

Workshop 1

Are Baptists Reformation People?

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Introduction

Pastor Lyons' reasons Baptists are not Protestants:

- (1) "Practical" reasons
- (2) Doctrinal reasons
- (3) Historical reasons

A. Historical Arguments that Baptists are Protestants (cf. Hudson)

1. Baptist views are the logical outcomes of Separatist reasoning.
2. Early Baptists had a different view of culture from the Continental Anabaptists.
3. Most early Baptist leaders came out of English Separatism.

B. Doctrinal Arguments that Baptists are Protestants

1. The Particular Baptists – London Confession of 1644 and Second London Confession of 1677/89
2. The General Baptists – Standard Confession of 1660 and the Orthodox Creed of 1678

C. "Practical" Reasons that Baptists Should Be Regarded as Protestants

1. Outworking of the absolute authority and sole sufficiency of Scripture: regulative principle of worship and scriptural defenses of Baptist distinctives

2. Outworking of justification by faith alone: affirmation of Protestant doctrine and rejection of infant baptism

3. Outworking of priesthood of the believer: congregational polity

The point of this last section, on the doctrines that distinguish Baptists, is to say that even here, where Baptists are least like their fellow Protestants, they viewed themselves as carrying Reformation principles to their biblical and logical ends. Far from denying they were Protestants, they viewed themselves as the most biblically consistent Protestants, or, if you will, as the most Protestant of the Protestants. Practically speaking, we are more Reformed than the Reformed.

Conclusion

While no one wishes to deny *any* continuity of Baptists with pre-Reformation separatists—indeed, one could find conceptual continuities between the mainline reformers themselves and earlier protests against Rome—historically, doctrinally, and practically, the early Baptists show abundant evidence of being profoundly shaped by the Reformation. We modern Baptists share that heritage and should be thankful for it.