THE STORY OF BAPTIST CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

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A Synopsis of Five Lectures

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THE STORY OF BAPTIST CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

It is commonly held that for Baptists the Bible is the sufficient and only rule of faith and practice. It does not follow, however, that summaries or confessions of their faith have had no place among Baptists. As a matter of fact, confessions have exercised formative influences upon their history.

It is probable that Baptist use of confessions has been more widespread than that of any other denomination, but Baptists have consistently refused to elevate their confessions to the status of creeds. Instead, they have thought of their confessions as descriptions of their prevailing doctrine rather than binding definitions of their faith. Freely formulated and freely discarded, the summaries have been published particularly in times of crisis for the sake of answering specific contemporary needs. Most often they have been published by groups anxious to reveal their true nature or beliefs, counteracting outside prejudice, misconception, or false propaganda. Sometimes they have been used by zealots to magnify minor differences and create schism.

Which was the first Baptist confession of faith? The answer to that question must depend in a measure upon one's dating of Baptist beginnings. In any event, the earliest Baptist confessions have a traceable line of descent from certain sixteenth century documents which might be considered their immediate precursors. These documents were products of two movements, one Continental and the other English.

The first movement represented the radical wing of the Protestant Reformation and is known in history as Anabaptism. Appearing first in Switzerland in connection with the Zwinglian movement, Anabaptism became a distinct movement after 1524, with the emergence of the Swiss Brethren, and began to spread fiery enthusiasm across the face of Europe. The Anabaptists had much in common with the more prominent sixteenth century reformers, but they differed from them particularly on the doctrine of the Church. The churchly reformers, like Luther and Calvin, retained the medieval conception of the Church as embracing the entire population of the state or territory whose king...
or prince was a Christian, irrespective of individual religious experience or choice.

The Anabaptists, avid students of the Scriptures, could find no authority for such a Church and advanced, instead, the sectarian concept of the "pure" church of deliberate followers of Christ. Thus, while other religious leaders sought to reform the old Church, the Anabaptists attempted a complete reconstruction of the Church in conformity with the New Testament pattern.

The early Anabaptists produced no formal creeds. Their views found fullest expression in the writings of the learned German pastor, Balthasar Hubmaier (1480-1528). A declaration of Anabaptist distinctives came from an important conference held at Schleitheim in 1527. Its seven articles comprise the basic Anabaptist confession. A similar document from the same period came from the Tyrol (Austria) and has been preserved in the History Book of the Hutterian Brethren.

At length, in 1580, the Mennonite wing of the Anabaptist movement (in the Netherlands) produced a more formal confession of faith. Activities of certain Polish unitarians prompted the Dutch pastors, Hans de Ries and Lubbert Gerritsz, to prepare the Waterland Confession. Though never officially adopted by the Mennonites, this confession was long looked upon as a fair statement of Mennonite doctrine. It directly influenced the beginnings of English General Baptists in the seventeenth century.

The Mennonites produced other confessions, the most important of which was the Dortrecht Confession of 1632. Before that time, however, Anabaptism had reached England where it had merged with other evangelical elements in that country to help produce the Puritan movement and English Separatism.

1. An unpublished collection of his writings, in English, is the work of G. D. Davidson, "The Writings of Balthasar Hubmaier."
2. Usually called the "Schleitheim Confession." Vid. translation of Wenger in Mennonite Quarterly Review, XIX, 246 ff.
3. Entitled "Discipline of the Church, How a Christian Ought to Live."
The Separatist movement, appearing late in the sixteenth century, represented the reaction of a minority group of English evangelicals to the failure of the national Church to undergo a thorough reformation. The initial experiment in congregational separatism, attempted by Robert Browne and Robert Harrison about 1580 at Norwich, failed when its members were driven from the country.

A second Separatist church appeared in London about 1587. Two of its leaders, Barrowe and Greenwood, sent from prison in 1589 a simple church creed, A True Description out of the Word of God of the Visible Church. By 1595 a good portion of the church had gone into exile at Amsterdam, where Henry Ainsworth acted as pastor. The church in 1596 issued a new creed, A True Confession, which spoke for members in London as well as in Amsterdam.

