

Lesson 28 – Where Did the Denominations Come From?

This is not a lesson on church history, but rather a history of the various denominations we encounter today. As such, we will cover selected events and concepts from church history. The various groupings of churches have their own twists on church history.

Matthew 16:18 – Jesus said He will build His church. He only built one kind of church.

Matthew 28:19 – He would be with His church until the end of the age. That means His church would exist until the end of the age.

Ephesians 3:21 – To Him be glory in the Church to all generations. Shows the true church would be present on earth throughout all generations.

1. Views of Church History

- a. The Roman Catholic View
 - i. The Roman Catholic is the true church founded by Jesus
 - ii. Peter was the first pope, or supreme ruler of the church
 - iii. All other churches are false churches
- b. The Eastern Orthodox View
 - i. The Orthodox Church is the true church founded by Jesus
 - ii. The Catholic Church split off from the Orthodox Church, and is therefore not a true church
 - iii. All other churches are not true churches
- c. The Protestant View
 - i. The Roman Catholic Church is the original church
 - ii. As the Roman Catholic Church became more and more corrupted in doctrine and practice, concerned men tried to reform the church. They eventually left the Church and started their own churches so they could teach the truth of Scripture.
 - iii. Liberal Protestants and liberal Baptists add...
 1. Jesus and the early Christians had primitive beliefs in Biblical inerrancy, the existence of Satan and demons, demon possession, miracles, creation, Heaven, Hell, salvation, etc.
 2. As people became more enlightened in the 17th through 20th Centuries, theologians began to realize that the Bible contained a lot of myth, and they refined Christianity by modernizing and “demythologizing” it.
- d. The Restoration View (Church of Christ, Mormon and some other cults)
 - i. The original church corrupted and truth died out completely.
 - ii. Their “church” is the official restoration of the original church. All others are false churches.
 - iii. This view is held by Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, Mormons and others.
- e. The Baptist View
 - i. The original churches were severely affected by apostasy beginning in the late 1st Century.
 - ii. The church in Rome evolved into the Roman Catholic Church during the first five centuries AD.

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- iii. True Christian churches never ceased to exist. Many were called *Anabaptists*, beginning in 251 AD, because they would “re-baptize” the Catholics they led to the Lord.
- iv. These Anabaptists were not Protestants, because they predated the Protestant Reformation by 1,500 years.
- v. Some of the Anabaptists of during the Protestant Reformation later became known as *Baptists*.
- vi. Although Baptists have a lot in common with born-again Protestants, Baptists are not Protestants because they did not have their origin in the Protestant Reformation.

2. The evolution of the Roman Catholic Church

- a. It all began with the founding of the church in Rome. The church that was addressed in the Book of Romans.
- b. During the 2nd and 3rd Centuries, the false teaching of baptismal salvation began to become accepted in a number of churches. It eventually got to the church in Rome.
 - i. Justin Martyr (AD 165) – Men are regenerated by baptism.
 - ii. Irenaeus (AD 202) – Called baptism regeneration
 - iii. Tertullian (AD 255) – Said that baptism is “the laver of regeneration.”
 - iv. Augustine, in the 5th Century, taught that people who didn’t have their babies baptized should be persecuted. At the Council of Mileve (AD 416) he pronounced that everyone who does not believe babies should be baptized or affirm that Catholic baptism as the means of regeneration is accursed.
 - v. Catholics are taught that this is how they are born again.
- c. Constantine merged the Church with the State – the Roman Empire
 - i. Made emperor 306 AD
 - ii. Stopped persecution of Christians
 - iii. Incorporated the church and state in 326 AD
 - iv. Began to import the teachings of pagan religions into the church
 - v. Made the teachings of the church mandatory
- d. Development of the Roman Catholic Priesthood
 - i. Pastors became priests, patterned after the priests in pagan religions
 - ii. As priests they had the power to connect people with God
 - 1. They were the official interpreters of Scripture
 - 2. They dispensed grace to the people through the sacraments of the Catholic Church.
- e. Elevation of Mary
 - i. Mary became “the Mother of God”
 - ii. As such, she became the object of worship
 - iii. Catholics are instructed to pray the “hail Mary”

*Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with you
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the Fruit of your womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, Pray for us sinners
Now and at the hour of our death.*



