
Radical Discipleship And the Renewal Of Adventist Mission

by Charles Scriven

The theological crisis in Seventh-day Adventism today has made many churchmembers doubtful and even anguished about their religious identity. Some of them are leaving the community and others are unsure whether to remain in it. This turmoil calls for constructive response, and what follows is the outline of such a response.

Our church has, to this point, seriously misunderstood its Reformation roots. It is usual among us to suppose that our 16th-century predecessors were Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli. This is partly true, but at the same time massively misleading. The pivotal 16th century antecedents of Adventism are the Reformation radicals, most notably the Anabaptists, who differed substantially from these other reformers. After describing the main outlines of the Anabaptist vision, I will suggest how that vision of solidarity with Christ and radical discipleship illuminates the true meaning of our own church's special mission, and helps establish a viable Adventist identity for today.

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Adventists and the Radical Reformation

Seventh-day Adventists have for a long time said it was their particular task to complete the Reformation. In *The Shaking of Adventism*, Geoffrey Paxton took notice of this, quoting exemplary passages from the writings of Ellen White, Carlyle Haynes, LeRoy Edwin Froom, and Hans LaRondelle.¹ He did not, however, betray any awareness that the religious upheaval of the 16th century involved more than the dispute between Roman Catholicism and the Reformation of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli. His claim appears to be this: the criterion of Adventist success in completing the Reformation is precise faithfulness to Luther's doctrine of justification by faith—and not only to his doctrine but also to his emphasis upon it, his belief that it is the “cardinal” Christian doctrine, the one on which we should “concentrate our attention.”²

If, however, we recall the beginnings of Adventism, we find impressive reasons for doubting this idea. Ellen White came out of the Methodist tradition,³ reflecting it in much of her writing. The most important leader of Methodism was John Wesley,

whose characteristic emphasis was not justification by faith but moral growth through the transforming presence of Christ. He believed in justification by faith and his conversion occurred, indeed, under the influence of Martin Luther's writings; still, he thought it possible to cut Christianity's ethical nerve by overemphasizing the doctrine, something for which he criticized his friends the Moravians in Germany.⁴

Besides Methodism, another pivotal influence upon the Adventist conception of the Gospel, mediated through the church's other most important founding teacher, William Miller, was the English and American Baptist tradition. In this tradition, too, we find not only points of agreement with Luther, but also emphases substantially different from his. Shaped in part by Calvinism and even Methodism, the Baptist tradition also reflects the influence of Anabaptism.⁵ This by itself would justify attending to Anabaptism as a way of enhancing our understanding of the Adventist heritage.

But in addition, historians have come to believe that both Methodism and Baptism belong to a distinctive type of Christianity, profoundly different not only from Roman Catholicism but also from the "magisterial state-church" religion of Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Anglicanism.⁶ This is the "believers' church," or "sectarian," or "radical Protestant" type of Christianity, and though it is anticipated by such medieval sects as the Waldenses and the Czech Unity of Brethren, many 20th century historians believe it was with the appearance of the Anabaptists in the 16th century that this type of Christianity actually began.⁷

Anabaptism, then, is the founding movement among the many movements that make up the radical Protestant tradition. More than Lutheranism or Calvinism, it is the radical Protestant tradition that acquaints us with the Methodist and Baptist pioneers of the Adventist way. This radical Protestantism is what we should especially attend to as we try to faithfully fulfill the promise of the Reformation.

If Geoffrey Paxton did not consider this, it is due partly to the fact that although our pioneers did identify Adventism with groups that are considered part of radical protestantism, they did not specifically mention one of its largest components. The index to Ellen White's writings contains no reference to Anabaptism. What helps to explain this, perhaps, is that in the age of our pioneers, Anabaptism received extremely unsympathetic treatment from historians, largely because of the immense influence of the Zwingli reformer Henry Bullinger, whose account of Anabaptism traced its origin back to the (widely despised) Zwickaw prophets and ultimately Satan himself.⁸ We now know that the first of these claims (at least!) is false.⁹ We are able to benefit from 20th century research into Anabaptism that has led to a thorough reassessment of its history and character as well as its relation to later religious movements. What our pioneers could not know and Geoffrey Paxton apparently overlooked is available for us to know; important because in these days we are groping, all of us, for a renewal of our identity as Adventists.