Another Separatist church, organized about 1606 by the ex-clergyman John Smyth in Lincolnshire, fled to Amsterdam in 1608. This group embraced believers' baptism there, and its members were baptized in 1608 or 1609 by its leader, who first baptized himself. When, within the following year, Smyth repented of his self-baptism and sought to lead his people into the nearby Waterland Mennonite church, a minority of his followers led by Thomas Helwys dissented.

Smyth petitioned the Mennonites to admit his group, offering them a private confession of his faith. Helwys advised the Mennonites not to accept the English, sending also with his letter a Latin confession of his faith in nineteen articles. 4

The Mennonites responded to Smyth by submitting an English translation of the Waterland Confession, in shortened form. 5 Smyth and forty-two of his people subscribed to this confession.

5. Two articles omitted. McGlathlin, Baptist Confessions, 54-55.
Meanwhile in 1611, Helwys published in the name of his group of about ten souls a confession of twenty-seven articles. It repudiated the conciliatory views of his earlier nineteen articles. Theologically, it was anti-Calvinistic on the atonement and anti-Arminian on sin and the will. It went beyond Smyth's confessions in urging local church autonomy, in denying a succession in church life, and in rejecting Mennonite prohibitions against oaths, bearing arms, and participation in government. This first Baptist confession to appear in England was taken to that country when the small church returned to bear its witness in the homeland in 1612 and to become the mother church of the General Baptist denomination.

The Smyth party, awaiting admission to the Mennonite fellowship, responded to the Helwys Confession by preparing, in the period 1612–14, an elaboration of the Waterland Confession in a new work of one hundred and two articles. This document may have been instrumental in finally accomplishing union with the Mennonites, which occurred in 1615. It was probably the first confession of modern times to demand freedom of conscience and separation of church and state.

ENGLISH BAPTIST ASSOCIATIONAL CONFESSIONS

The Particular (or Calvinistic) Baptists appeared in England in the 1630's, coming directly out of the separatist movement. The earliest Particular Baptist churches grew out of a London Separatist church organized in 1616 by Henry Jacob. By 1644 there were seven of their churches in London. (They held that Christ died for the elect—a particular atonement—while the General Baptists insisted that He died for all men.)

Abnormal conditions in church and state during the Civil War—Commonwealth period (1640–60) gave the dissenting sects extraordinary opportunity to experiment with and propagate their

7. "Propositions and Conclusions concerning True Christian Religion."
ideas. The Baptists, never independents in a strict sense, gave
attention to the association of churches and their total corporate
life. Attacks on the part of opponents plus the missionary demands
of the time induced Baptists to consider making specific formu­
lations of their faith. The period became more productive of con­
fessions, mostly associational, than any similar period of Baptist
history. Outstanding confessions of the time include the following:

The London Confession, 1644.—The rapid growth of Baptist
sentiments in the London area by 1644 called forth serious oppo­
sition to the Baptists. Their enemies accused them of Pelagianism
and anarchy and sought to trace their descent from the revolution­
ary sects of sixteenth-century Europe. Several scurrilous works
appeared in the years 1642-1644, each seeking to arouse popular
suspicion against the Baptists and to becloud their identity. Two
damaging publications appeared in 1642: A Short History of the
Anabaptists of High and Low Germany and A Warning for England
Especially for London. Finally derogatory and provocative was the
1644 work, A Confutation of the Anabaptists and of All others who
affect not Civil Government.

In order to distinguish themselves from both the maligned
Anabaptists and the General Baptists, the Particular Baptist
churches of London determined to prepare a confession of their
faith. Some of the leaders had been connected with the older
London Separatist movement, and so the Separatist Confession of
1596 was refurbished as a model for a longer and more compre­
hensive document. The authors may also have had other models
before them.

One of the authors, John Spilsbury, had published earlier
a private confession of faith of ten articles with a treatise of his
on baptism. He was known as 'the great Patriarch of the Ana­
baptist Confession,' and he must have played a prominent part
in the preparation of the Confession. Some of the order and
phrasing of the Confession is like that of the Spilsbury document.

