

Anabaptist History (Day 16) Menno Simons and the Early Dutch Anabaptists

by Dean Taylor

The early Dutch Anabaptist movement emerged in the 16th century, emphasizing the importance of scripture and the teachings of Jesus, and was shaped by the influence of Christian humanism, Erasmus, and the Brethren of Common Life.

Duration: 1:10:04

Scripture: Matthew 5:44, Matthew 25:35-36, John 3:3, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 2 Corinthians 10:4

Topics: "Church History", "True Faith"

Description

This sermon delves into the journey of Menno Simons, highlighting his transformation from a hypocritical priest to a fervent preacher of true faith. It emphasizes the importance of being born again, living a changed life, and manifesting love, obedience, and non-resistance as fruits of true faith. Menno's teachings stress the need for a genuine conversion that reflects Christ's character in actions and attitudes.

Transcript

Midnight history now, let me ask you a question after hearing about all that happened there in and Munster Yesterday, I I mean what was your impressions of that? I mean Could you imagine now being a Christian a serious Christian in those days and not being a Catholic or something and and trying to be? Taken seriously after all that just happened. I mean it would have been rough to be a Christian in those days. Wouldn't you think? To give a little backup of this of these times.

I Have you're here on your handouts there if you look Again, if you look at the whole Reformation in Holland, just like in Europe It was it was a time where there was a lot of weakness in the church again You had the ideas like I talked about yesterday and the days before where the monasteries owned a lots of the areas and that weakened the economy caused People the peasants and such to be upset and and those types of things But also in Holland you had a concept which is an oxymoron to some degree, but nevertheless it's it's it has its expression there in Holland. It's the idea of Christian humanism and I agree those words don't really go well together because we think of humanism It just means the whole as we think of humanism And I think it's right that we do of the idea of the human person enlightening without the need of God But in Holland there was a mix of trying to say that Christianity made sense and this was the kind of thing that Erasmus was trying to give and and although he didn't preach a biblical Repentance. He certainly didn't preach being born again and and Accepting a cross life and that type of a thing.

Nevertheless. He tried to make arguments of hey this teachings of Jesus actually makes sense Why are we killing each other when we could be doing some of these things and he they began to talk about Christianity on a humanistic level and that was more popular in these northern areas than even they were down south Especially according to your book cup and the cross And during that time also, you remember we talked about during this when we came up close to the Swiss Brethren and all that we talked about Greek goot We have that little scene that I read to you from the where they walked into the monastery and they were talking back and forth with who Myron Busser was in there and one of the one of the The people of the Brethren of the common life and they were really good into bringing in education and in Christian Enlightenment into the into this area and particularly if you recall they stress the inner life and this was important They stress that this external things that we're doing there If there's not a true inner life of of devotion Then then we've lost it you get some great writings Thomas a campus and imitation of Christ Have you all read that imitation of Christ? Yeah, it's a good book I think it's there's some things we wouldn't agree with it particularly gets at the end There's a some talking's on the sacraments and things that I think would be a little offensive But nonetheless you definitely see in there his concept of an inner life where he says things like what good does it do for us? to debate on the Trinity if we don't have the Trinity within our heart and and Those types of things come out of Thomas a campus and out of this Enlightenment or a new way of saying we've got to take Christianity deeper and and people who did get a hold of scriptures of course that that affected them Erasmus Spread his teaching remember Erasmus was raised by the education of one of these groups of the Brethren of common life Which again were one of these monasteries But you didn't have a vow was more voluntary and that type of a thing Erasmus came out of that and of course his teachings went everywhere Because of all that education they had a high literacy rate It was a little different place and we're gonna see this maybe play out through today and tomorrow Maybe entirely it's something I'd like to talk about. It's just the different Feel of Holland versus the mountains of Switzerland.

You know it was a little different high education high literacy cities Metropolitans in in their degree you know it was it was a more of a built-up area than I than the mountains of Switzerland things like that and so when the Reformation got there it was received very quickly and Early on in the 1520s a lot of the religious leaders a lot of priests and bishops Actually in that area received them as a matter of fact even the archbishop of Cologne For a while which is in not in Holland But if Holland is here as you saw that and you go on to Germany down here Cologne would be around here And in those days you know they didn't have such clear marked areas It's kind of like maybe if you're a missionary in Africa today and some King tells you he's king of this tribe Which goes between Kenya and you know?

Tanzania it's it's their ideas was surrounded by people groups and so a lot of these people went back and forth From their language from their people group and things like that and that certainly was the case there in Holland But Charles the fifth as we've been hearing about his His his life through all this time had his effect there in Holland as well, and he came down hard here in Holland He actually then Also instituted here the Spanish Inquisition, and I'm sure you've heard that growing up You've heard that term, and it was brutal there and and the very first execution at least in Western Europe Occurred here in Holland and the in the Spanish Inquisition, and this was brutal.

