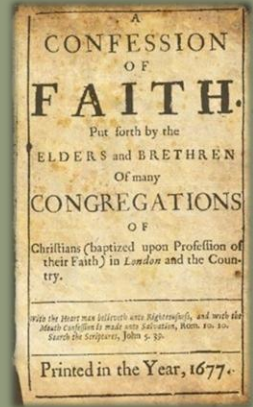


SECOND LONDON BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH



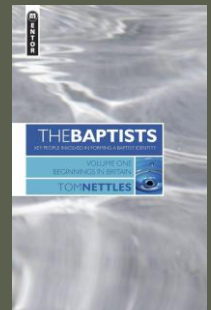
PREFACE



1

What does it mean to be Baptist?

- For many modern Baptists, liberty of the conscience is the heart of Baptist identity
- Baptist historian, Tom Nettles, calls this the “soul-liberty party”
- This view became prominent in the 20th century as progressive theology took over Baptist churches and seminaries
 - Questions like, “Do Baptists believe in the authority and infallibility of scripture?”
- Out of this identity flows the “no creed/confession but Christ” ideology



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On the other hand, another group seeks to demonstrate that the distinctive tenets of freedom and voluntarism would never produce a Baptist church apart from a broader foundation of theological, Christological, and soteriological truths.

Tom Nettles, *Beginnings in Britain, vol. 1, The Baptists: Key People Involved in Forming a Baptist Identity* (Ross-shire, Scotland: Mentor, 2005), 13.

3

What does it mean to be Baptist?

- Another group put forward by Dr. Nettles is the “Coherent-truth party”
- “Baptists must be Christian and Protestant evangelical before they can be Baptist.”
 - Tom Nettles, *Beginnings in Britain, vol. 1, The Baptists: Key People Involved in Forming a Baptist Identity* (Ross-shire, Scotland: Mentor, 2005), 13.
- We believe and identify with historic Christian and Protestant beliefs
- For example: The *Regulative Principle* led us to only practicing believer’s baptism

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Early Baptists Commitment to Truth

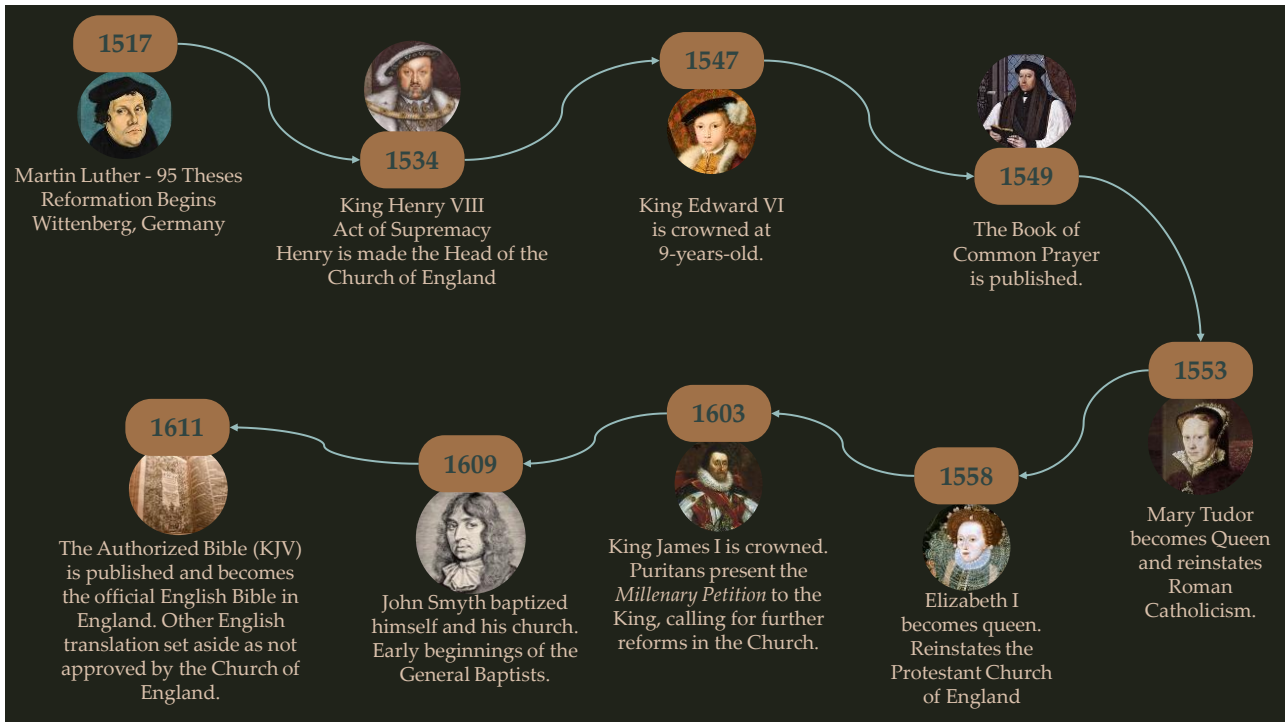
- The early Baptists were Puritans and were devoted to the truths of scripture and let scripture dictate the beliefs and practices
- Their willingness to face persecutions both in England and in the American colonies are testament to their commitment to scripture
- Though not often included within the Reformation, they were no less reformers in their own time
- As we go through this confession, we need to be careful not to impose modern Baptist thinking upon it