8. A Treatise Concerning the Lawful Subject of Baptism, 43.
R. B. Hannen\textsuperscript{10} has suggested another probable source of doctrinal expressions of the document. He has noted the remarkable similarity of large sections with corresponding sections in the Aberdeen Confession (a document authorized for the Church of Scotland by the Episcopal Assembly in 1616). Featley's work, \textit{The Dippers Dipt} (1645) reveals that an unknown Scot was identified with London Particular Baptists in 1642, and Hanney conjectures that this man brought the little-known confession to the attention of the leaders of the seven churches.

In any case, the structure of the London Confession is most like that of "A True Confession" of 1596. Both confessions are notable for their Christological emphasis. Of course, the large section of the 1596 document dealing with the means of reforming the Church of England along Separatist lines is absent from the Baptist confession, for the Baptists did not think of reforming the national church but of building an entirely new structure on the New Testament pattern.

The signatories included two men from each church, except that Spilsbury's had three. Outstanding names among them were Spilsbury, William Kiffin, and Samuel Richardson. None of the signatories had been trained formally for the ministry.

The Calvinism of the confession is of a moderate type. The doctrine of election is balanced by the statement that the Gospel is to be preached to all men, and there is no teaching of reprobation. The definition of the church is novel, though not unlike that of the Helwys church of 1611. It includes the concept of the invisible church. It was the first modern confession of Western Europe to require immersion as the mode of baptism. In spite of its incompleteness and its infelicity of wording at points, this confession is one of the noblest of all Baptist confessions. Essentially independent in statement, it largely anticipated the famous Westminster Confession (of Church of England Presbyterians, 1646), "but with more rhetorical expansion and greater tenderness of tone."\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Baptist Quarterly}, XII (1946-49), 389-399.
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Green, The Christian Creed and the Creeds of Christendom}, 150.
Some London General Baptists appear to have responded to the confession in 1645 with a pamphlet called The Fountain of Free Grace Opened, in which they defended their distinctive doctrine of a general atonement. In non-Baptists circles the confession was received with extreme skepticism. Doubt was expressed that it fairly represented Baptist views.

The strongest attack upon it came from Dr. Daniel Featley, Anglican clergyman, in 1645. He dedicated to Parliament a calumnious work, The Dippers Dipt in which he reviewed a 1642 debate which he had had with some Baptists, associated the Baptists with certain fanatical Anabaptists of the Continent, and named six articles of the London Confession as heretical.

Being seriously concerned about the effect of Featley's work upon Parliament, then the ruling body of the country, the Baptist leaders decided to work over their confession, altering language at points which Featley had considered most objectionable. In addition to representatives of the seven congregations, two ministers of a French (Huguenot) congregation in London signed this second edition. The revised document was submitted to the House of Commons in 1646, and it helped secure a legal toleration for the Baptists.

Before third and fourth editions of the confession appeared in 1651 and 1652, respectively, the position of Baptists as compared with that of 1646 was greatly changed. In the army of Cromwell Baptists had distinguished themselves in the civil wars and had risen to positions of leadership. The army had proved to be an excellent medium for the spread of their principles. Comparison of their confession with the applauded Westminster Confession had also convinced many people that Baptists indeed belonged to the main stream of Reformation life.

By 1651 there was little danger of persecution by the state, but there had appeared a new kind of danger for the Baptists, because of their supposed connections with a rising Quakerism. The first to share George Fox's experience of the "Inward Light" were Baptists at Mansfield. They had joined in initiating the Quaker movement. Quakerism gained its earliest following
from among Baptist churches. In 1651 rumor was flying about the provinces to the effect that all of the Baptist churches of London had fallen to Quakerism though, as a matter of fact, the Quakers had made little impression anywhere in London by 1651. To quiet the baseless rumor, as well as to reaffirm their faith to the world, London Particular Baptists prepared two new editions of their confession. A new foreword was added, entitled "Heart-Bleedings for Professors' Abominations," and slight changes were made to the body of the confession. Several other editions appeared in the seventeenth century.