It was brutal for the Anabaptists It was brutal for anyone who disagreed with Roman Catholic thought at the time and so that was you know it It certainly had its effect on that The author the right of the cup and cross brings out an interesting point He says that in the Germany with Luther being able to quickly get the attention of the Kings and such they That the Reformation kind of spread from the top down remember

even when the peasants revolted. What was Luther's response?

All right, they're getting it or Kill them you know I mean it was he quickly got the power from the top and then he was able to use that power to bring in the Reformation from the top down in Holland the top was squashed from the beginning by Charles the fifth so that the writer makes the the argument that That the the common people still though were very dissatisfied and there was more of a grassroots movement in Holland that began to spread and spread more in that way and perhaps it was some of that that led to all of that dissatisfaction and all the kind of craziness that happened with Munster as we heard about yesterday but interestingly and by 1530 there is no known records of Of Anabaptist thought Swiss brother and anything in Holland, I think somebody asked that question yesterday and so It's interesting so remember 1530 Think of all that happened down south there by 1530 I mean you had all of happening in Switzerland Zurich you had the migration into the Moravian the Moravian Anabaptist You had the Schleichheim's you had the the the Martyrs Synod You had the Hutterites being formed and all those sorts of things were happening And none of that are there records of of that actually making it all the way to Holland To to spread that say okay this one was a direct came from from Holland later You do they certainly start bringing missionaries up there, but by 1530 according to the Mennonite encyclopedia.

There was no there was no record of of Anabaptist up there, and then we then incomes Milky or Hoffman which we talked about yesterday at length and for a good reason when he brought it in there He had somehow that fire that lit that common persons Need for a better expression of Christianity and it and it caught fire and we again talked at length about that yesterday There's a couple of converts that That Hoffman made which you need to make attention to and I have them on your handout here Okay, he made some converts and some of those were Sikh freaks Obe Phillips and Jan Matthias which Matthias which of course is the guy that became that first Guy with the big beard who came to Munster Munster there and did all his things there, but those were some of the important Converts that Hoffman made and that particularly I'd like you to focus it in on Obe Phillip now Obe Phillip had a brother named Dirk Phillips and both of those began to be Something that that brought this apostolic Christianity to Holland in their time And those become kind of common names in our circles.

How many y'all know somebody named Dirk? Yeah, how many you know somebody named Obe? Well, there's a reason All right, it's interesting it and it's too bad, you know, I mean we could be we could had a name like Obe in our circles But you know anyway but these brothers Helped to emerge out of the rubble a an ancient Christianity and tried their best to be able to live that out They began early to complain about that The preachers had not enough regard for the scriptures themselves and this began to be very early a point to them that these Hoffman Melchorites these These monster rights and these other people this this Spiritualizing this this new prophecies new visions and things they began to be concerned of from the very beginning and And they be they believe that they they completely then rejected the idea of revelation over the scriptures I think I touched on that just a little bit yesterday, but Again, what does the scripture say about these things?

And you know, I think that it's good for us to know I thought about even monster as we look at it in your own life When you're trying to find the will of God It's easy for us somehow to like Rothman saw three sons and said That's it and Began to go and to put those things over the scripture even in our own lives In other words, it's easy for us to laugh at these guys But we have to be careful that the scriptures becomes remains the sure word of prophecy as it says there in 2nd Peter Chapter 1 verse 19 We also we have also a more sure word of prophecy not cunning devised fables and things as the scripture tells us And so again, don't just laugh at these guys Look at some tendencies in our own lives because I think in all of

these Extremes we can find tendencies in ourselves and in our churches that can go off in some of these these different things the word Of God needs to be what forms us and makes us Alright, so as these people went the Phillips Oh Phillips and Dirk began to rebuke these different Radical groups.

It wasn't just the Moonstone riots There was a lot of weird stuff happening at Holland and I I don't know if it was again because of the it was originally brought milk your Hoffman with all these revelations, but a lot of people ended up with a lot of strange things and all this fell on the lap of these brothers and and minnow Simons I Have here bottom of page 2 Oh Phillips when he rebuked the Munster rights and the other spiritualist groups They reacted against him there was one particular group the Battenbergers and this was a person that came out of the whole Munster thing and they had this kind of strange idea that they Thought what everything belonged to God, right?

I mean we would agree with that wouldn't everything belongs to God and if you're of God and This guy's not well, then I own what he has because everything belongs to God So they thought had no problem taking over little monasteries or taking over some guy's house or killing somebody Or sharing their wives or whatever they could do because everything belonged to God and they brought in a kind of Munster Polygamy and and they were going around blowing stuff up and everything.