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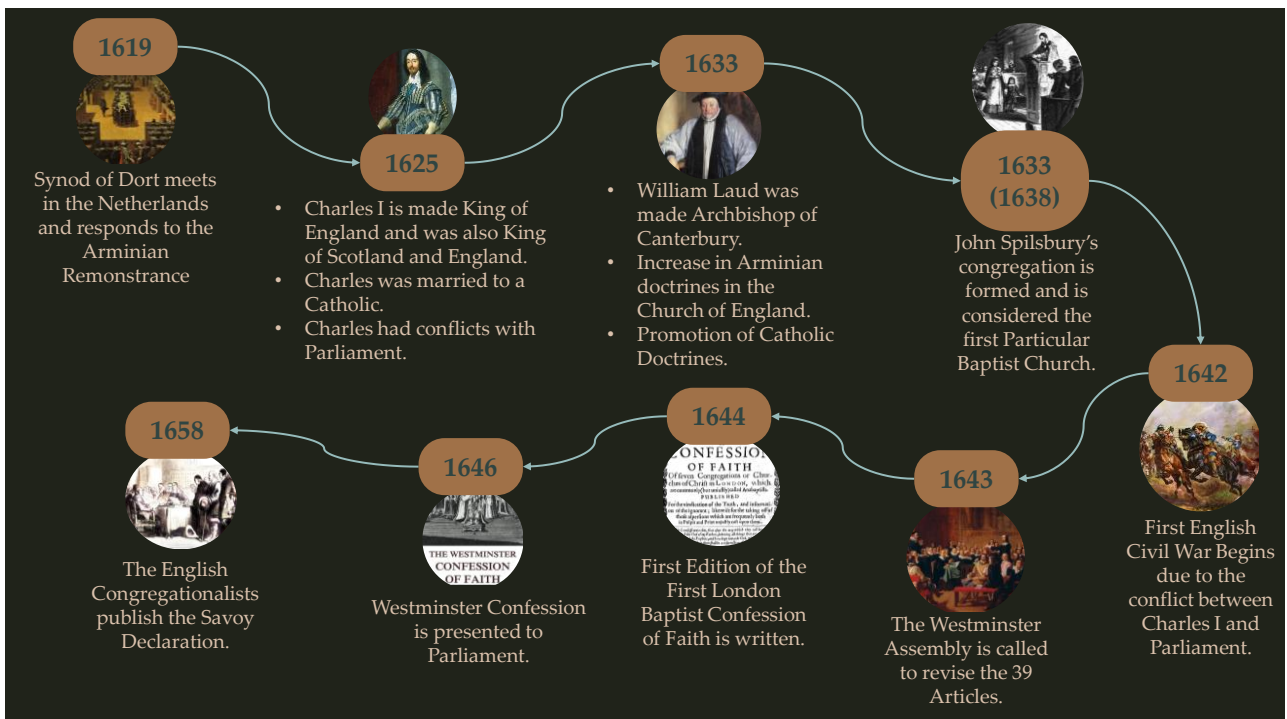


WHY WRITE A CONFESSION?

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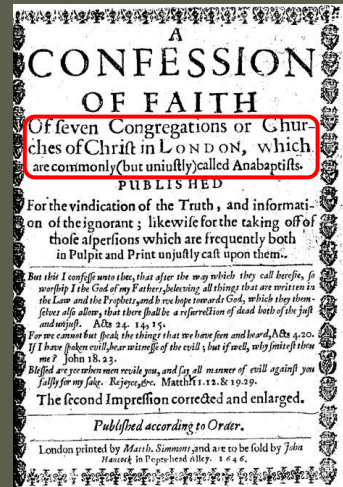
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The First London Confession

- They felt they needed to clarify where they differed from the state church
- Rumors were spreading and many people considered them Anabaptists
- 7 churches in London gathered and put together the First London Confession
- “Of seven Congregations or Churches of Christ in LONDON, which are commonly (but unjustly) called Anabaptists”



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Since which time, divers impressions thereof have been dispersed abroad, and our end proposed in good measure answered, inasmuch as many (and some of those men eminent both for piety and learning) were thereby satisfied that we were in no way guilty of those heterodoxies and fundamental errors which had too frequently been charged upon us, without ground or occasion given on our part.

2 LBC; Preface, Paragraph 1

10

The Need for a Second Confession

- The First London Confession was no longer printed and was becoming hard to find
- With the political and religious pressures rising, the Particular Baptists in London felt it was time for a new confession
- They wanted a fuller expression of their beliefs that would clarify to everyone where they stood

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One thing that greatly prevailed with us to undertake this work was not only to give a full account of ourselves to those Christians that differ from us about the subject of baptism, but also the profit that might from thence arise unto those that have any account of our labors in their instruction and establishment in the great truths of the gospel, in the clear understanding and steady belief of which our comfortable walking with God, and fruitfulness before Him in all our ways, is most nearly concerned. Therefore, we did conclude it necessary to express ourselves the more fully and distinctly, and also to fix on such a method as might be most comprehensive of those things we designed to explain our sense and belief of.

2 LBC; Preface, Paragraph 2

12

A Modern Need for Clarity?

- Modern Baptist churches need clarity
- They need a clarity on what they believe but also on what other Baptists believe
- Great clarity is needed for them around Reformed Theology

13

Same Beliefs, Different Format

- To give a fuller description of their beliefs, they adopted the format of the Westminster Confession and the Savoy Declaration
- They only changed the parts they didn't agree with and altered some of the language in other places
- Most of the confessions share identical statements on beliefs

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And oh, that—other contentions being laid asleep—the only care and contention of all upon whom the name of our blessed Redeemer is called, might for the future be to walk humbly with their God in the exercise of all love and meekness toward each other; to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, each one endeavoring to have his conversation such as becometh the gospel.

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