The Anabaptist Ethos

WE may turn now to the story and ethos of those most important of the radical reformers, the Anabaptists. The story began in Switzerland, though beginnings more or less independent of this one occurred later, in southern Germany and in the Netherlands.¹⁰ A brief narrative of the first of these beginnings will provide us with a minimal sense, at least, of the type of conflict out of which the Anabaptist vision grew.

In 1519, Ulrich Zwingli came to the Zurich Cathedral and began preaching straight through the New Testament. Focusing on ethical questions, not as Luther did, on questions of personal salvation,¹¹ he sought to conform church practice with the

Scriptural pattern. But when the city council, which had to this point supported him, refused for political reasons to let him celebrate Communion in a new way—as demanded, he thought, by the Bible—Zwingli accepted its decision, believing that patient education would eventually change the council’s mind.

In this he betrayed his acceptance of the medieval pattern of union between church and state. Some of his followers thought, however, that he had “cast down” the Word of God and “brought it into captivity.”¹² These dissidents began to meet for Bible study and to discuss their differences with Zwingli. They soon were reflecting on what a true church should be like, emphasizing the Lordship of Christ and the need for a return to apostolic ways. On January 21, 1525, despite a council decree passed that very day banning independent Bible study groups, a dozen or so of them gathered in a Zurich house. Before the evening was through, there was a baptism—of the adults who were there, not of infants. In that day and place, this signaled a radical denial of Zwingli’s state-church conception and an affirmation that loyalty to Christ may mean opposition to the magistrates. Not only was this a break with their teacher, but also with the whole “magisterial Reformation,” as the movement of Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli has come to be known. All these Reformers held on to the medieval Catholic idea that church and government should be linked together. The Anabaptists, or “re-baptizers”—the name was at first a term of derision—said No.

From the day of its birth, Anabaptism was a missionary movement; soon the first Anabaptist fellowship grew up in a nearby town and from there spread further. Government authorities took umbrage at this and began persecuting Anabaptists. When imprisonment proved no deterrent to the movement, they resorted to capital punishment, killing many of early Anabaptism’s finest leaders. To Anabaptists, however, the costliness of their mission was no surprise, but rather a

part of their distinctive outlook. We may turn now in some detail to the main features of this outlook, remembering that our precise aim here is to illuminate Adventism through the Anabaptist element of our heritage.

The phrase “solidarity with Christ” has been suggested as the key to the various strands of Anabaptist dissent from the mag-

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isterial Reformation.¹³ In fact, the phrase is an apt *summary* of Anabaptist conviction. We begin by considering the movement’s conception of Christ. Here, as in other doctrines, Anabaptist writers did not display sheer uniformity of opinion; still, we may with minimal oversimplification sum up their position as follows: *Christ is the Jesus of the Bible story now exalted, now the Lord and Liberator of his people; he is embodied on earth in his church; he will soon complete his victory over evil through a final apocalyptic transformation of the world.*¹⁴ Consider now the idea of solidarity. The qualities it suggests—trust, loyalty, likemindedness, union, shared life—are precisely the marks, according to Anabaptism, of a proper relationship between Christians and the Christ.¹⁵ If we understand the term Christ as these dissenters did, the phrase “solidarity with Christ” really does epitomize their outlook; the main features of that outlook turn out, indeed, to be ramifications of this single, summarizing motif. Moreover, as readers familiar with Adventism will note, they also bear striking resemblance to the convictions Adventists grow up with. This is what we would expect, of

course, if Adventists are really inheritors of the Anabaptist way.