There's a pretty bad group Unfortunately, they also baptized adults and so they got kind of thrown into this whole mix of things Well, Oh Phillips came directly against that even early on and interestingly enough when they did This group of people made a pact like the days of Saul, you know before he was converted They made a pact that they would make an oath to persecute and kill the Obanites And so kind of gives you some of the conflicts of even trying to to find biblical Christianity here in Holland in the early in the early days So again, the Obanites pull Christianity out of the rubble of these different things no direct contact with the Swiss Brethren However with the scripture they came essentially for the most part to the same conclusions They had the Word of God and they allowed those things to to form them. I Have here just a few questions and then I'd like to talk in particular about a few of these personalities I think it's good to just mention them What were some of the cultural differences that that made a different emphasis between what happened here in Holland even out of the Phillips brothers Oban Dirk and Switzerland I have just a couple suggestions I I'm not saying this is it but I wonder as I look at these different things and I look at Thinking about tomorrow also when we start talking about the church splits and that the different things that occur tomorrow I wonder about some of the differences and some of the things that I see as I look into it is Even just the different way society was formed Down in Switzerland. Remember they had the peasant war they had like their 12 articles and the concept of a Community a a little town being able to be autonomous and to say this is what's going to happen to our town We can elect our own preachers.

We can decide our own taxes and that kind of a thing was a a Swiss Concept Holland it was it was a little bit more city a little bit more built up a little bit more Hierarchical. I wonder is there some possibility that some of that general feeling is a difference between a hierarchical Dutch church that comes out in a More of a community model with the Swiss brethren interesting I Also have on here. See what you're thinking your thoughts are A Jesus hermeneutic if you can let me use that word versus a theological hermeneutic And let me explain what I mean by that hermeneutic means your interpretive principle I Just have consequences right and this is the kind of thing I keep harping on the whole the whole time Well, if you again when you go to a concept of a creed There's a good quote by Chesterton who says in in his in his book on orthodoxy To something to the effect of I didn't make the creeds Or orthodox Christianity as he calls it.

It's making me. I didn't make it It's making me and this concept is is a very good concept. I although I think we need to take it one step further these fundamental principles of who you are as a people Affect everything ideas have Consequences and so in in Chesterton or Cardinal Newman who would think that the creeds and the council period? Forms them.

It's it's right that makes who you are What's important you know if creeds are important then getting the right creed getting the right? A Doctoral definition will form you as a people and this will be what you make sure is important I think Chesterton has a good good good point the deeper point. I wonder though is this Isn't the ultimate Jesus and I know I keep harping this the whole five weeks But I think it's a good thing to harp on it does come to Jesus And I see the the more simple the more kind of a more uneducated people if you would although The first leaders were certainly very educated, but the whole Swiss people had more of a concept like the Waldensians of a Jesus people of saying okay This is going to be our creed is going to be the Sermon on the Mount and the teachings of Jesus and this Forms us of who we are and so it keeps going back to well are we getting to this are we getting to this I? Wonder and I just throw this out now and thinking of our discussion for tomorrow Even though Biblically that they because they use the Bible as the as the thing that formed them does the Dutch end up with a little bit? different of a Slant because it becomes to the right interpretation of their articles and their creeds even though they were good creeds. It's still the Bottom-line thing was a little different than the Swiss.

I just throw it out. I I don't want to cast any Negative thing on them just some of the things I observe as I look at the two groups They also you can't ignore this they come out of a persecution a hundred years earlier than the Swiss Brethren And so they had to deal with materialism They had to deal with free time to talk about stuff when the Hutterites and the Swiss Brethren were still Fighting for their very lives, and so I think maybe that had the most most thing to do about it All right Yeah Yeah, it was people tend to be more educated and your textbook brings that out is that They because of the emphasis that these Brethren of Common Life and the different Enlightenments that they were going through the general people were were an educated people and illiterate people that could read And so your book brings out that when Luther's books came through that it was quickly Received on a large scale all over there, so yeah, it would seem that there was a higher literacy rate from those types of from those types of people Yeah, so interesting all right, so let's start looking at just a few of these personalities and Then we're gonna take a break and come back and and finish the time with minnow Simons But I just wanted you at least to touch these guys because I think it's important again to know what some of the things that these Dutch people were dealing with Oh Phillips We have a debt to pay to Oh Phillips because again he was a guy who helped those difficult years between The Hoffman ites milk milk your ites and all those types of people that were trying to do some extreme stuff Oh Phillips stood in the gap But we'll see why we don't have little children named Obe anymore in our in our churches. Okay, Oh Phillips Again was an illegitimate son of a Catholic priest who else was in history An illegitimate son of a Catholic priest we've talked about there's been several in our little one particular one Erasmus and another one was Felix months.