ROSARY

- iv. Praying the Rosary

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1. The Rosary is taken from paganism. Buddhism and Hinduism both have rosaries that are very similar to the Catholic rosary.
 - v. The Immaculate Conception of Mary – she was born without original sin
 - vi. The sinlessness of Mary – she lived her entire life without committing a single sin.
 - vii. The perpetual virginity of Mary – she remained a virgin her entire life (Jesus’ brothers referred to in Scripture were really His cousins).
 - viii. The Assumption of Mary – She ascended to Heaven after she died.
 - ix. Co-Redemptrix – Sometimes she is referred to as redeeming us along with Jesus.
 - x. She is almost the fourth person of the Trinity.
- f. Purgatory (invented by Gregory I in 593 AD)
 - i. Very few people are good enough to go straight to Heaven when they die. Good Catholics go to Purgatory first.
 - ii. Purgatory is a place of fire and torment – like Hell – where people are purged from their sins so they can get into Heaven.
 - iii. You can help get your deceased loved ones out of Purgatory faster by paying the church to have special Masses for them. This has been a big money maker for the Catholic Church through the centuries.
- g. Popes
 - i. Leo 1 (440 AD) – “Lord over the whole church”
 1. Council of Chalcedon – Pronounced that Peter was the first pope and Leo was his successor.
 - ii. Gregory I, or Gregory the Great (590-604 AD) –
 1. Solidified the papacy
 2. The first of the proper popes
 - iii. Theodore 1 (642-649) –
 1. First pope to be called “the supreme pontiff”
 2. *Pontiff* means “bridge.” This means the Pope is the bridge to God and to Heaven.
 3. If you don’t follow the Pope’s religion, you don’t have the bridge, and you’ll never get to Heaven.
- h. The Sacrifice of the Mass
 - i. This is defined as the “unbloody sacrifice of Christ”
 - ii. The service where the priest . . .
 1. Magically transforms the wafer into the literal body of Christ, and the people worship the wafer (it’s Christ’s body) and eat Jesus (again the wafer is supposed to be Jesus).
 2. Magically transforms the wine into the literal blood of Christ, and the priest drinks it. (Only the priests are allowed to drink it).
 - iii. Catholics are taught that this is how they receive Christ.
3. **The Eastern Orthodox Church** – started in “The Great Schism” in 1054 AD
 - a. The Orthodox and Catholic churches became two separate bodies when they split in 1054 AD. The event is called “The Great Schism”
 - b. The Eastern Orthodox Church is made up of several national Orthodox Church bodies... Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Serbian Orthodox, etc.
 - c. They have a few minor doctrinal differences from the Roman Catholic Church, but they took most of the Catholic doctrines with them.

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- d. They claim *they* are the original church – the true church, and that the Roman Catholic Church split from them. (What difference does it make?)

4. Meanwhile, in other places

- a. Britain – the Celtic Church (named after the Celts – early inhabitants of the British Isles. The Celts were also the people of Gaul (France) and Galatia.
 - i. Christianity was present in Britain before the Catholic Church arrived. Some have speculated that some of the people of Galatia may have taken it to Britain. Others think one of the Apostles may have visited Britain.
 - ii. “St.” Patrick was a Celtic Christian, but the Catholic Church claims him as one of theirs. He left very few writings, but there is evidence that his teaching was quite Biblical, and not Catholic. The Catholic teaching that he was a Catholic is historical fabrication.
 - iii. The Celtic church, over the years, lost its commitment to Scripture. They merged with the Roman Catholic Church at the Council of Whidby in 668 AD.
- b. The Piedmont area of Italy – **the Vaudois, or Waldenses**
 - i. A group of committed Christians called the *Vaudois*, or “People of the Valley,” flourished in the Italian Alps. They sent missionaries out all over Europe. They were very evangelistic and mission minded.
 - ii. We have two Confessions of Faith from 1120 AD and 1150 AD. These documents show their commitment to Biblical doctrine.
 - iii. They claimed that their movement went back to the Apostles. Some historians think that the Apostle Paul stopped there on the missionary trip he had planned to Spain (Rom. 15:24, 28). Although we know Paul was planning to go to Spain, we don’t know if he ever went there.
 - iv. The Pope had tried on numerous occasions tried to stamp them out. Finally, in 1655, he sent an army of 15,000. Volunteers were promised instant entrance into Heaven – no purgatory – when they die. Antoine Leger, an eyewitness told some of the horrors of the massacre:

Little children were torn from the arms of their mothers, clasped by their tiny feet, and their heads dashed against the rocks; or were held between two soldiers and their quivering limbs torn up by main force. Their mangled bodies were then thrown on the highways or fields, to be devoured by beasts. The sick and the aged were burned alive in their dwellings. Some had their hands and arms and legs lopped off, and fire applied to the severed parts to staunch the bleeding and prolong their suffering. Some were flayed alive, some were roasted alive, some disemboweled; or tied to trees in their own orchards, and their hearts cut out. Some were horribly mutilated, and of others the brains were boiled and eaten by these cannibals. Some were fastened down into the furrows of their own fields, and ploughed into the soil as men plough manure into it. Others were buried alive. Fathers were marched to death with the heads of their sons suspended round their necks. Parents were compelled to look on while their children were first outraged, then massacred, before being themselves permitted to die.

- v. John Milton, the famous English poet, wrote a poem about the Massacre of the Waldenses in 1655:

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*AVENGE, O Lord, thy slaughtered Saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans 5
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow 10
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundredfold, who, having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.*

- vi. Some of the Vaudois, or Waldenses, escaped the massacre, and there were other Waldenses all over Europe at the time, so their movement was not eliminated.
- vii. Peter Waldo was a famous leader of the Waldenses in the 12th Century. Some people claim he founded the Waldensian movement, but the early Waldenses did not subscribe to that claim.
- viii. Waldenses were considered Anabaptists because they did not accept Roman Catholic baptism. They “rebaptized” the Catholics they led to Christ.
- ix. During the Protestant Reformation . . .
 1. Some Waldenses joined the Calvinists
 2. Some remained Anabaptists
 - a. Some Anabaptists became Mennonites
 - b. Some Anabaptists became Baptists
- x. There are two surviving groups of Waldenses today. They have both forsaken their Biblical heritage and have embraced liberalism
 1. The group in Italy merged with the Italian Methodist Church in the late 20th Century.
 2. A group came to North Carolina in the 19th Century. They merged with the liberal wing of the Presbyterian Church.

5. The Protestants

a. Martin Luther

- i. Catholic Augustinian monk who read the Bible and saw many of the errors of the Catholic Church.
- ii. He didn't want to start a new church. He wanted to Reform the Catholic Church.
- iii. He was eventually forced out of Catholicism and started his church. His teaching was a mixture of the Roman Catholicism of Augustine and the Bible.
- iv. The Lutheran Church became the State Church in Germany and the Scandinavian countries.
- v. Lutheran groups in the U.S. today...

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1. **Missouri Synod Lutherans** – Very conservative. They believe in the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Some of them believe in salvation by grace alone. Some believe in baptismal salvation. These are mostly German Lutherans.
2. **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America** – Very liberal for the most part. They seem to tolerate anything but Bible truth and Biblical Christians, although there are a few churches in their denomination that believe the Bible. This is the largest Protestant denomination in the United States. These are the Lutherans who had their origin in the Scandinavian countries.
3. **Wisconsin Synod Lutherans** – Very conservative. Many of their churches preach a pure salvation message, but, like all Lutherans they practice infant baptism.
4. **Lutheran Brethren** – A very small Lutheran group that is very committed to the Word of God and Biblical salvation. Some of them are very evangelistic.
5. There are a number of other smaller Lutheran groups.
- vi. Denominations that came out of the Lutheran Church. Both of these groups were founded by born again Swedish immigrants of Lutheran background in the Midwest.
 1. **Evangelical Free Church**
 2. **Evangelical Covenant Church**
- b. John Calvin
 - i. Roman Catholic who read the Bible, Augustine and Luther. He ended up teaching and preaching in Geneva, Switzerland.
 - ii. Like Luther, he also believed in a State Church, patterned after Roman Catholicism.
 - iii. He started the **Reformed Church**.
 - iv. The main Reformed Churches in the United States today
 1. **The Reformed Church in America (RCA)**
 - a. This was known as the Dutch Reformed Church.
 - b. The denomination is very liberal today, although there are a few churches in it that believe the Bible and preach the Gospel.
 - c. Robert Schuller, of the Crystal Cathedral, is part of this denomination.
 2. **The Christian Reformed Church**
 - a. This denomination pulled out of the Reformed Church in America over liberalism.
 - b. Most of these churches believe the Bible and preach the Gospel, but they teach the predestination theory of Calvin and Augustine, and they practice infant baptism.
 - v. **Presbyterian Church**
 1. Although Calvin didn't found the Presbyterians, they followed his teachings very closely, including infant "baptism" by sprinkling.
 2. The Presbyterian Church became the National Church of Scotland.
 3. Presbyterian denominations in the United States today:
 - a. **Presbyterian Church USA**
 - i. The largest Presbyterian denomination in the US

