



Anabaptist History: Day 2

- **What is Kingdom Theology?**

David Bercot defines “Kingdom Christians” as ”Christians who focus on the lifestyle teachings of Jesus, recognizing that God’s kingdom is in no way connected to the kingdoms of this world. Such Christians realize that the kingdom of God is a present reality, and they recognize that the essence of Christianity is an obedient love-faith relationship with Jesus Christ. Although living in this world, Kingdom Christians live as Citizens of Christ’s kingdom" (Will the Theologians Please Sit Down pg 9).

- **What was the focus of theology for the early Christians?**

Answer: The teachings of Jesus.



Justin Martyr---its about Jesus!

- "For we forewarn you to be on your guard, lest those [demons](#) whom we have been accusing should deceive you, and quite divert you from reading and understanding what we say. For they strive to hold you their slaves and servants; and sometimes by appearances in dreams, and sometimes by magical impositions, they subdue all who make no strong opposing effort for their own [salvation](#). And thus do we also, since our persuasion by the Word, stand aloof from them (i.e., the [demons](#)), and follow the only unbegotten God through His

Son — we who formerly delighted in fornication, but now embrace [chastity](#) alone; we who formerly used magical arts, dedicate ourselves to the good and unbegotten [God](#); we who valued above all things the acquisition of [wealth](#) and possessions, now bring what we have into a common stock, and communicate to every one in need; we who [hated](#) and destroyed one another, and on account of their different manners would not live with men of a different tribe, now, since the coming of [Christ](#), live familiarly with them, and [pray](#) for our enemies, and endeavour to persuade those who [hate](#) us [unjustly](#) to live conformably to the good precepts of [Christ](#), to the end that they may become partakers with us of the same joyful hope of a reward from God the ruler of all. But lest we should seem to be reasoning sophistically, we consider it right, before giving you the promised explanation, to cite a few precepts given by Christ Himself. And be it yours, as powerful rulers, to inquire whether we have been taught and do teach these things [truly](#). Brief and concise utterances fell from Him, for He was no sophist, but His word was the power of [God](#)."



- "Concerning [chastity](#), He uttered such sentiments as these: 'Whosoever looks upon a [woman](#) to [lust](#) after her, has committed [adultery](#) with her already in his heart before God. And, If your right eye offend you, cut it out; for it is better for you to enter into the [kingdom of heaven](#) with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into [everlasting fire](#).' And, 'Whosoever shall marry her that is [divorced](#) from another husband, commits [adultery](#).' And, 'There are some who have been made eunuchs of [men](#), and some who were born eunuchs, and some who have made themselves eunuchs for the [kingdom of heaven's](#) sake; but all cannot receive this saying.' So that all who, by [human](#) law, are twice married, are in the eye of our Master sinners, and those who look upon a [woman](#) to [lust](#) after her. For not only he who in act commits [adultery](#) is rejected by Him, but also he who desires to commit [adultery](#): since not only our works, but also our thoughts, are open before God. And many, both men and [women](#), who have been Christ's [disciples](#) from childhood, remain pure at the age of sixty or seventy years; and I boast that I could produce such from every race of men. For what shall I say, too, of the countless multitude of those who have reformed intemperate habits, and learned these things? For Christ called not

the just nor the chaste to repentance, but the ungodly, and the licentious, and the unjust; His words being, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' Matthew 9:13 For the heavenly Father desires rather the repentance than the punishment of the sinner. And of our love to all, He taught thus: 'If you love them that love you... (Vol 1 pg 166-167)

5. How did the Early Christians feel about Separation from the world? Answer: They saw the world and the church as black and white!

The Two Ways:

Didache (circa 100-150 AD)

- "There are two ways, one of life and one of death; but a great difference between the two ways. The way of life, then, is this: First, you shall love God who made you; second, your neighbour as yourself; and all things whatsoever you would should not occur to you, do not also do to another. And of these sayings the teaching is this: Bless those who curse you, and pray for your enemies..."

The Epistle of Barnabas

- "But let us pass on to another lesson and teaching. There are two ways of teaching and of power, the one of light and the other of darkness; and there is a great difference between the two ways. For on the one are stationed the light giving angels of God, on the other the angels of Satan."

6. How did these two ways affect every day life? How did early Christians feel about Entertainment, war, modesty, etc.?



The Shows....

- "Do we have to ask the pagans themselves about this? Let them tell us whether it is right for Christians to attend the shows? Why, the rejection of these amusements is the primary sign to them that a man has adopted the Christian Faith."

- “The father who carefully protects and guards his virgin daughter’s ears from every polluting word takes her to the theater himself, exposing her to all its vile language and attitudes. How can it be right to look at the things that are wrong to do? How can those things which defile a man when they go out of his mouth not defile him when going in through his eyes and ears?”

War ...