Oh, you got it. All right Esther Yeah, Felix months an illegitimate son of a Catholic priest Oh was another one of those and so it kind of gives you a little insight into their to their upbringing But the father gave his son a careful education he chose to go into medicine became a barber surgeon and Began to practice those types of things in his area He was quickly Interested in with the Reformation stuff that started coming around with Luther and particularly this quiet group The midnight encyclopedia mentions this about a group that wished to I have it quoted on the bottom of page three there worship God quietly in the manner of their fathers and the patriarchs so that each one could seek God from his heart and Serve and

follow him without a preacher teacher or any other outward meeting kind of like an inner little group that you just kind of stay at your house and be and be a all by yourself, maybe a Preview to extreme pietism or something like that, but that was something he was early attracted to But when milk you're a Hoffman came through he was very interested in what was happening with all those guys and jumped on the bandwagon They John little later Jan Matthias the guy who went down to Munster and started all the extreme stuff down there sent some mission missionaries through Obe enthusiastically joined with them and from there this he emerged from the seclusion and was baptized with many others by these missionaries and this happened on December of 1533 Again Munster if you to get your dates is was destroyed in 1535 to give you remember how all this was going on Quick rise to the ministry. He was baptized this day.

Well, the missionaries must have considered that he was best suited because the next day He was ordained to preach baptized and to lead and lead out in the brotherhood. So You know They recognized that and again, this was a movement. Remember they all thought the world is ending We've got a hurry and so they made him a minister right from the beginning Filled with zeal Obe left the city at once after the ordination and began to preach to baptize with the brethren and promote the new doctrine meanwhile, however, the authorities had become aware of this movement and Everything else that was happening in Munster and making matters worse another one of the ministers their fellow minister When he left his town one day came into his town and began to call for the imminent destruction of all tyrants So already Obe is finding himself Okay, this isn't where I'm going.

What do I do about this? And so he then finds out that the the magistrate of his area Sees his name on the list It says that he's one of the seducers and deceivers who wonder about the country who rebaptized people and teaches bad and dangerous eras and sex Cults in other words in their mind and so he thought okay, it's time to leave He went to Amsterdam and met this one little group and I love this name the bone good notan but I'm sure I'm butcher in the Dutch, but the name of the group was comrades of the Covenant and It's too bad. We lost that name. They actually all ended up going into the Munster thing But comrades of the Covenant was a group and he kind of met with them met with this quiet group and and eventually began to To find that there's definitely a split in this This faith that's coming this Anabaptist faith and he's not getting in with all this crazy stuff.

And of course, he doesn't go to Munster It's time to leave that area he was there at Amsterdam and and And he found out these other people were even more and more getting influenced with Jan Matthias who wanted to bring about a violent means of the imminent coming of the kingdom of God. We heard all about that yesterday So he did not say in Amsterdam. He was no longer secure anywhere in the late fall of 1534 He came to Delft where he ordained very important He ordained David Joris as an elder.

He also ordained his brother Dirk Phillips and later he ordained Minnow Simons and that's where that comes from Later on he's in the mix of all these things Munster now has all that catastrophe He's trying to work with people have this balance between all these things. Finally, he gets so sick of it. He leaves renounces his Anabaptism and goes into Secrecy as it's thought that perhaps some of the scholars today think that maybe he was one of these that Went back into that secret mode where he just kind of had church in his house and prayed to God But that was the story of of Oh, but his brother Dirk Gets even more excited and becomes a leader.

So let's talk about Dirk Phillips and he's important and here's his writings Dirk Phillips and he's he becomes very known in The Amish the beachy still to this day and he becomes an important figure for you

to know Moderate the Mennonites and people progressive. However, you want to use the word liberal or however, you want a word that don't like him and I'm gonna even mention some of the quotes here and the Mennonite encyclopedia and so it's some of the things I'd like to talk about the the concept of old order or conservative Mennonite versus the different ways to look at things and and Dirk would certainly represent more of an old order concept. Here's the published by Pathway Press, okay.

So, all right, let's talk about Dirk Dirk was also of course in that same house sold another I guess illegitimate son of a priest and but he instead of going the route of the surgeon became a Franciscan friar So was there with the Franciscans and so he took a more spiritual direction right from the beginning Later on he quickly with his brother and all that joined the Anabaptist and in 1534 Remember Munster was 1535 in 1534 upon the wishes of the brethren. He was ordained by his brother there in the following years, he quickly becomes a Big leader in the movement He is all at all the important meetings when they get into discussions and he gets into the different debates and it does seem Dirk was certainly Theological minded the Mennonite encyclopedia says if there's any a theologian in its classic sense of the Anabaptist It was Dirk and I think it was Bender who says in the Mennonite encyclopedia a dogmatician In other words the guys who said it has to be this way. It cannot be that way He was a straight shooter It was this way and that way and that became the legacy of Dirk Phillips And when they dealt with all these these now kind of crazy things that happen We'll see tomorrow some of that is difficult and some of that balance between Standing for the truth and bending with your brother.

