

A History of the Baptists – Part 3
Joel 1:2-3

- I. The Albigenses
 - a. Started by Paulicians who traveled to Albi, France after fall of Teprice c. 1000
 - b. Became the new center of Paulician missionary activity
 - c. They were the subject of multiple church councils of the Catholic church
 - i. Condemned in the councils of AD 1139 and AD 1163
 - ii. Use of violence against them promoted in council of AD 1179
 - d. Pope Innocent the III authorized a crusade against the Albigenses in the year 1200
 - e. When this crusade failed, another was authorized in 1209
 - i. When the leader of the crusade, Simon de Monfort asked the Catholic church what to do with the citizens that he captured, the church answered: “Kill them all. God knows His own.”
 - ii. Simon then began a 20 year reign of terror in Southern France
 - f. The inquisition was started in 1229 to prevent the Albigenses from growing again

- II. The Waldensians
 - a. No one knows the story of their origin.
 - b. The accounts of them in history begin about the same time as those of the Albigenses
 - c. They claimed to be following the same doctrine as that which was taught by the Apostles
 - i. “There have always been men who walked faithfully in the paths of righteousness. Their number has been at times reduced to few; but has never been altogether lost ... We do not believe that the church of God, absolutely departed from the truth; but one portion yielded, and, as is commonly seen, the majority was led away to evil; and the other portion remained long faithful to the truth it had received. Thus, little by little, the sanctity of the church declined.” (The Noble Lessons – c. 1100)
 - ii. “This religion, in which we live, is not merely our religion of the present day or a religion discovered for the first time only a few years ago, as our enemies falsely pretend: but it is the religion of our fathers and of our grandfathers, yea of our forefathers and of our predecessors still more remote. It is the religion of the Saints and of the Martyrs, of the Confessors and of the Apostles.” (Confession of 1559)
 - iii. “Our ancestors have often recounted to us, that we have existed from the time of the Apostles.” (Letter to the Reformers – c. 1550-1600)
 - d. I think that the Waldensian churches were started by Paulician missionaries
 - i. They are not mentioned in any document from history prior to the fall of Teprice
 - ii. They claimed the same antiquity as the Paulicians
 - iii. They had the same missionary spirit as the Paulicians
 - iv. They had the same doctrines as the Paulicians
 - e. The doctrines of the Waldensians

- i. Religious liberty
 - ii. Authority of the Scriptures
 - iii. Every member was expected to preach the Gospel
 - iv. Rejected the Catholic sacraments
 - v. Shunned the use of oaths
 - vi. Condemned the teaching of purgatory and prayers for the dead
 - vii. Taught believer's baptism
 - 1. There are eleven known accounts of their enemies accusing them of rejecting infant baptism on the grounds that infants could not exercise faith
 - 2. "We believe that in the ordinance of baptism the water is the visible and external sign, which represents to us that which, by virtue of God's invisible operation, is within us, the renovation of our minds, and the mortification of our members through (the faith of) Jesus Christ. And by this ordinance we are received into the holy congregation of God's people, previously professing our faith and the change of life." (Confession of 1544)
- f. The Waldensians began to decline during the Protestant Reformation of the 1500's
- i. Many of them chose to drop the name of Waldensian and joined with other Paulicians in adopting the name of Anabaptists
 - 1. This was the first time that the name Anabaptist was used as anything other than a slur
 - ii. Some of them chose to join forces with Luther and Calvin
 - iii. The branch that joined the reformers eventually accepted infant baptism
 - iv. The branch that joined the Anabaptists remained free of that doctrine
 - v. Modern Waldensians are descendants of the reformed branch