- "The Lord will save them in that day--even His people--like sheep. ... No one gives the name of 'sheep' to those who fall in battle with arms in hand, or those who are killed when repelling force with force. Rather, it is given only to those who are slain, yielding themselves up in their own place of duty and with patience--rather than fighting in self defense." -Tertullian (c. 207, W), 3.415
- "We have learn not to return blow for blow; nor to go to law with those who plunder and rob us. Not only that, but to those who strike us on one side of the face, we have learned to offer the other side also." -Athenagoras (c. 175, E), 2.129
- "Paul does not merely describe the spiritual an as being characterized by suffering wrong, rather than doing wrong. Rather, Paul teaches that a Christian does not keep count of injuries, For Paul does not allow him even to pray against the man who has done wrong to him. For he knows that the Lord expressly commanded us to pray for our enemies." - Clement of Alexandria (c. 195, E), 2.548
- "Men of old were used to requiring 'eye for eye, and tooth for tooth' and to repay evil for evil, with usury! ... But after Christ has supervened and has united the grace of faith with patience, now it is no longer lawful to attack others even with words, nor to merely say "fool," without danger of the judgment. ...Christ says, 'Love your enemies and bless your curses, and pray for your persecutors.'" -Tertullian (c. 200, W,) 3.711
- "For what difference is there between provoker and provoked? The only difference is that the former was the first to do evil, but the latter did evil afterwards. Each one stands condemned in the eyes of the Lord for hurting a man. For God both prohibits and condemns every wickedness. In evil doing, there is no account taken of the order. ... The commandment is absolute: evil is not to be repaid with evil." -Tertullian (c. 200, W), 3.713
- Clement of [Alexandria](#) in 217 AD: “He who holds the [sword](#) must cast it away and if one of the faithful becomes a soldier, he must be rejected by the [Church](#), for he has scorned God. For even if soldiers came to [John](#) and received advice on how to act, and even if a [centurion](#) became a believer, the Lord, in subsequently disarming [Peter](#), disarmed every soldier” (Treatise on Idolatry 19; Ante-nicene Fathers 3:73).



Modesty of dress...

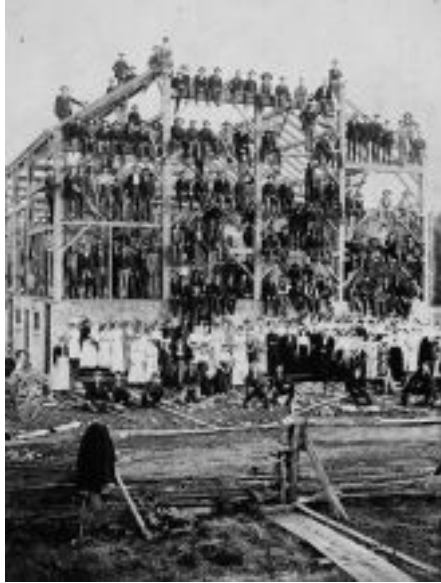
- "For these superfluous and diaphanous materials are the proof of a weak mind, covering as they do the shame of the body with a slender veil. For luxurious clothing, which cannot conceal the shape of the body, is no more a covering. For such clothing, falling close to the body, takes its form more easily, and adhering as it were to the flesh, receives its shape, and marks out the woman's figure, so that the whole make of the body is visible to spectators, though not seeing the body itself." Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 195) Ante Nicene Fathers vol. 2 pg. 265
- "Let the woman observe this, further. Let her be entirely covered, unless she happen to be at home. For that style of dress is grave, and protects from being gazed at. And she will never fall, who puts before her eyes modesty, and her shawl; nor will she invite another to fall into sin by uncovering her face. For this is the wish of the Word, since it is becoming for her to pray veiled." Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 195) Ante-Nicene Fathers vol. 2 pg. 290
- "You call yourself wealthy and rich; but Paul meets your riches, and with his own voice prescribes for the moderating of your dress and ornament within a just limit. 'Let women,' said he, "adorn themselves with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with brodered hair, nor gold, nor pearls, nor costly array, but as becomes women professing chastity, with a good conversation.' Also Peter consents to these same precepts, and says, 'Let there be in the woman not the outward adorning of array, or gold, or apparel, but the adorning of the heart.' ...and draw the sighs of young men after you, nourish the lust of concupiscence, and inflame the fuel of sighs, so that, although you yourself perish not, yet you cause others to perish, and offer yourself, as it were, a sword or poison to the spectators; you cannot be excused on the pretense that you are chaste and modest in mind. Your shameful dress and immodest ornament accuse you; nor can you be counted now among Christ's maidens and virgins, since you live in such a manner as to make yourselves objects of desire." Cyprian (A.D. 250) Ante-Nicene Fathers vol.5 pg.432
- "Nay, rather banish quite away from your 'free' head all this slavery of ornamentation. In vain do you labor to seem adorned: in vain do you call in the aid of all the most skilful manufacturers of false hair. God bids you 'be veiled.' I

believe (He does so) for fear the heads of some should be seen!" Tertullian (A.D. 198) Ante-Nicene Fathers vol.4 pg.22



Money and sharing possessions...