We're still of course struggling with in any conservative group I think struggles with we see them struggle with that and Dirk seems to be in the midst of all that kind of discussion At first he wrote a book against the Bernard Rothman's book on the restitution Remember here where he was claiming that Christians need to usher in this thing and he wrote a book against that called on the spiritual Restitution and began to be speak out on non-resistance and and those types of things One I said I have here on page six and you thought your church service was long and one of the church services there It says they've met at 4 in the morning and they were there until 7 in the evening 4 in the morning 7 in the evening now the encyclopedia says perhaps that was just because they they needed to be in secret and And couldn't leave and you know, and who knows they're not saying they were sitting there in church, you know the whole time But nevertheless, I just had to throw that in because I thought it was kind of funny Okay, he's described as here later in the 50s 1550s an old man not very tall with a gray beard and white hair After 1550 at home and Danzig was a number of Dutch Mennonites Where Dutch Mennonites had already located He is he is this he is more systematic than minnow. It says in the encyclopedia and He also stood for minnows conception of the incarnation which we've talked about from time to time through the five weeks He study was strong on the doctrine of the Trinity and that became a contesting point believe it or not here with some of these early guys, he was a very strong believer in the visible Church, just like the Swiss Brethren in the and the the Hutterites were but he and so to him particularly since they got into worldliness and materialism a lot quicker that became a more sharper point of what you do with it and He also then of course became very strong on the teaching of the band excommunication which began something famous for him So he also talked about seven ordinances and I put in here seven sacraments in those days the Roman Catholic Church would have talked about Very important that they listed their seven sacraments seven particular channels of grace And Oh, excuse me the dark mentions these He talked about that his seven ordinances were The pure doctrine that was an ordinance interesting it kind of you know pure doctrine was an ordinance Scriptural use of the sacraments in other words a right way that you use communion in baptism Washing the feet of the Saints. This is something different in Holland Swiss Brethren never quite got into that till later the ban in other words excommunication a command of love

Was another sacrament or an ordinance and obedience to the commands of Christ as an ordinance.

I like that one love and obedience to Christ those are two good ordinances and suffering and persecution as an ordinance There's something interesting about that that list The legacy of today again, even if you go on the Mennonite encyclopedia today and read about him what do they say about him too strict too unbending too Gotta be my way type of thing is the is the rebuke that's put upon him. I don't know I think we can discuss that It says here he's less agreeable less friendly and charmed and then his His comrade there at minnow Simons Bender I think it is on the encyclopedia says is unpleasant to note that minnow's name Does not appear once in Dirk's writings. I Don't know.

Is that a little it was he trying to say by saying that does that mean, you know, I don't know But anyway, but Dirk was was very involved and they worked together in many of those things It says here when the first half of the 17th century the practice of the band became more lenient Among the Dutch and North German Mennonites. It is interest to that the interest in Dirk Phillips then began to be going away, so Dirk Phillips is an interesting fellow and and Silas. Would you mind grabbing me a couple glasses of water? I forgot to grab me some water, please So, what do you think of dirt? Interesting guy interesting guy.

Yes, sir I'll try to make sure I do that for you. Is that coming into your heritage and that type of thing? Exactly in particular even the splits between the The different groups of Holland people he plays a part in that that we're going to see tomorrow Tomorrow is going to be a little ugly and that I'm going to hopefully Talk about church splits tomorrow and we're going to go through a lot of Dutch splitting and it's not pretty but I think it's I Think it's something that we haven't learned a lesson yet before so it's time to take a look and say, okay If if this if this can happen If we haven't learned our lesson yet, then maybe we should go back and read the history. Thank you very much Silas That's the that's the question how tied of lines of brotherhood do we have to have and those sorts of things are the questions We're still asking today, you know And yeah, we'll we'll bring and think of those kind of discussions Those are the kind of things I want to particularly bring in tomorrow in our discussion on church splits within the Dutch another guy a one of my favorites just because of his incredible record of Evangelism and baptizing and I also plays a role tomorrow in the church splitting world as Leonhard Bowens Leonhard Bowens was interesting in his youth.