1) *Discipleship*. At the center of Anabaptist conviction was the idea of discipleship. This meant, on the one hand, radical identification with the story of Jesus—the story of his people, of his own career on earth, of the first years of the church that rose up in response to his resurrection. Thus, as is often noted in recent scholarship,¹⁶ the Anabaptists took Scripture to be the ultimate

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authority for Christian existence. In this they were like the other Protestant reformers, but with the difference that they applied their biblicism in a more radical way. Luther doubted whether Scripture supports the practise of infant baptism, yet held on to it still. A leading Anabaptist, on the contrary, called for discarding “the old ordinances of Antichrist” and holding “to the Word of God alone” for guidance.¹⁷ On the issue of the Lord’s supper, Zwingli, as we have seen, subordinated the Bible to the decision of the city council; Anabaptists said no authority but Scripture could be the norm for Christian practise.¹⁸

For Anabaptists, the culmination of the Bible story was Jesus Christ, and it was he, within all of Scripture, whose authority was supreme.¹⁹ Thus one Anabaptist could say that the “content of the whole Scripture is briefly summarized in this: honour and fear God the almighty in Christ his Son.”²⁰

The other side of discipleship was the actual obedience of Christ, the actual fol-

lowing of his example.²¹ Anabaptists criticized Luther for playing down the necessity of moral reformation among Christ’s followers.²² True Christians, they said, are “regulated and ruled” by Christ, seeking “to fulfill his whole will and his commandments.”²³

2) *New Life*. With discipleship we may match another crucial feature of Anabaptist solidarity with Christ, and that is the experience of new life in Christ. Unlike Luther, who began with a crushing awareness of being a lost sinner, the Anabaptists seem not to have been particularly bothered with feelings of guilt²⁴; what galvanized them was the liberating experience of Christ now renewing their lives. In his work on earth, Jesus overcame the devil²⁵ and through the Spirit he now overcomes the devil in his followers as well, delivers them, and sets them free so that they may be of the same mind and character as he.²⁶ People who do not exhibit the fruits of Christ’s liberating power cannot be said to have genuine faith. The Spirit, said Hans Denck, “equips and arms the elect with the mind and thoughts of Christ.” Then he added: “For whoever believes that Christ has liberated him from sin can no longer be the slave of sin. But if we continue in the old life we do not truly believe. . . .”²⁷

Here, solidarity with Christ means more than commitment to obedience; it means receiving from Christ the power to obey. In Christ “who strengthens us” we are able to live the “way of righteousness,” wrote Bernhard Rothmann, but without him “we can do nothing.”²⁸ Some took the theme of new life in Christ to the point of claiming they were without sin²⁹; most made no such claim. What no Anabaptist could countenance, though, was the idea, attributed by them to the magisterial reformers, that impenitent, unchanged persons could be called Christians and remain members of the church.³⁰ No Christians are perfect as Christ was, said Hans Denck, but if they are true Christians they do “seek exactly the perfection which Christ never lost”—though the

seeking, paradoxically, is itself a gift from Christ.³¹

3) *Witness*. A main element in the new life of discipleship, according to Anabaptists, was witness. For these Reformation radicals (in contrast to their magisterial counterparts), the command of Jesus to go, teach, and baptize was addressed *to them*, and not to their leaders only but to every believer.³² They were all to shed their light; together, as the church of Christ, they were to be “a lantern of righteousness” so that human beings everywhere might “learn to see and know the way of life” and “all war and unrighteousness” might come to an end.³³

Witness was witness to *Christ*, witness by *obedient disciples*, and this meant acknowledgment that the church’s way of life might differ sharply from the way of life dominant in surrounding society. Schooled in the teachings of the Gospels, Anabaptists emphasized the contrast between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness, and urged that the values of the former put the true Christian profoundly at odds with the values of the latter.³⁴ Solidarity with Christ meant nonconformity, separation from the world.

In line with this, and as part of their understanding of witness, Anabaptists rejected the notion, typical in their day, of the church as the nation at prayer. The medieval idea that church and state are a socio-political unity remained alive in the thinking of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin (and even some Anabaptists)³⁵; but Anabaptists in general anathematized it.³⁶ It presupposed that everyone was Christian, despite the scriptural doctrine of the two kingdoms; and it required the members of the church to compromise their allegiance to Christ.

