forevermore. So, the Anabaptists.

When you believe in believer's baptism and when you believe in the believer's church, in other words, the church is made up of believers, not just the community. Friends, this is right out of the Anabaptist textbook. That was not the teaching of Martin Luther.

It was not the teaching of John Calvin. That's the Anabaptists. In a lot of ways, we owe a precious, precious debt to our Anabaptist brethren.

They really, really were persecuted terribly. All right, well, let's thank the Lord for the time. Father, we want to thank you for this time together.

We praise you, Lord. We ask that you give us your guidance and your love and help us to be your followers, Lord. In Jesus' name.

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