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ii. Very liberal in theology

b. The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)

- i. Split from the Presbyterian Church USA over liberalism.
- ii. Very committed to the inerrancy of Scripture.
- iii. At least one PCA church I know of will immerse baptismal candidates on demand.
- iv. Very conservative and evangelistic.
- v. Although many of their churches believe the predestination of Calvin, many of them don't let it affect their zeal for evangelism.

c. Orthodox Presbyterian Church and Cumberland Presbyterian Church

- i. Two smaller denominations that are committed to the Scriptures.
- ii. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church emphasizes Calvinism more, and is therefore less evangelistic.

c. Church of England

- i. Henry VIII wanted to divorce his wife. The Pope wouldn't let him. He dissolved the ties of the churches in England with Rome and started his own church.
 1. The theology remained Catholic
 2. Bishop Cranmer, wanted the church to be more Biblical, and he influenced the church away from some of the Catholic teachings.
- ii. In most of the world the church is known as the Anglican Church. It is known as the Episcopal Church in the United States.
- iii. Most of their churches are very liberal – especially in the United States. Most of the more Biblically oriented churches are in England and Australia.
- iv. Two divisions within the Anglican, or Episcopal Church:
 1. High Church
 - a. Identify themselves as “English Catholics” as opposed to “Roman Catholics.” They also identify themselves as Protestants.
 - b. Very close to the Roman Catholic Church in doctrine and practice, except they don't follow the Pope. They practice the Mass and believe in transubstantiation, like the Catholics.
 2. Low Church
 - a. Identify themselves as Protestants, and not as Catholics.
 - b. Although their services are very formal, they do not believe in the Mass.
- v. Denominations that came out of the Church of England
 1. **Congregationalists**
 - a. These were the “Separatists” of the 16th and 17th Centuries.
 - b. They were generally born again people who followed the teachings of John Calvin.
 - c. The Pilgrims who came to America in 1620, were Congregationalists.

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- d. Congregationalist denominations in America today
 - i. **United Church of Christ**
 - 1. One of the most liberal Protestant denominations in America.
 - ii. **Conservative Congregational Christian Conference**
 - 1. Bible teaching
- e. **Unitarians (cult)** – came out of the Congregationalists
 - i. They do not believe in the Trinity. (They are *Unitarians*, not *Trinitarians* in belief).
 - ii. Many of the old Congregational churches in New England became Unitarian.
 - iii. Extremely liberal. You can be an atheist and a good Unitarian. God doesn't matter to them.
 - iv. "If you ask a Unitarian, 'are you a Christian,' some will say 'yes,' and some will say 'no.' All of them would respond, however, 'What does it matter?'"
Taken from a brochure published by the Unitarian-Universalist Church.

2. Methodists

- a. John Wesley, an unsaved Anglican clergyman volunteered to serve as a missionary to America in the 1700's.
- b. On his way back to England, the ship was caught in a big storm. He was scared to death. He met some Moravian missionaries who exhibited the confidence of the Lord on the ship during the storm. He got saved through their testimony.
- c. When he started preaching the Gospel very forcefully in England, he was barred from preaching in many of the Anglican churches.
- d. He took the Gospel outside. Huge crowds gathered to hear him. Multitudes got saved.
- e. He trained other preachers to take the Gospel to the masses.
- f. About 2% of the population of England got saved through the ministry of Wesley and his preachers.
- g. Although he did not want to start a new denomination, the movement he started was not welcome in the Church of England, so a new denomination was inevitable.
- h. The Methodists were a very powerful force in evangelizing the original 13 colonies of the United States and had a profound impact on the spiritual life of early America.
- i. The United Methodist Church today is very liberal. Although it used to be the largest Protestant denomination in America, it has been losing people very rapidly. Many of the United Methodist congregations have a high percentage of senior citizens, and many of these congregations will probably disappear when this generation passes.