A symbol of such compromise, and key illustration of it, was for Anabaptists the Christian use of the sword. The link between church and state had made church members into soldiers. But the way of Jesus was the way of peace, its weapons, as Menno Simons wrote, “not swords and spears, but

patience, silence, and hope, and the Word of God.”³⁷ True solidarity with Christ, true witness to Christ, meant obeying his command to resist no evil with the sword.³⁸ Since it was characteristic of the state to rely upon the sword, the church had no business being its partner.³⁹

It was dangerous making such a witness, and in the Anabaptist idea of solidarity with Christ this was recognized. Jesus suffered torture and death and so, Anabaptists believed, may his disciples. The enemies of God’s kingdom may be armed with fire and steel, but true disciples do not shrink back. As one Anabaptist martyr said, Christ’s sheep “hear his voice and follow him whithersoever he goes.”⁴⁰ They follow him, moreover, not only in going where he goes but also in forgiving as he forgives. They forgive even their persecutors, as Christ did. And this, said Menno Simons, is *how* they “conquer their fate, their opposition.”⁴¹

4) *Community*. Another main feature of Anabaptist solidarity with Christ was the shared life of the community which is now his body on earth. This community, the church, was to Anabaptists, as their adult baptism symbolized, a voluntary fellowship of those who had freely consented not only to follow Christ but also to share the joys and sorrows of faithful witness. The rite of the Lord’s Supper, as they understood it, likewise underscored this conviction. It was “a sign of the brotherly love to which we are obliged,” an “expression of fellowship.” No one could participate who was unwilling “to live and suffer for the sake of Christ and the brethren, of the head and the members.”⁴² To belong to the church was to be in solidarity with one another, to be concerned for one another.

One meaning of such solidarity was mutual aid. Members of the community were to be concerned about the needs of one another. They were to see themselves not as “lords” of their possessions but as “stewards and distributors.”⁴³ In addition to concern with the physical well-being of the community, however, they were to show con-

cern for its spiritual well-being. Solidarity with Christ's body meant not only mutual aid, but also mutual discipline and forgiveness. The brother or sister who sins openly, said the Anabaptists, must be reprov'd, or even, if resolutely unrepentant, excluded from the community. Discipline in whatever form, however, was to be redemptive. Whoever repented, no matter how serious his offense, was to be forgiven and received by the church "as a returning, beloved brother or sister."⁴⁴ The fundamental thing was to give mutual support to one another in Christian life and witness.

5) *Apocalyptic consciousness.* As we saw earlier, for Anabaptists solidarity with Christ meant identifying with his story. In this story we find a vivid sense of coming apocalyptic transformation. We find the themes of urgency, of judgment on the present age, of hope rooted in the trust of God. These same themes appear importantly in Anabaptist writings. One writer said that since the "day of the Lord is nearer to us than we expect" his followers should prepare themselves "in daily worship, piety, and the fear of God."⁴⁵ Menno Simons said the rulers and institutions of the present age would soon appear as "earth, dust, wind, and smoke."⁴⁶ Being in solidarity with Christ meant sharing his heightened sense of eschatology, and this, indeed, was another main element of the Anabaptist outlook.⁴⁷

Our sketch of Anabaptism has shown its emphasis on discipleship, new life, witness, community, and apocalyptic eschatology. We may note finally that in all of this, Anabaptists believed they were recalling the vision of the apostles. With the idea of church and society as one—an idea dominant, they believed, since the time of Constantine⁴⁸—Christianity had fallen from the apostolic standard. In saying that the true church lives out today the way and mission of the apostolic church, they were making, they said, "a new beginning upon the rule from which others had departed."⁴⁹

Radical Reformers and Adventist Identity

I have argued that in fact the radical reformers, particularly the Anabaptists, are the Reformation exemplars of our type of Christianity. An appreciation of this fact can help us reshape our vision and at the same time keep us faithful to our heritage. The idea is not, it must be emphasized, that 16th century Anabaptism is the final criterion of Adventism. I would say (in the spirit of Anabaptism itself) that this role is reserved exclusively for Jesus Christ. But it would be odd indeed to suppose that we are called to complete the Reformation while failing to acknowledge the authority of that strand of the Reformation that pioneered our way of life. We may recognize that Anabaptism supports the truth we know and brings out the truth we have forgotten or suppressed, while at the same time we recognize that Anabaptism, too, has seen through a glass darkly and must be subject to the higher authority of Christ.