He was part of a political oratory Club In other words what that means is is he would as a little boy been in this club that you'd practice speeches okay, a little interesting insight and so he then became a a big member of The the Anabaptists and began to be a very big preacher Among them all he was ordained and emden by mental Simons himself in 1551 and lived in the neighborhood as a missionary and he traveled extensively But it's interesting a little note that his wife wasn't always that happy about his missionary journeys and as we've seen some of these ladies of the somebody should write a book once of the the ladies of of these Anabaptists, you know, but there's there are some interesting ones of the the martyrs and things like that, but some of these ladies of famous preachers have some hard lives and I was reading one by I think the one of Jonathan Edwards married to a difficult man And there's another one on Baxter's wife and certainly John Wesley's wife Probably could write one but he she apparently wasn't always very happy with his very extensive missionary things And Maybe we have some lessons to learn about preachers who go around You know Preaching all the time away from his home spending five weeks at places like this and then things going on in his home But he's not taking care of what I'm saying that there's a maybe some lessons that we can learn Because he does become a very popular Preacher, but the end of his life there seems to be a few things that you start to question In 1681 edition of minnow's work There's a letter that minnow wrote to his wife trying to persuade her to consent to her husband's trips

Which says hey, you should really you know Balance activity extended further and further and all around different Holland and he took very good records and to the person he kept these records to the number of 10,252 baptisms Wow busy boy 2,000 10,252 it says that a lot of Dutch churches can trace their lineage back to you know A baptism obviously of that they got from this man And so a little later in his life he starts to get into some problems with Dirk and he becomes actually very one of these that are very strong on the band and and Encourages the the Anabaptist to take a very strong view of the band is there with Dirk But then later gets in trouble with Dirk and ends up getting silenced for a while some different behavior issues that were talked about and Spent some years in silence until after Dirk's death.

He began to preach again But he also seemed to play a part in the split that we'll talk about tomorrow Another few just people are just going to mention Adam pastor Adam pastor was from Munster himself left Munster as a one of those early missionaries that left from Munster and Finally came up and gave up those beliefs and was later ordained by minnow Simons as a preacher but Adam pastor who had this little gathering started preaching and gathering people together ended up denying the Trinity and So it was another thing that the early Anabaptists of Holland had to deal with and that's Adam pastor And then particularly now one more radical spiritualist I'm gonna throw onto your list is David Joris before we get into minnow Simons and then David Joris Was kind of a strange guy. There's a famous painting of him there It's you can see it there and I don't know what that little hand position there is thing is there I don't know if they had Satanic hand symbols back then.

I don't know. It looks creepy, but I don't know but that's David Joris it becomes kind of a strange guy, but he starts like a lot of them kind of a an interesting guy and He ends up in the Reformation time and begins to get excited about these things He gets acquainted with the Anabaptist of Holland and is deeply moved by their martyrdom He joins them and is actually baptized by old Phillips. He was the guy we talked about He came against the Munsterites when their militarism and these types of things and even that guy that Battenberg who believed in that all things were his so he could take over stuff.

He came against him as well So he he was strong against the sword and those types of things But his biggest thing is he was very outwardly spoken again on this concept That the scriptures have to be both spiritual or even more so Spiritual than they are in the literal and he says if you're just sticking to this literal word You're not getting these new prophecies You're not tapped into the spirit and because of that you're not getting the full revelation of God he came into a lot of conflict with minnow Simons and he and minnow Simons pretty much duped it out in the in the paper world and it began to be Very serious between them two When minnow wrote about him in his book on the fundamentals Joris wrote back and he said Gird on your sword minnow Simons arm yourself with the most powerful scriptural weapon Who advises you minnow to appear so boldly before the Lord that you elevate yourself above all? Do say dear man, what spirit or witness advises you to teach who has sent you? I will show you however firmly you may think you have it that you do not know it You don't know who where you're sent from nor. Do you know what is truth and wisdom except after the letter? Emphasize you've got to be able to get these new revelations he answers back the calling him an Antichrist the man of sin the son of perdition the false prophet a murderer of soul deceiver and falsifier of the divine truth and the commands of Christ so They weren't buddies, I guess but it's a serious issue though. I mean if you think about it Imagine minnows going everywhere.

He's trying to teach the Word of God these early and a Baptist are teaching the Word of God And this guy's oh, no, you see I got this letter It came from this little group up here this prophetess She said this and someone else passed this and the whole integrity the whole bottom line of what we stand for the Word of God was in jeopardy and So yes, these were a strong minnow took a very strong and sort of dirk and all

these people against this Nevertheless if if they'd have lost the very basis of what who we are with the scriptures, I think it could have been very serious He goes back and ends up living in burn under a false name ends up a kind of like a secret life and Kind of has little mystical fellowships and things like that and ends up becoming very wealthy down there And I think it if I recall one of the things I read it wasn't until after his death Did all of his children find out who he really was? Strange guy strange guy and there's house kind of a big house there the outskirts of burn is still there to the day He ended up down there just a few more crazy things that will take a street Take a break. This is what happened in the street another crazy thing Milkier Hoffman had this thought that he said we come with Totally naked before the Lord and coming into the kingdom of God Well, some of these people took him literally, you know It's the heart that matters and the modesty on the outside doesn't matter You may have heard that today to the extreme they come running into Amsterdam twelve men and women Madly shouting with nothing on but a smile screaming truth is naked truth is naked and they aroused the anger of the people and of Course they got thrown in jail and they were executed Again, unfortunately, these were people who had re-baptism. It was crazy Another people who came I escaped from Munster during December of 1534 with 40 followers Stormed the courthouse in Amsterdam.

