

# **Protestantism II**

# Major Protestant Churches Today

- Lutherans
- Baptists
- Methodists

# Lutheran Origin

- Lutheranism is a major branch of Protestant Christianity that identifies with the teachings of the sixteenth-century German reformer Martin Luther.

# Lutheran Origin

- Unlike the Reformed Churches, Lutherans have retained many of the sacramental understandings and liturgical practices of the pre-Reformation Church.
- Lutheran theology differs considerably from Reformed theology in its understanding of divine grace and predestination to eternity after death.

# Lutheran Origin

- Today, nearly 70 million Christians belong to Lutheran churches worldwide; furthermore, the world's 400 million Protestant Christians can trace their tradition, at least in part, back to Luther's reforming work.
- The Evangelical-Lutheran church is or was the state church of several countries in northern Europe.

# Lutheran Beliefs

- Infant baptism is practiced
- Baptism and Communion are the only two sacraments
- Belief in Monergism – Salvation is by God's act alone
- Some Lutherans reject the term “Eucharist”

# Lutheran Beliefs: Monergism

- In its simplest form Monergism states that salvation is all from God, as opposed to synergism, which, in its simplest form, insists that God performs some action(s) leaving salvation incomplete until man performs some action(s) to complete salvation.



# Lutheran Beliefs: Monergism

- According to Monergism, a sinner is given pardon for sin by the death of Jesus, acceptance with God by the imputed righteousness of Jesus, and faith in Jesus by the Holy Spirit.
- Sanctification then begins either instantaneously according to some, or as an ongoing progressive process according to others. But to remain consistent to Monergism, justification must be entirely of God.



# Lutheran Beliefs: Monergism

- Lutherans reject the doctrine that humans in their fallen state have a free will concerning spiritual matters.

# Lutheran Beliefs: Monergism

- They believe that although humans have free will concerning civil righteousness, they cannot work spiritual righteousness without the Holy Spirit, since righteousness in the heart cannot be wrought in the absence of the Holy Spirit.

# Lutheran Beliefs: Monergism

- Lutherans believe that the elect are predestined to salvation and that Christians should be assured that they are among the predestined.
- However, they disagree with those that make predestination the source of salvation rather than Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection.

# Lutheran Beliefs: Monergism

- Unlike some in Calvinism, Lutherans do not believe in a predestination to damnation. Instead, Lutherans teach damnation is a result of the unbeliever's rejection of the Holy Spirit.

# Lutheran Beliefs: Eucharist

- Some Lutherans use the term Eucharist to refer to Communion; however, others reject the term on the basis that the word Eucharist ("thanksgiving") puts the emphasis on the human response to the sacrament, which is contrary to the Lutheran emphasis on God's omnipotence and human powerlessness.

# Lutheran Beliefs: Eucharist

- Lutherans believe that the Body and Blood of Christ are "truly and substantially present in, with and under the forms" of the consecrated bread and wine (the elements), so that communicants eat and drink both the elements and the true Body and Blood of Christ Himself

# Lutheran Beliefs: Eucharist

- Lutherans use the terms "in, with and under the forms of [consecrated] bread and wine" and "sacramental union" to distinguish their understanding of the Lord's Supper from those of the Reformed and other traditions.



# Lutheran Beliefs: Eucharist

- More liberal Lutheran churches tend to practice open communion, inviting all who are baptized to participate.
- Conservative Lutheran churches are more likely to practice closed communion (or "close communion"), restricting participation to those who are in doctrinal agreement with them.

# Lutheran Beliefs: Eucharist

- This might involve the formal declaration of "altar and pulpit fellowship", another term for Eucharistic sharing coupled with the acceptance of the ministrations of one another's clergy.

# Lutheran Beliefs: Eucharist

- Open communion is a thoroughly modern practice, as most Lutheran bodies as late as the 20th century would often preclude their own members from partaking in communion, such as divorcees and men and women who lived together outside of marriage; this was a carryover from the church's roots in Catholicism.

# Baptist Origin

- Baptists today are the third largest Protestant group in the world. Their history can be traced back to the early days of the Protestant Reformation - specifically, the radical wing of the Reformation which was rejected by major Protestant leaders like Luther and Zwingli.

# Baptist Origin

- Baptists were originally nicknamed "Anabaptists," which means "re-baptists," because the baptism of mature church members rather than children is one of the original defining marks of this denomination - when they first appeared in the United States, this was a particularly radical position to take.

# Baptist Origin

- Baptists number over 110 million worldwide in more than 170,000 congregations, and are considered the largest world communion of evangelical Protestants, with an estimated 22 million members in the North America.



# Baptist Origin

- Other large populations of Baptists also exist in Asia, Africa and Latin America, notably in India (2.4 million), Nigeria (2.5 million), Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (1.9 million) and Brazil (1.7 million).



# Baptist Origin

- According to a poll in the 1990s, about one in five Christians in the United States claims to be a Baptist. U.S. Baptists are represented in more than fifty separate groups.

# Baptist Origin

- Ninety-two percent of Baptists are found in five of those bodies:
  - The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC)
  - National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. (NBC)
  - National Baptist Convention of America, Inc. (NBCA)
  - American Baptist Churches in the USA (ABC)
  - Baptist Bible Fellowship International (BBFI)

# Baptist Beliefs: Eternal Security

- Eternal security is a controversial Christian doctrine which maintains that none who are truly saved can be condemned for their sins or finally fall away from the faith.
- The doctrine appears in two different forms: (1) the traditional Calvinist doctrine found in the Reformed Christian confessions of faith, and (2) the non-traditional doctrine found in some Baptist and other evangelical churches.