Overall, my point is that remembering these pioneers can make us as Adventists unabashed in our devotion to Christ. In trying to establish a viable Adventist identity for today, nothing can matter more, surely, than acknowledging that no person but Christ, whether Moses or Luther or Ellen White, is the center of our life. Christ and Christ alone is the center; our proper business is to be in solidarity with him.

But this by itself may seem ordinary, hardly the basis for a special Christian movement with a special sense of destiny. Anabaptism helps, however, by setting before us a *distinctive and radical interpretation of devotion to Christ*. In this view, true devotion requires, first of all, discipleship: an acknowledgment that true Christian existence is determined by the Jesus story, a resolve to follow the pathway of the Christ. True devotion requires, too, that we acknowledge and proclaim the transformative

power of the indwelling Christ. The memory of Anabaptism can give us the courage to strike a different emphasis from Luther, to stress the reality of new life in Christ as strongly as we affirm the truth of justification by faith. Until the scriptural witness to Christ persuades us to think otherwise, we may regard our church's emphasis on sanctification as a thing not to be ashamed of, but to vigorously uphold.

Since the time of J. N. Andrews, we have seen ourselves as a missionary movement. In Anabaptism we find historical precedent for faithful lives serving as missionary witness—a witness to the world within the Christian churches as well as the world outside it. We find that we are not mere upstarts in thinking God uses a special people to call others, including other Christians, into transforming our entire lives into radical faithfulness to God. In doing so we belong to a tradition; we preserve a heritage. Knowledge of this fact can reinforce our commitment to this kind of witness.

More than supporting us in witness, however, Anabaptism summons us to a deeper understanding of it. We have always said Christ's witnesses are separate from the world; Anabaptists remind us that this is not a cosmetic matter (as when it is defined, say, in terms of wedding bands), but a matter of courageous dissent from the idolatries of nation and self, of violence and greed. The pioneers of our way call us to a recognition of the contrast between church and world. They challenge us to ponder whether we truly bear the message of the Three Angels if we do not reject violence for peace and selfishness for brotherhood, and if we do not so interpret peace and brotherhood as to show unmistakably the difference between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness.

There are two ways in which we can make this sort of witness; both reflect the Anabaptist heritage and both are present, if not fully

developed, in contemporary Adventism. Consider first non-violence: Christ's weapons, said Menno Simons, are not swords and spears but patience, hope, and the Word of God. For the most part, our own fathers and grandfathers refused to bear arms in the world wars. In light of this, is the time not here for non-violence to become a central motif of Adventist identity? Are we faithful to our own past if we avoid the simple question, Can disciples ever kill or prepare to kill? This is a complex matter and there is no easy answer. However, we are unfaithful to our heritage if we do not justify our conclusions by reference to Jesus Christ and acknowledge that the way to which he calls us is a narrow way. In an age of violence—an age, indeed, of potential nuclear holocaust—we veer toward irrelevance so long as we keep the issue of nonviolence in the background.

A second way to sharpen our witness is through the style of our lives together. True Christians live and even suffer for one another, the Anabaptists said; they build up a kind of family solidarity. Adventists today likewise have a strong sense of church as family, which suggests another motif for a viable Adventist identity, the motif of authentic Christian community. At the very forefront of our consciousness should be this task: exemplifying in our communal existence, patterns of social and economic life that are faithful to the way of Christ. In our relations as male and female, black and white, ordained and unordained, do we exhibit harmonious equality or do we erect dividing walls of hostility? Do our pay scales for the church-employed—in health, in education, in ministry—express mutual solidarity or display the world's concern with status and advantage? In our treatment of those who sin, do we reprove in love and forgive in love, or are we reproachful and conceited? Seen with an Anabaptist perspective, the ideals these questions evoke are not merely duties; they are the stuff of witness. They are at the center of Christian identity because true followers of Christ

transform surrounding culture not through words alone but through example; in their life together they are a “lantern of righteousness” showing the world the way to the Kingdom.