Perhaps no confession of faith has had so formative an influence on Baptist life as the Confession of 1644. It served Baptists all over Great Britain at a time when the Particular stream was becoming the major segment of Baptist life. It was a most effective bit of propaganda both for winning a toleration for Baptists and for gaining converts to the Baptist position. By 1689, however, it had fallen into disuse, the Assembly of that year reporting that copies of it were exceedingly rare.

The Faith and Practice of Thirty Congregations, 1651. The second associational confession of the period was a General Baptist document. It appears to have been used as an instrument of formal association by churches of the Midlands when they met in 1651. The document is significant as the first General Baptist confession to represent more than one church.

The True Gospel Faith, 1654. The first effort of the young, aggressive Quaker movement to "occupy" London called forth a confession in 1654 from some General Baptist churches there. Bands of itinerant Quaker preachers, aiming their proselyting efforts especially toward Baptist groups, had their greatest success among the General Baptists. As a defense against the sudden depredations of George Fox's preachers, John Griffith of

14. Originals in British Museum and Regent's Park College library, Oxford. Has not been printed in modern times.
the Dunning's Alley Church gathered fellow churchmen who prepared a polemic against the Quakers to which they attached a private confession of one Thomas Lover (deceased) as a declaration of their faith. The confession used "dipped" for "baptized," and is the first Baptist confession to prescribe laying of hands upon all baptized believers. It appears to have made London General Baptists aware of the Quaker threat and to have steadied the churches in the crisis.

**The Midland Particular Confession, 1655.** --London Particular Baptists sent a lay preacher, Daniel King, to the Midlands about 1655 to evangelize and to encourage churches there to associate. 15 The presence of George Fox and his preachers in the area inclined the churches to listen to the call of King. 16 Representatives of seven churches met in May, 1655, to consider seven articles of faith which afterward served as a doctrinal basis for their Association. The confession was intended primarily for instructional and disciplinary uses. It probably was not printed but was circulated in associational letters and local church-books. 17

**The Somerset (or Western) Association Confession, 1656.** --The Particular Baptist churches of the West of England gathered by Thomas Collier were formally associated as early as 1653. 18 At the seventh of the Association, in 1656, a confession of faith was set forth. The epistle dedicatory indicates that the Quakers were chiefly responsible for its publication, though the confession may have been drawn up earlier and used as a basis of union. 19 The authors indicated their essential agreement with their London brethren, though their theology seems to have been more mildly Calvinistic than that of the London Confession.

18. Collier, *Several Resolutions and Answers to Queries*.
ENGLISH BAPTIST GENERAL CONFESSIONS

The Standard Confession, 1660.--Fear of compromising the principle of local congregational autonomy and political conditions hindered the development of general denominational bodies among English Baptists. However, both General and Particular Baptists fashioned national organizations before the close of the seventeenth century, though the Particular Baptists were thirty-five years behind their General brethren.

The first General Assembly of General Baptists appears to have been held in 1654. Political conditions were a major concern of the Assembly. Affairs relating to the new government of Oliver Cromwell, particularly the Fifth-Monarchy movement which opposed Cromwell, bore directly upon the life of General Baptists. Annual Assemblies were held through 1663. In that period the season of greatest anxiety for the Baptists followed the death of Oliver Cromwell. Cromwell's son Richard resigned in May, 1659, after only a few months as Lord Protector.

The six months before the restoration of Stuart rule was a time of extreme tension. Popular discontent with unsettled political conditions led to a royalist reaction, and Charles II was summoned to return from exile to take the throne of England. In this period Baptists went quietly about their affairs and kept out of politics. Nevertheless, there was much talk in the nation of complicated political intrigues, and Baptists were regarded in some quarters as most dangerous plotters. Many people spoke of what the "Anabaptists" in the army were about to do. Accusations against them included opposition to magistracy, attempts to destroy the public ministry of the nation, countenancing the irregular practices of the Quakers, license "under pretense of Liberty of Conscience," and desiring to "murder and destroy" those who differed from them in matters of religion. 20

To answer the calumnies of adversaries the Assembly of General Baptists which met in March, 1660 issued a confession

of twenty-five articles, in whose preparation William Jeffrey of Kent may have had largest responsibility. A group of Lincolnshire Baptists presented the Confession to King Charles II in July, 1660.