I wasn't in Amsterdam, Amsterdam During May of 1535 where a celebration was taking place. The attack failed and the scrimmage a In the scrimmage of Burgermeister and several citizens fell on the following morning 11 survivors and rioters were all those 11 Survivors and rioters were executed. So a group of 40 people tried to take over this You know courthouse and thing during a celebration.

So again again, I'm painting the picture that the life in Holland was difficult and for these brothers to now to dig into the Word of God and say okay. This is true. This is not true would have been difficult.

Let's take a quick break Let's get back and let's follow minnows journey. I'm gonna try to give you actual writing. So pay Stay tuned And tuned in to it and I think it'll be interesting to hear the the writings of minnow come out with his Conversion in his life.

So take a quick break that everything comes from this being born again and this kind of fervent love of Christ and this Attention to the new birth comes out in his writings and you were gonna see that it's in this testimony I think it's a very powerful testimony Even though it is a big at length is a bit lengthy and I apologize for that But I he's such an important name in Anabaptist history that I want you to understand the thinking and the soul if you would Of minnow Simons, he writes this He says my reader I write you the truth in Christ and I lie not This is giving his testimony in the year 1524 Being then in my 28th year. I undertook the duties of the priest in my father's village called ping him and Friesland two other persons about my age also officiated the same sanction The one was my pastor and was well learned in part The other succeeded me in other words one new things whether is even more smart than him Both had read the scriptures partially, but I had not touched them during my life For I feared if I should read them, they would mislead me He mentions in his early life that he was actually scared of the scriptures He saw what happened to Luther it happened as wingly he heard all the stories there when he was studying he said no, thanks I'll stay away from though. So he went through all of his study for the ministry and never read the scriptures Which was not uncommon for them I remember members wingly and Zurich says I Want everybody to get a copy of the Bible and some of the priests were saying we don't have one We don't have enough money to buy the Bible.

They didn't have one yet. And so that's not uncommon for their day Just behold such a stupid preacher was I for nearly two years in the first year thereafter a thought occurred to me As often as I handled the

bread and the wine and the mass That they were not the flesh and blood of the Lord. He began to think of the church dog with it.

I mean this actually is They begin to question that now there was a group the Sacramentarians and things like that in this area that would have been kind of a more of a radical a radical reformer type of people that began to have more of a zwing Lee and view of the of the Communion and remember Hoffman was involved with some of that and that was maybe had some play in his mind in there But we don't know. I Thought that it was the suggestion of the devil. Why are you even doubting church dogma? That he might lead me off from the faith I confessed it often sighed and prayed Yet I could not be freed from the thought Then he goes on and discuss how he works with that Minnow admitted that his knowledge of the scripture was so limited that he could not discuss biblical concepts intelligently He says I could not speak a word with him his fellow priests without being scoffed at for I didn't know what I was driving At so concealed was the Word of God from my eyes Even when he would try to talk about these things they would laugh at him He don't know the Bible and he and he had this aching to know the Bible more.

Does anybody remember an Early and a Baptist who when he was coming to these convictions wrote a letter to his friend of how he was aching To wish that he knew the Bible more. Does anybody remember another person? Yeah, exactly Conrad Grebel writing to Vadian he said oh I want to get in and discuss these things I don't know the Bible well enough. There seems to be this aching to really understand the Word of God Conrad Grebel had that quote to Vadian Finally, I got the idea to examine the New Testament diligently.

I had not gone very far when I discovered That we were deceived and my conscience troubled on account of the aforementioned bread was quickly relieved even without any instruction Just reading the Word of God through the illumination illumination and grace of the Lord I continued daily to examine the scriptures and was soon considered by some though Undeservingly as being an evangelical preacher He started to know the Bible's probably started preaching from the scriptures and people started liking him there in his church And he writes back in his testimony now, you didn't know who I really was Yeah, I might have been quoting scripture, but it hadn't yet permeated into his soul Everyone sought my company the world loved me and had my affections yet It was said that I preached the Word of God and was a fine man He says I love he later. He says the world loved me and I loved the world But then I have here the blood of the martyrs a seat of the church Afterwards it happened. So he went through that first with the communion now.

He's still Opening up the Word of God and after word that happened before I had ever heard of the existence of the brethren The Anabaptist the brethren that a God-fearing pious man named Sikh Snyder was beheaded in Lewin Varden for being Baptized for being rebaptized. It sounded strange to me a second baptism spoken up I never heard of that. This is the first time middle Simons hears of the Anabaptist.