This takes us to another insight about Christian witness. Anabaptists rejected individualism. Christian faith was no private thing; it involved a common life. Furthermore, it touched on the entire fabric of human culture. In line with this, Anabaptists believed that true Christian witness, true Christian evangelism, confronts not only individuals but also nations and institutions. Witness must deal with public life and its goal must be the transformation of all society. The church is an exemplary community precisely in order to heal the nations, to be God’s agent in bringing injustice and war to an end. From this idea can we not better apprehend our own special calling? As inheritors of the Anabaptist way, are we not given the role of transformative minority in human culture? Is this not, perhaps, what it really is to be a remnant people, a people called out from Babylon to the way of the cross?

The radical Protestant element in our past teaches us this about Adventist identity: that through the witness and example of *radical discipleship* we are to transform human consciousness and thus transform society, and that in this special calling we are to address the other churches as well as the great mass of unbelievers. This advances the usual

conception of Adventist identity—the one implicit, say, in traditional evangelism—by linking it unmistakably with the task of social transformation. We remain faithful to the usual conception by acknowledging the truth of radical obedience and separation from the world.

Even if we were to entertain a sense of high calling such as this, we would still, no doubt, be tempted to sidle up to the world or to lose hope in the possibility of change. But that is where a final element of the Anabaptist heritage within radical Protestantism comes into play: the sense of coming apocalyptic transformation. We today are familiar with apocalyptic consciousness; it is central in Adventism as it was central in Adventism’s Reformation predecessors. The coming apocalypse keeps us always mindful of divine judgment on the present age, and always hopeful that, by whatever miracle, a new heaven and a new earth will truly come and our witness will truly matter.

In these ways then, re-appropriating our radical Protestant heritage helps us become what we feel called to become—a community truly faithful to God, a remnant making a new beginning upon a vision from which others have departed. To the degree that we feel a kinship at all with the Anabaptists, we will be willing at least to lift up the Christ as the final measure of our thought. To do less would flout more than our radical Protestant tradition for it is the New Testament itself which declares that among all the prophets, Christ alone is the very image of the father, the very Word of God to all mankind.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Geoffrey Paxton, *The Shaking of Adventism* (Wilmington: Zenith Publishers, 1977), pp. 18–23.

2. Quoted from Luther’s “Sermons on the Gospel of St. John,” *ibid.*, p. 36. On this point see all of chaps. 1 and 2. Paxton invokes several quotations from Ellen White which he takes to support the view that the Gospel as interpreted by Luther is “the criterion of the movement itself” p. 28. The quotations

by no means prove this, and in view of the emphasis Ellen White puts on the new birth, obedience, sanctification, church-state separation and the like, the claim seems all the more to be a dubious one.

3. To be precise, the American Methodist tradition. Russell Staples of Andrews University has reminded me that American Methodism differs

substantively from its British counterpart, but not, I believe, in ways that would affect the point I am making here.

4. See John Dillenberger and Claude Welch, *Protestant Christianity: Interpreted Through Its Development* (New York: Scribner's, 1954), pp. 129–134, and Donald Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church: The History and Character of Radical Protestantism* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 132–137.

5. Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church*, pp. 97–106.

6. *Ibid.*, chap. 1.

7. Among them Roland Bainton, George H. Williams, and Peter Taylor Forsyth. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–22.

8. On Bullinger's influence and "tendentious historiography," see George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982), pp. 848–852.

9. Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church*, p. 67.

10. Klaus Depperman, Werner O. Paukull and James M. Stayer, "From Monogenesis to Polygenesis: The Historical Discussion of Anabaptist Origins," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XLIX (April, 1975), pp. 83–121.

11. Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church*, p. 68.

12. Conrad Grebel's words, quoted in Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, p. 96.

13. J. Denny Weaver, "Discipleship Redefined: Four Sixteenth Century Anabaptists," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XVI (October, 1980), 255–279.