The document is more of a confession of faith and less of a statement of practice than the 1651 Confession of General Baptists. Theologically it is mildly Arminian. Article 24 is one of the clearest statements of the seventeenth century in favor of liberty of conscience. The laying on of hands upon all baptized believers prescribed in Article 12 must have been something of an innovation for the Assembly. Its importance had been recently accentuated by the adoption in some quarters of the six principles of Heb. 6:1-2 as a credal standard and by the accession of several Anglican ministers, who were used to the practice under the name of confirmation.

After 1654 John Griffith led a movement favoring as its lone official basis "The Doctrine of Christ or the Six Principles of Heb. 6:1-2." His work, God's Oracle and Christ's Doctrine, or the Six Principles of the Christian Religion, became the textbook of the six-principle churches. The new symbol served as a divisive issue in the General Assembly by 1660. It seems that because the Assembly churches would not accept the six principles as the authoritative and only official platform, though they agreed to the laying on of hands, the Griffith group withdrew from the Assembly.

In 1665 the Assembly conciliated the dissidents by adopting concurrent symbols, the Confession of 1660 and the Six Principles. In 1690, however, the Six-Principle Baptists left the Assembly and set up an assembly of their own. They have had a continuing history in England and America.

The General Assembly of 1663 revised and reaffirmed the Confession of 1660. From that time it was called the Standard Confession. Serving the churches as a basis of union for many years, the confession was especially valuable as a specific

21. Whitley, Minutes, I, XIX.
stabilizing body of doctrine during the dark years of repression, 1664-72, when little intercourse and organization were possible.

The Assembly Confession, 1677 and 1689. --The Restoration brought upon dissenters a period of severe testing. The renewal of persecution drew dissenting groups nearer to one another. Fear of a return of popery to England furnished further stimulus to inter-denominational co-operation. Baptists and Congregationalists wished to form a united front with the strong Presbyterian body. Particular Baptists of the London area took the lead in 1677, putting out their revision of the Westminster Confession. William Collins of London did most of the work of editing the new Confession. Major alterations of the Westminster creed were made on the doctrines of the church and the ordinances, but the purpose of the new confession was to show "hearty agreement" with Presbyterianists and Congregationalists. 23

At the first general meeting of Particular Baptists, September, 1689, following the ascension of William and Mary to the English throne, a General Assembly of this group was formed and the Confession of 1677 was approved. Known as the Assembly or Second London Confession, this became one of the most influential of all Baptist confessions.

Benjamin Keach of London worked over and condensed the confession in 1697. It was then published in the name of the churches of Keach and his son, Elias. In this form it found its way to America. 24

The Orthodox Creed, 1678. --General Baptists quickly followed the example of their Particular brethren when a large segment of them from several Midland counties prepared a new Confession to "unite and confirm all true Protestants...." Their "Orthodox Creed" was also designed to refute certain current heterodox Christological views. The Westminster Confession again served as a model, but it was followed less

closely than was the case with the Confession of 1677. The General Assembly never adopted the Confession of 1678. 25

The Somerset Confession, 1691. --A protest against the heightened Calvinism of the Second London Confession came from the West of England in 1691. Churches of the area issued a confession of twenty-seven articles, which reflected the changing theology of Thomas Collier (cf. Somerset Confession of 1656) and his wish to include General as well as Particular churches within his circle. 26

The Unity of the Churches, 1704. --This document was designed to reunite two General Baptist bodies whose doctrinal differences dated from a 1696 schism. 27

Articles of Faith of the New Connexion, 1770. --The evangelical awakening of the second half of the eighteenth century gave the General Baptists a new start with the movement of Daniel Taylor known as the New Connexion of General Baptists. This New Connexion drew up a confession at its formation in 1770 to which, for a few years, new ministers had to subscribe. The articles continued in use for most of the next century. 28

Doctrinal Statement of the Baptist Union, 1888. --The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, formed in 1888, and including Particular and General Baptists after 1891, adopted a brief doctrinal statement in the former year. It has not known wide use. 29

AMERICAN BAPTIST CONFESSIONS

No confessions are known to have been used among the earliest Baptists of New England. In the South the earliest Baptists held Arminian views, and they seem generally to have

27. Taylor, A., History of English General Baptists, I, 47.
28. Ibid., II, 456.
acknowledged the Standard Confession of 1660. Their movement was overwhelmed, however, in the second half of the eighteenth century, by Calvinistic Baptists who looked to Philadelphia as their center. It was in the Philadelphia area that the most prominent early confession was circulated.

