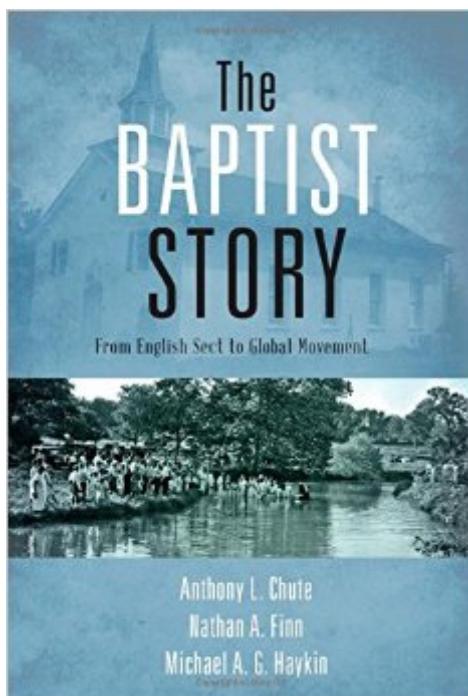


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The Baptist Story: From English Sect To Global Movement



Synopsis

The Baptist Story is a narrative history spanning over four centuries of a diverse group of people living among distinct cultures on separate continents while finding their identity in Christ and expressing their faith as Baptists. Baptist historians Anthony Chute, Nathan Finn, and Michael Haykin highlight the Baptist transition from a despised sect to a movement of global influence. Each chapter includes stories of people who made this history so fascinating. Although the emphasis is on the English-speaking world, The Baptist Story integrates stories of non-English-speaking Baptists, ethnic minorities, women, and minority theological traditions, all within the context of historic, orthodox Christianity. This volume provides more than just the essential events and necessary names to convey the grand history. It also addresses questions that students of Baptist history frequently ask, includes prayers and hymns of those who experienced hope and heartbreak, and directs the reader's attention to the mission of the church as a whole. Written with an irenic tone and illustrated with photographs in every chapter, The Baptist Story is ideally suited for graduate and undergraduate courses, as well as group study in the local church.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Baptist Story: From English Sect to Global Movement by Anthony L. Chute, Nathan A. Finn and Michael A. G. Haykin is a newly published textbook on Baptist history that should prove to be useful for college and seminary students as well as those interested in church history. All three authors are accomplished writers and historians, but especially Michael Haykin who is very prolific in drawing

out little known treasures from church history (especially 17th and 18th century Baptist figures) through the publication of multiple volumes. Haykin is not only one of the best Evangelical historians doing work today, but he is also quite conversant in theology. He has been able to show how theology and church history intersect in important ways. The authors walk through the Baptist story from its beginnings. Baptists had their origins not in the Anabaptist movement of the 16th century Reformation, but a century later as one of the separatist movements who broke away from the Church of England in the early 17th century. Although there are parallels, Anabaptists and Baptists have distinct origins and beliefs beyond the common acceptance of believer's (credo) baptism. The English Separatists became known as Puritans and one of these Puritans was John Smyth. He fled England to the Netherlands as did many Separatists seeking to escape persecution. Initially he was joined to the group of believers who eventually made their way to America in the Mayflower. The two groups separated over views on church polity. Smyth was initially a Calvinist but then became convinced of Arminianism during the Remonstrance controversy in the Netherlands at the time. A split among Smyth's followers resulted in many joining Thomas Helwys in a North London church. They became known as the General Baptists.

In 2015, the reading world saw a surge in books about Baptists. We saw the rise and domination of Baptists in America, were urged to Go Public on the issue of church membership, and encouraged to re-discover Baptist Foundations. Those volumes were certainly helpful, but how can we understand our heritage without first going back and retelling the story? The Baptist Story: From English Sect to Global Movement tells the story of a despised group who moved into a place of national influence and literally changed the world for Christ. If you're wondering at this point, even before we get into the story, "Hasn't the history of the Baptist people already been written several times over?" I thought that myself and it is certainly true that a history has been compiled more than once by several historians. As I moved through this volume, however, I saw a story unfold with clarity as the authors went all the way back to the beginning, well, not the beginning, but you get the idea. I cannot think of anyone I enjoy reading more, in a historical vein, than Michael Haykin. If we must begin at the beginning, we must introduce here the Puritans. "Baptists are children of the Puritans" and as such, we must understand the historical context in which our heritage begins. In 1616 a London-based congregation was pastored successively by three men; Jacob-Lanthrop, and Jessey. The church has become known as the JLJ Church, and marks the time surrounding the origins of the Particular Baptists. Unlike their Separatist brethren, the Particulars thought that worship with those Puritans still left in the Church of England was just fine. This led to several

groups breaking from the congregation and forming Separatist congregations.

Like many denominational histories, Baptist history is as varied as the people that comprise it. Though they have Baptist Story started small, Baptists have come to spread themselves all over the world in obedience to the Great Commission. Outlining this small to great explosion, authors and professors Anthony N. Chute, Nathan A. Finn, and Michael G. Haykin have written *The Baptist Story: From English Sect to Global Movement* (B&H, 2015). This book takes a walk through Baptist history as it was birthed in the seventeenth century and as it now stands centuries later. While the Reformation may have divided the Catholic Church into Catholic and Protestant denominations, both groups agreed that the state had a vital role to play in the life of the church.¹¹ While noting the significant impact the Reformation, and its (predominately) Presbyterian Reformers, had on religious and world history the authors focus on a small number of believers who refused to identify themselves with this way of thinking.¹² Instead, they identified themselves on the basis of a personal confession of faith and believer's baptism.¹³ Though initially a small single group of believers, Baptists have reached across the seas of its English beginnings to the shores of every continent in the world. The Baptist Story is a historical survey of Baptists that includes not only the major organizations but the minor players and minority members as well.¹⁴ As one reads through this book they will see that Baptist history weaves itself into the very fabric of world history wherever it spreads. From combating slavery and alcohol to their involvement in wars and politics, Baptists history has not just contributed to church history but to history around them.

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