14. Hans Denck is a prominent Anabaptist whose discussion of the relation of Jesus and the Christ differs from what this summary suggests, but the practical effect of his arguments keep him well within the mainstream of Anabaptism. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 263–271. As backing for the summary I have given, notice these representative quotations, all from Walter Klaassen, ed., *Anabaptism in Outline: Selected Primary Sources* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1981):

Hans Schlaffer, responding to heresy with respect to the doctrine of Christ: "Concerning this I choose to remain with the Scriptures. The Word which was with God from the beginning has become flesh" pp. 24, 25.

Balthasar Hubmaier, addressing the "Lord Jesus Christ": "I believe and confess that you suffered under the judge Pontius Pilate, that you were crucified, dead, and buried" p. 25.

Peter Riedeman: ". . . we likewise confess him [Jesus] to be Lord; as, indeed, he truly is, for all power is given him by the Father, not only in heaven but also on earth and in the abyss. For this reason also all unclean spirits fear and tremble before him, for he has overcome and bound them, and taken from them their power and delivered and set free the prey, namely us, whom they had held captive in death" p. 31.

Hans Schlaffer: "The body of Christ is the faithful community of Christ" p. 196.

Jacob Hutter: "Be comforted, you chosen of the Lord, for the time of our deliverance is at hand. . . . For he who is to come will soon come in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory, the king and comfort of Israel. He will rescue, save and liberate his own and will give them a glorious crown that will never fade" p. 325.

Menno Simons: "Yes, dear brethren, the desirable day of your release is at hand. . . . Then shall all those who pursue us be as ashes under the soles of our feet and they shall acknowledge too late that emperor, king, duke, prince, crown, scepter, majesty, power, sword, and mandate, were nothing but earth, dust, wind, and smoke" p. 343.

15. Consider these quotations, again from Klaassen, ed., *Anabaptism in Outline*:

Hans Denck: "Faith is the obedience to God and the confidence in his promise through Jesus Christ" p. 46.

Peter Riedeman: "This Spirit of Christ which is promised and given to all believers makes them free from the law or power of sin, and plants them into Christ, makes them of his mind, yea, of his character and nature, so that they become one plant and one organism together with him. . . . Thus we are one substance, matter, essence, yea, one bread and body with him—he the head, but we all members one of the other" pp. 66, 67.

Bernhard Rothmann: "The true Christian congregation is a gathering large or small that is founded on Christ" and that "holds only to his words and seeks to fulfill his whole will and his commandments" p. 106.

16. See, e.g., John H. Yoder, "The Prophetic Dissent of Anabaptists," and John C. Wenger, "The Biblicism of Anabaptists," in Guy F. Hershberger, ed., *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1957).

17. Conrad Grebel, as quoted in Wenger, "The Biblicism of Anabaptists," pp. 171, 172.

18. See Yoder, "The Prophetic Dissent of Anabaptists," pp. 95, 96.

19. The Old Testament, said Hans Pfistermeyer, "has been fulfilled and explained by Christ. What Christ has explained and helped us to understand, I will adhere to, since it is the will of the heavenly Father." Quoted in Klaassen, ed., *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 149.

20. Bernhard Rothmann, quoted *ibid.*, p. 150.

21. The terms "most often used" in Anabaptist writings were *Nachfolge* (discipleship) and *Gehorsam* (obedience), says Robert Friedmann, in "The Doctrine of the Two Worlds," in Hershberger, ed., *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*, p. 115.

22. Hans Denck and Peter Riedeman, for ex-

ample. See Weaver, "Discipleship Redefined," p. 226, and Robert Friedmann, *The Theology of Anabaptism* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1973), p. 89. For a useful comparison of the Lutheran and Anabaptist perspectives on justification, see Hans J. Hillerbrand, "Anabaptism and the Reformation: Another Look," *Church History*, XXIX (1960), 404-423.

23. Remarks of Balthasar Hubmaier and Bernhard Rothmann, quoted in Klaassen, ed., *Anabaptism in Outline*, pp. 102, 106.

24. Friedmann, *Theology of Anabaptism*, p. 78; Hillerbrand, "Anabaptism and the Reformation," p. 412.

25. Anabaptist writings reflect what Gustaf Aulen calls the "classic view" of the atonement. For his famous typology of atonement doctrines, see *Christus Victor* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953).