The Philadelphia Confession, 1743. -- Elias Keach of London was converted and became pastor in this area in 1688. Returning to London in 1692, he became pastor of a church there. The articles of faith which he and his father published in 1697 in the name of their churches were almost exactly the Assembly Confession, with the addition of articles on hymn-singing and laying on of hands. This so-called Keach's Confession became the confession of the Philadelphia Association (organized 1707). If it did not come directly from Elias Keach to Philadelphia, it came by way of Welsh Baptists, whom Benjamin Keach had certainly influenced before they came to America. Welsh Baptists, a very prominent group in the early history of the Philadelphia Association, insisted upon hymn-singing, laying on of hands, and church covenants.

For many years before its formal adoption by the Association in 1742, the confession was the accepted doctrinal standard among Philadelphia area churches. It was first printed for the Association by Benjamin Franklin in 1743. A "treatise of discipline" was appended to it.

Many early associations adopted the Philadelphia Confession, among them the Kehukee of N. C. and Virginia (1765), the Ketoc-ton of Virginia (1766), the Warren of Rhode Island (1767), and the Charleston of South Carolina (1767). The Charleston Association rejected the article on laying on of hands. It was in the area of the Carolinas that the confession exerted extraordinary influence, especially among Baptists who once held Arminian beliefs. Throughout the South it shaped Baptist thought generally and has been the most influential of all confessions. Local church covenants still reflect its outlook.

30. His book Laying on of Hands upon Baptized Believers was originally addressed to Welsh Baptists.

31. There revised and condensed into seventeen articles by David Thomas in his work, The Virginian Baptist.
The Separate Baptist movement, coming out of the Great Awakening of New England, at first rejected all confessions of faith. The Separate General Association of Virginia, however, cautiously adopted the Philadelphia Confession in 1783. This confession also served as the basis of the union of Separate and Regular Baptists in Virginia in 1787. It passed into the background of Baptist affairs in the nineteenth century, but it continued to be referred to as "the Baptist Confession" in America.

The Kehukee Articles of Faith, 1777. --Original confessions were occasionally drawn up for use by local churches in the eighteenth century. John Watts prepared a confession for the Lower Dublin Church, near Philadelphia, in 1700, and the First Church of Boston subscribed an original confession in 1747. One of the earliest purely American associational confessions was that adopted by the Kehukee Association in 1777. A document of seventeen articles, it was designed to meet objections of Separate Baptists to the Philadelphia Confession, and to declare against Arminianism and lax disciplinary standards. The articles are still in use by the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association (N. C.).

Kentucky Terms of Union, 1801. --Separate and Regular Baptists in Kentucky united in 1801 on the basis of a brief original doctrinal statement of ten articles.

Sandy Creek Principles of Faith, 1816. --The famous Sandy Creek Separate Association of North Carolina adopted, with the help of Luther Rice, ten principles of faith in 1816.

The New Hampshire Confession, 1833. --The rise of the Free Will Baptists in New England after 1780, under the leadership of Benjamin Randall, resulted in some theological accommodation on the part of the Calvinistic Baptists in that area. In 1830 the Baptist Convention of New Hampshire authorized the preparation of a new confession of faith, asserting that known declarations of faith were not "in precisely the same language as

32. Semple, History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists of Virginia, 68.
33. Hassell, History of the Church of God..., 698.
34. Minutes, Sandy Creek Association, 1816.
it is desirable they should be." The Calvinism of the group was restated in very moderate tones in the confession which was published in 1833.