# Baptist Beliefs: Eternal Security

- In a sense, both can describe Christian believers as "once saved, always saved", but the two forms attach a different meaning to the word saved — namely, whether or not it necessarily involves sanctification, the process of becoming holy by rejecting sin.

# Baptist Beliefs: Eternal Security

- Baptists hold the non-traditional view of eternal security and has been espoused by Charles Stanley, Norman Geisler, Zane C. Hodges, Bill Bright, and others. This view, like the traditional Calvinist view, emphasizes that people are saved purely by an act of divine grace that does not depend at all on the deeds of the individual, and for that reason, advocates insist that nothing the person can do can affect his or her salvation.

# Baptist Beliefs: Eternal Security

- The non-traditional doctrine views the person's character and life after receiving the gift of salvation as independent from the gift itself, which is the main point of differentiation from the traditional view, or, in other words, it asserts that justification (that is, being declared righteous before God on account of Christ) does not necessarily result in sanctification (that is, a progressively more righteous life).



# Baptist Beliefs: Eternal Security

- The doctrine sees the work of salvation as wholly monergistic, which is to say that God alone performs it and man has no part in the process beyond receiving it, and therefore, proponents argue that man cannot undo what they believe God has done, even by denying the very existence of that God.



# Baptist Beliefs: Eternal Security

- The traditional doctrine teaches that a person is secure in salvation because he or she was predestined by God, whereas in the non-traditional view, a person is secure because he or she has believed the Gospel message.

# Baptist Beliefs: Baptism

- Baptism, commonly referred to as believer's baptism among Baptists and some other groups, is administered by full immersion in water after a person professes Jesus Christ to be Savior.

# Baptist Beliefs: Baptism

- It is seen as an act of obedience to the example and command of Jesus given in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). It is an outward expression that is symbolic of the inward cleansing or remission of their sins that has already taken place. It is also a public identification of that person with Christianity and with that particular local church.

# Baptist Beliefs: Baptism

- Most Protestants do not practice infant baptism because they believe parents cannot make a decision of salvation for an infant. Related to this doctrine is the disputed concept of an "age of accountability" when God determines that a mentally capable person is accountable for their sins and eligible for baptism.

# Baptist Beliefs: Baptism

- This is not a specific age, but is based on whether or not the person is mentally capable of knowing right from wrong.

# Baptist Beliefs: Baptism

- Thus, a person with severe mental retardation may never reach this age, and therefore would not be held accountable for sins. The book of Isaiah mentions an age at which a child "shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good."



# Baptist Beliefs: Baptism

- Baptists insist upon baptism by full immersion, the mode Baptists believe Jesus received when he was baptized by John the Baptist.
- Baptist theology considers that no saving grace is conveyed during baptism and that original sin is not washed away. Baptists have traditionally believed that baptism is a symbol.



# Baptist Beliefs: Baptism

- The candidate is lowered in water backwards while the baptizer (a pastor or any baptized believer under the authority of the local Baptist church) invokes the Trinitarian phrase found in Matthew 28:19 or other words concerning a profession of faith. Baptism by immersion is a representation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

# Baptist Beliefs: Baptism

- Some Baptist churches will recognize "age of accountability" baptisms by immersion performed in other Christian churches of "like faith and order," while others only recognize baptisms performed in Baptist churches.

# Baptist Beliefs: Baptism

- Baptists are known for re-baptizing converts to their faith who were previously baptized as infants or small children. Because of this, the first Baptist congregations were dubbed "Anabaptists", which means re-baptizers.

# Baptist Beliefs: Baptism

- Baptist churches will not accept:
  - Prior baptisms by any means other than immersion
  - Baptisms performed as an infant or child too young to make a personal decision to accept Christ
  - Baptisms performed by any means, including immersion, if administered by a church not considered to be of "like faith and order" by the Baptist congregation.

# Methodist Origin

- The Methodist movement traces its origin to the evangelistic teachings of John Wesley, who was an Anglican priest.
- It originated in 18th century Great Britain, and through vigorous missionary activity, spread throughout the British Empire, the United States, and beyond.

# Methodist Origin

- Originally it appealed especially to workers, agricultural workers, and slaves.
- Soteriologically, most Methodists are Arminian or on rare occasions moderately Calvinist, emphasizing that Christ accomplished salvation for every human being, and that humans must exercise an act of the will to receive it (as opposed to the traditional Calvinist doctrine of monergism).



# Methodist Origin

- Methodism is traditionally a low (contemporary) church in liturgy (although this varies greatly between individual congregations; the Wesleys themselves greatly valued the Anglican liturgy and tradition).
- In 2006, Methodism claimed some seventy-five million members worldwide.

# Methodist Beliefs

- Free will (as opposed to pre-destination)
- Trinity
- Affirm the Nicene Creed
- Baptism and Communion are the two recognized sacraments
- Believes in the real presence of Jesus Christ in Communion (not simply a remembrance)
- Tradition is a source of authority
- Do not believe in Monergism