26. See, for example, Riedeman's remarks in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, pp. 29, 31, 67.

27. Quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 86. Cf. the famous epigram of Dietrich Bonhoeffer: ". . . only he who believes is obedient, and only he who is obedient believes," in *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Macmillan, 1963), p. 69.

28. Quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 35.

29. See Hillerbrand, "Anabaptism and the Reformation," p. 416.

30. See Walter Klaassen, *Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant* (Waterloo, Ontario: Conrad Press, 1973), pp. 28-35.

31. The quote, from Denck's essay on God and evil, appears in Angel M. Mergal and George H. Williams, eds., *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1957), p. 99. Weaver, in "Discipleship Redefined," says the Anabaptist account of discipleship and Christian freedom is a rendering of the Pauline paradox of grace. Denck himself reflects this in the essay quoted here, as, for instance, when he speaks of the "Christ whom no one may truly know unless he follow after him with his life" and then adds: "And no one may follow him except as he already knows him." *Ibid.*, p. 108. Also in Weaver, p. 267, whose more elegant translation I have used.

32. See, e.g., J. Lawrence Burkholder, "The Anabaptist Vision of Discipleship," in Hershberger, ed., *The Recovery of the Anabaptist vision*, p. 138.

33. The first two quoted phrases are from Peter Riedeman; the third from Jacob Hutter; quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, pp. 112, 275.

34. Robert Friedmann, "The Doctrine of the Two Worlds," in Hershberger, ed., *Recovery*, pp. 105-118. In the covering letter of the 1527 Schleitheim Confession, Michael Sattler, explaining the document to his fellow Anabaptists, said its points and articles make known that "we who have assembled in the Lord at Schleitheim . . . have

been united to stand fast in the Lord as obedient children of God, sons and daughters, who have been and shall be separated from the world in all that we do and leave undone . . ." Quoted in John Yoder, *The Legacy of Michael Sattler* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1973), p. 35.

35. As witness the Munster debacle. On this, see George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, pp. 362-368.

36. Walter Klaassen, "The Anabaptist Critique of Constantinian Christendom," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, LV (July, 1981), pp. 218-230.

37. Quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 280.

38. See, e.g., articles four and six of the Schleitheim Confession, in Yoder, *The Legacy of Michael Sattler*, pp. 37, 38.

39. Most Anabaptists (though not all) said, indeed, that no Christian could even be a magistrate. Some, such as Hans Denck, could imagine Christian service in government but doubted, given the attitudes of the world they knew, whether anyone so employed could "keep Christ as a Lord and master." Quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 250.

40. Anneken of Rotterdam, quoted in Burkholder, "The Anabaptist Vision of Discipleship," p. 146.

41. Quoted in Franklin Littell, *The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism* (New York: Macmillan, 1964), p. 134.

42. The first remark, by Hubmaier, is in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 194; the next two, by Grebel, are in Mergal and Williams, *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, p. 76.

43. So said Hubmaier, as quoted in Durnbaugh, *The Believers' Church*, p. 269. Hutterite Anabaptists actually repudiated private property and practised a kind of Christian communism. On this whole matter, see J. Winfield Fretz, "Brotherhood and the Economic Ethics of the Anabaptists," in Hershberger, ed., *Recovery*, pp. 196-199.

44. See, e.g., quotations in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, pp. 219, 221. In support of church discipline Anabaptists appealed to such passages as Mt. 18: 15-18, I Cor. 5:9-10 and Col. 3:16.

45. Quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 324.

46. Quoted *ibid.*, p. 343.

47. A few Anabaptists, notably those involved at Munster, embraced an eschatology of revolutionary violence. Most did not. Anabaptist hymns, to take one measure of popular piety, nowhere reflect the idea. Friedmann, *The Theology of Anabaptism*, p. 107.

48. Littell, *The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism*, pp. 61, 62.

49. Words of an unnamed Anabaptist at the 1538 Bern Colloquy, quoted in Klaassen, *Anabaptism in Outline*, p. 100.