This document might not have become known outside of New Hampshire, except for the work of one of its authors, J. Newton Brown who, twenty years later, was editorial secretary of the American Baptist Publication Society. In 1853 Brown revised the confession on his own authority and published it in The Baptist Church Manual. Articles on "Repentance and Faith" and "Sanctification" were added by him. In Brown's and other manuals, the Confession became the most widely disseminated creedal declaration of American Baptists. Its silence on the doctrine of the universal Church made it particularly adaptable to the emphasis of the Landmark Baptists of the South, following its introduction among them by J. M. Pendleton. Landmark Baptists of the Southwest (now the American and the North American Baptist Associations) adopted the confession in 1902, along with a supplementary Doctrinal Statement. Also, in 1933, the General Association of Regular Baptists, a fundamentalist movement of protest against denominational policies and theological liberalism in the Northern (now American) Baptist Convention, adopted the New Hampshire Confession, with a premillennial interpretation of its last article.

**Free Will Baptist Confessions, 1834 and 1935.** --The Free Will Baptist movement of New England resisted the use of confessions until 1832. The General Conference of the body adopted a "treatise" or confession in 1834, which also was revised in 1869. The merging of this large group of Baptists with the Northern Convention in 1911 did not mean entire disuse of their treatise. In the South "The Original Free Will Baptists" continued their separate existence. Their General Conference formulated a treatise in 1935, based especially upon that of the New England group. A revision of this treatise, adopted in 1948, continues in use by the National Association of Free Will Baptist Churches.

35. McGlothlin, op. cit., 300.
Fundamentalist Controversy Confessions, 1921 and 1923. -- The Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy of the 1920's produced several new Baptist confessions. In the North the Fundamental Fellowship of the Northern Convention adopted a short confession of Frank M. Goodchild in 1921. This group sought unsuccessfully to get the approval of such a declaration by the Northern Convention. Even a resolution that the New Hampshire Confession be officially recommended to the churches was rejected by that body. The Goodchild Confession was adopted by the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society in 1943 and later became the doctrinal platform of the Conservative Baptist Association of America. Another Fundamentalist organization among Northern Baptists, the Baptist Bible Union, produced a confession in 1933.

Statement of Faith of the Southern Convention, 1925. -- In the Southern Convention the controversy over evolutionary theory led, in 1925, to the adoption of a statement of faith by that body. This statement was an enlargement of a statement of principles (based upon the New Hampshire Confession), which had been prepared in 1919 as a worldwide greeting to Baptists following World War I. The Sunday School Board has continued to publish the document under the title, "The Baptist Faith and Message."

The Sunday School Publishing Board of the National Baptist Convention, U. S. A., published in The Baptist Standard Church Directory (1929) articles of faith taken from the New Hampshire Confession and the Southern Baptist Statement. These Articles are the only Confession known to represent American Negro Baptists.

37. Annual, Northern Baptist Convention, 1922, 133-134.
39. Probably the work of T. T. Shields; circulated as brochure.
40. Annual, Southern Baptist Convention, 1925.
CONFESSIONS OF OTHER NATIONALITIES

German Baptists. -- Oncken and Kobner prepared a Confession in 1837 which was adopted by local churches and, in 1849, by the national Baptist Union. This confession was thoroughly revised in 1944 upon the union of several Brethren groups with the Baptists.

Swedish Baptists. -- About 1861 a confession was adopted by the Baptist church of Stockholm. A conference of Swedish churches adopted it in that year, and it is still acknowledged by the national Baptist Union.

French Baptists. -- The first French confession was drawn up by an American missionary in 1848. It was superceded by a confession prepared entirely by French Baptists in 1879. In Southern France and French Switzerland a separate association of churches adopted another confession in 1924.

Canadian Baptists. -- Several small groups of Canadian Baptists adopted credal statements in connection with doctrinal controversies of the 1920's. The main bodies adopted no official confessions, except that the Convention of Ontario and Quebec drew up an abbreviated confession in 1925, which, however, was not intended to be permanently binding or official.

Other Groups. -- The New Zealand Baptist Union has had a "doctrinal basis" since 1882; the Baptist Union of Victoria, Australia, has had one since 1888. The Netherlands Union has employed a "basic statement" since 1881. Brazilian Baptists have long acknowledged the New Hampshire Confession, as also have several other national groups among whom American missionaries have worked.