

Equality in the church prevents persecution

The first step toward persecution among professed Christians, was the gradual introduction of a change from the simple brotherly compact of religious equality established by Jesus Christ, for the hierarchy in the third century. **As long as the principles of religious equality are observed, there can be no persecution.** Any religious system which gives one person ecclesiastical authority over another, contains the seeds of persecution. Infant baptism and membership is but the development of the principle of a hierarchal form of church government, which gives one person rule over another in matters of religion. We may, therefore, consider infant baptism as the second element of religious persecution. Where all have equal rights in church government, there can be no infant baptism; and where there is no infant baptism religious persecution, to the shedding of blood, is not likely to prevail. Every church holding an Episcopal, or hierarchal form of government, has persecuted when it has had the power. It is impossible to persecute on Baptist principles.

The murderous decrees of the emperors of the East and West caused the Novatians to commence their flight soon after the publication of the decrees of banishment and death, in A. D. 413. It was not possible for all to retire at the same time. They continued to emigrate till the main body of the Novatians had left Italy, which, I think, was consummated as early as the year 425, or 426. And from this date the 1260 years will take us to the year 1686, as the time for the woman to come forth from her hiding-place. I am-not dogmatic in the settlement of dates. These are approximate dates to the retirement of the church and her coming out of the wilderness. As bodies of the Novatians had emigrated from Italy, from time to time, prior to the general flight, prior to the year 426, in like manner the Waldenses had been partially expelled from the valleys of the Alps, from time to time, prior to their final dispersion in 1686, by the armies of Louis XIV. and the Duke of Savoy. The woman was driven into the wilderness by the persecuting wrath of the dragon ; and it was the dreadful wrath of the same papal dragon that expelled the Waldenses? from their places of security in the mountains. The bloody dragon had made war with the remnant of her seed throughout the Roman empire during the twelve hundred and sixty years ; and while the saints had been worn out and driven from one country to another in other parts of the empire, in the valleys of Piedmont the church had a local resting-place.

Doctor degree considered blasphemy

Crosby History. That the civil power has no right to make and impose ecclesiastical laws That people ought to have the right of choosing their own ministers: That the high-commission court was an anti-Christian usurpation. That those who are qualified to preach, ought not to be hindered by the civil powers: That, the Lord's prayer be a rule and foundation of prayer, yet not to be used as a form; and that no form of prayer ought to be imposed on the church. That the baptism administered in the Church of Rome is invalid: That a true condition and discipline is essential to a true church; and that the worship of God in the Church of England is in many things defective. He touches but briefly on their opinion of baptizing believers only; and brings up the rear with saying, they counted blasphemy for any man to **arrogate to himself the title Doctor of Divinity**—that is, as he explains it, to be called Rabbi, or Lord and Master of other men's faith. From the foregoing statement of Baptist doctrine, as held by the English martyrs, we find that they regarded the churches of Rome and England as false churches, and their baptism as invalid ; and that they regarded them as Modern Baptist Period. **assumption of the title of Doctor of Divinity as blasphemy.**" What will our modern D.D.'s think of this? Enoch Clapham writing against the English Baptists and others, in the year 1608, gives the following account of their doctrine, as reported by Crosby :

1Pe 5:3 Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

Mat 23:8-12 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren. (9) And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. (10) Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ. (11) But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. (12) And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.