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- j. Denominations that came out of the Methodist Church. These churches are sometimes known as **Holiness Churches**.
 - i. **Free Methodist Church** – fairly conservative but wavering toward liberalism
 - ii. **Wesleyan Church** – quite conservative with Biblical message, but they believe a Christian can lose his or her salvation through sin.
 - iii. **Church of the Nazarene** – much like the Wesleyan Church in doctrine, but larger and more aggressive in evangelism,
- k. Pentecostal denominations that came out of the Holiness Churches (that came out of the Methodist Church)
 - i. **Assemblies of God**
 - ii. **Church of God, Cleveland Tennessee**
 - iii. **Church of God in Christ** (mostly black)
- l. Black denominations that came out of the Methodist Church (mostly liberal)
 - i. African Methodist Episcopal Church
 - ii. African Methodist Episcopal Church Zion

6. The Anabaptists

- a. It's difficult to say where Anabaptist and Baptist history begins.
 - i. Protestants and Catholics like to tell us that our history began in 17th Century England
 - ii. Anabaptists with Baptist principles and teachings existed long before the Protestant Reformation. We identify with some of the groups of Anabaptists in doctrine and practice.
 - iii. Some of the Waldenses from Northern Italy (from the 11th Century or earlier) became identified with the Anabaptists, and many of the Anabaptists became identified as Baptists. That could place our origins at least as early as the 11th Century – long before the Protestants came along.
- b. Early Baptists in England
 - i. Some of the Baptists moved to Holland to escape persecution in the 17th Century. They were greatly influenced by Calvinism, and they became Calvinists before they moved back to England. They became known as **Regular Baptists, or Particular Baptists**.
 - ii. Other English Baptists of the time did not succumb to Calvinism. They became known as **General Baptists**. (The term *General Baptist* in modern-day America generally means an Arminian Baptist. In England, it merely meant a Baptist who was not a Calvinist).
- c. Baptists in America
 - i. 9 of the original 13 colonies had state churches – Congregational or Anglican. Roger Williams, a Congregational pastor in Massachusetts, read the Bible and became convinced that his baby baptism was worthless. He got baptized. For the crime of being baptized he was kicked out of Massachusetts. He bought some land from some Indian friends and founded the city of Providence, Rhode Island.
 - ii. He founded the First Baptist Church of Providence. The church exists today, but it went liberal long ago.

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- iii. As a Baptist, he believed in true religious liberty – a novel idea for his day – and he founded Rhode Island on that principle. The first Jewish synagogue in America was founded in Providence. They didn't have the freedom to start a synagogue in the provinces with state churches.
- iv. Since Baptist churches are independent, autonomous congregations, the churches were started first, then they got together to build an organization to help them reach more people for Christ.
- v. Baptist groups in America
 1. The Triennial Convention was founded in 1817 to help the churches organize for missionary work.
 2. Baptist churches in the South withdrew and founded the **Southern Baptist Convention** in 1845. Today Southern Baptists are the second largest denomination in the United States, after the Catholic Church. They are larger than any of the Protestant denominations. There are several groups that came out of the Southern Baptists:
 - a. **American Baptist Association**
 - i. These are *Landmark Baptists*. They believe that true Baptists can trace an unbroken succession of Baptist churches and Baptist baptisms all the way back to the baptism of John the Baptist.
 - b. **Baptist Missionary Association**
 - i. The BMA is also comprised of *Landmark Baptists*.
 - c. **World Baptist Fellowship**
 - i. Left the Southern Baptists because they felt the Southern Baptists were getting too liberal. Very evangelistic independent Baptists.
 - d. **Baptist Bible Fellowship**
 - i. Left the World Baptist Fellowship because of personality conflicts with J. Frank Norris, their president.
 - ii. Many of the largest churches in the United States in the 1960's and 1970's were in this group.
 - e. **Many Independent Baptists**
 - i. Many churches left the Southern Baptist Convention over the years and remained totally independent because they felt the Southern Baptists got too liberal.
 3. Churches in the North later changed the name of their organization to the **Northern Baptist Convention**. They have gotten very liberal, and are now known as **American Baptist Churches in the USA**. Churches that came out of the American Baptists:
 - a. **General Association of Regular Baptists**
 - i. They came out because of the liberalism in the American Baptists.
 - ii. Very conservative theologically.
 - iii. Many of them are Calvinistic
 - b. **Conservative Baptist Association**
 - i. They came out because of the liberalism in the American Baptists.