- "You shall communicate in all things with your neighbor; you shall not call things your own; for if you are partakers in common of things which are incorruptible, how much more [should you be] of those things which are corruptible!" *Barnabas (A.D. 70-130) ch.19*
- "Do not turn away from him who is in want; rather, share all things with your brother, and do not say that they are your own. For if you are partakers in that which is immortal, how much more in things which are mortal?" *Didache (A.D. 80-140) ch.4*
- "Toil together one with another, struggle together, run together, suffer together, lie down together, rise up together, as God's stewards and assessors and ministers." *Ignatius to Polycarp (A.D. 35-105) ch.6*
- "They have their meals in common, but not their wives." *Letter to Diognetus (A.D. 125- 200) ch.5*
- "But whosoever takes upon himself the burden of his neighbor, whosoever desires to benefit one that is worse off in that in which he himself is superior, whosoever by supplying to those that are in want possessions which he received from God becomes a God to those who receive them from him, he is an imitator of God." *Letter to Diognetus (A.D. 125-200) ch. 10*
- "We who valued above all things the acquisition of wealth and possessions, now bring what we have into a common stock, and communicate to every one in need." *Justin Martyr (A.D. 160) Ante-Nicene Fathers vol.1 pg.167*



A Disciplined Church...

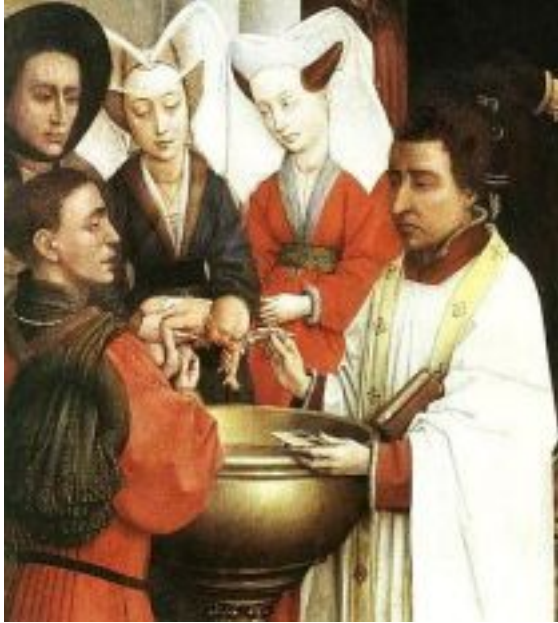
- "You say that we are a most shameful throng and that we are utterly steeped in luxury, wickedness, and depravity. We will not deny that this is true of some who profess to be Christians. Even the healthiest and purest body usually has a mole, a wart, or freckles on it. Even the sky itself is not perfectly clear so as not to be flecked with some wispy cloud. However, any person who conduct themselves in the way you have described do not assemble with us. Neither do they belong to our communion. By their delinquency, they become your once more. You have no right to call those Christians to whom we Christians ourselves deny that name." *Tertullian*

How would this teaching affect the way you see open vs. closed

communion? **Theology of Martyrdom:**

- "It's a beautiful thing to God when a Christian does battle with pain. When he faces threats, punishments and tortures by mocking death and treading underfoot the horror of the executioner; when he raises up his freedom in Christ as a standard before kings and princes; when he yields to God alone, and—triumphant and victorious—he tramples upon the very man who has pronounced the sentence upon him ... God finds all these things beautiful." Minucius Felix, A.D. 160-230 (The Octavius 37)
- "How many of our people have borne that not their right hand only, but their whole body, should be burned—burned up without any cries of pain ... Do I compare men with [your Roman heroes]? Boys and young women among us treat with contempt crosses and tortures, wild beasts, and all the bugbears of punishment with the inspired patience of suffering." Minucius Felix, A.D. 160-230 (The Octavius 37)

Controversial teachings in the early Church:



Infant Baptism:

- "And for [water baptism] we have learned from the apostles this reason. Since at our birth we were born without our own knowledge or choice, by our parents coming together, and were brought up in bad habits and wicked training; in order that we may not remain the children of necessity and of ignorance, but may become the children of choice and knowledge, and may obtain in the water the remission of sins formerly committed." (Justin, First Apology 61)
- "He came to save all through means of Himself—all ... who through Him are born again to God—infants, and children, and boys, and youths, and old men. He therefore passed through every age, becoming an infant for infants, thus sanctifying infants; a child for children, thus sanctifying those who are of this age, being at the same time made to them an example of piety, righteousness, and submission..." (Against Heresies II:22:4)
- "According to the circumstances and disposition, and even age, of each individual, the delay of baptism is preferable; principally, however, in the case of little children. ... The Lord does indeed say, 'Do not forbid them to come to me.; Let them come, then, while they are growing up! Let them 'come' while they are learning, while they are learning where to come to! Let them become Christians when they have become able to know Christ. Why does the

innocent period of life hasten to the remission of sins? ... Let them know how to ask for salvation, that you may seem to have given 'to him that asks.'"
Tertullian (On Baptism 18)