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- ii. Very committed to teaching the Bible.
- iii. Not quite as conservative as the General Association of Regular Baptists.
- iv. More evangelistic and less Calvinistic than the General Association of Regular Baptists.

7. Restoration churches and cults

- a. Most operate on the theory that the true church died out in the first few centuries, and that all that remained were apostate churches.
- b. They were raised up to restore the true church and bring truth and salvation back to earth after more than 1,000 years of total darkness.
- c. In the early 1800's, Alexander Campbell founded **The Christian Church**. He claimed no creed but the Bible and no name but Christian. He taught the false gospel of baptism by immersion as being part of the salvation process.
- d. "The Christian Church" also became known as **The Disciples of Christ**.
 - i. When the Disciples of Christ went liberal, a group pulled out and started their own movement, known as **The Churches of Christ**.
- e. Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses and other cults have a similar story. Of course each group is the hero in its own story, and each one rewrote church history to benefit their organizations and teachings.

Waldensian Confession of Faith of 1120

1. We believe and firmly maintain all that is contained in the Didache, commonly called the apostles' policy, and we regard as heretical whatever is inconsistent with the said articles.
2. We believe that there is one God - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We acknowledge for sacred canonical scriptures the books of the Holy Bible. (Here follows the title of each, exactly conformable to our received canon, but which it is deemed, on that account, quite unnecessary to particularize.)
4. The books above-mentioned teach us: That there is one GOD, almighty, unbounded in wisdom, and infinite in goodness, and who, in His goodness, has made all things. For He created Adam after His own image and likeness. But through the enmity of the Devil, and his own disobedience, Adam fell, sin entered into the world, and we became transgressors in and by Adam.
5. That Christ had been promised to the fathers who received the law, to the end that, knowing their sin by the law, and their unrighteousness and insufficiency, they might desire the coming of Christ to make satisfaction for their sins, and to accomplish the law by Himself.
6. That at the time appointed of the Father, Christ was born - a time when iniquity everywhere abounded, to make it manifest that it was not for the sake of any good in ourselves, for all were sinners, but that He, who is true, might display His grace and mercy towards us.
7. That Christ is our life, and truth, and peace, and righteousness - our shepherd and advocate, our sacrifice and priest, who died for the salvation of all who should believe, and rose again for their justification.
8. And we also firmly believe, that there is no other mediator, or advocate with God the Father, but Jesus Christ. And as to the Virgin Mary, she was holy, humble, and full of grace; and this we also

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believe concerning all other saints, namely, that they are waiting in heaven for the resurrection of their bodies at the day of judgment.

9. We also believe, that, after this life, there are but two places - one for those that are saved, the other for the damned, which [two] we call paradise and hell, wholly denying that imaginary purgatory of Antichrist, invented in opposition to the truth.
10. Moreover, we have ever regarded all the inventions of men [in the affairs of religion] as an unspeakable abomination before God; such as the festival days and vigils of saints, and what is called holy-water, the abstaining from flesh on certain days, and such like things, but above all, the masses.
11. We hold in abhorrence all human inventions, as proceeding from Antichrist, which produce distress (Alluding probably to the voluntary penances and mortification imposed by the Catholics on themselves), and are prejudicial to the liberty of the mind.
12. We consider the Sacraments as signs of holy things, or as the visible emblems of invisible blessings. We regard it as proper and even necessary that believers use these symbols or visible forms when it can be done. Notwithstanding which, we maintain that believers may be saved without these signs, when they have neither place nor opportunity of observing them.
13. We acknowledge no sacraments [as of divine appointment] but baptism and the Lord's supper.
14. We honour the secular powers, with subjection, obedience, promptitude, and payment.