I examined the scripture assiduously and Meditated on it earnestly, but could not find anything in them concerning infant baptism After I had discovered this I conversed with my pastor on the subject and after much discussion He had to admit there was no scriptural foundation for infant baptism, and you know, I'll just give you a personal testimony I remember for me when I was in the middle of the army and I when I looked at the scripture this kind of thing where you're staring at it and you're saying Everybody around me is seeing this differently and I did the same thing I went to the chaplain. I I went to talk to my my pastor and I and I said How are we dealing with this and and I began to do this study? I so I can understand kind of

this frightful journey of of does the scriptures really mean what they're saying? And this seemed to be a kind of a journey minnows on here Nevertheless all this I dare not trust my own understanding but consulted several ancient authors They taught me that children were to be washed by baptism from their original sin Augustine taught that unless the child is washed from original sin. That's the reason we get baptized That's not in the Bible I Compared this doctrine with the scriptures and found that this if I say that listen to this point now that makes Baptism take the place of the blood of Christ What washes away this sin? Infant baptism or the blood of Christ it concludes that this was a wrong view So, where did it come from? Afterwards desiring to know the grounds for infant baptism.

I went and consulted Luther I'm sure he means by the books there and he taught me that children were to be baptized on account of their own faith and You think this is I heard a Lutheran sermon once on the radio Who actually was preaching it was it was an apologist for? classic Lutheranism Saying that some kind of primitive faith is in the infant that you're baptizing them for So he read that kind of thing from Luther and he said I perceive that this also was not in accordance with the Word of God he rejected that Next I consulted Bruce Busser who was the Zwinglian type of reformer down in Strasbourg He taught that infants were to be baptized that after baptism This would cause their training to be more careful in the bringing them up that this would make it better for the families to bring Them up in the Lord. He said okay. Well, that's nice, but That's not in the Bible.

And so I perceived too that this doctrine was without foundation. I then consulted Bollinger he was actually the man there at Zurich and he directed me to the covenant of circumcision and That I found incapable of being substantiated by scripture and that was the biggest one and I think the most Prevalent one that's even to the day that baptism takes the place of circumcision in the Old Testament But again, they answered back. Yeah, but you can't circumcise a baby.

That's not born and So a person has to be born again and then is baptized. Yes, let's have that be the likeness of circumcision but To baptize an infant before he's born again would be silly and so he concluded that that was wrong as well Having thus observed that the authors very greatly among themselves each following his own opinion. I became convinced that we Were deceived in relation to infant baptism What does this feel like when you're menno simons your parents your church your your job everything about you? And now your whole world has to change a little bit.

I know what that's like and it's a scary thought I mean at the time I asked Tanya said I read her Matthew 20 Matthew 5 and the Sermon on the mountain talked about Loving your enemies and I said to her What do you think of that? And she said to me? Well, it sounds very simple. I said, yeah, but We're in the army and loving your enemies is a kind of difficult when you're blowing people up. It's hard and So here Luke here, excuse me, middle Simons is dealing with these things one thing after time But still this is still head knowledge.

This is still doctrine. This is the point that I don't want you to miss He now takes it inside and he really starts looking at himself if that if Christianity then isn't just some outward rites of baptism What is it? Shortly after I went to the village that I was born called Whitsmerson And there a covetousness and desire to obtain a great name. He wanted to be a famous preacher Were the inducements which led me to that place there? I spoke much concerning the word of the Lord without spirituality or love as all hypocrites do and by this means I made Disciples of my own stamp such as vain boasters and like-minded babblers who alas like myself aired but little About these matters, although I had now acquired considerable knowledge of the scriptures yet I wasted that knowledge through the lust of my youth in an impure sensual

Unprofitable life without any fruit and sought nothing but gain ease favor of men Splendor reputation and honor as all generally do who embark in the same ship head knowledge Christianity head knowledge Christianity I Knew the scriptures.

I knew the faith. I knew what we're wrong on this I could talk about being wrong on this scripture and on that scripture, but there was no real change of life And this comes out because middle doesn't think that getting born again is something you just go do like a little ceremony he thinks it's a Proof a witness of the Spirit that God has truly changed someone and we're gonna see that come out Okay, he meets early Samantha Baptist Meanwhile, it happened when I had resided there about a year that quite a number broke in about baptism But once the first beginners came or where they Resided or where they properly were to this hour is unknown to me. Neither have I seen them since so he start to meet some early brethren some early and a Baptist and he says I don't know where those guys are now who knows it where they are and Then he goes and he began to even as early day He began to be famous now Munster happened and as his evangelical preacher He quickly begins to be in the in the in the fray already of speaking against the Munsterites Afterwards the second of monks the sect of Munster made inroads by whom many pious hearts in our quarter were led into error My soul was must trouble for I perceived that though they were zealous Herod and doctrine I Exerted my feeble efforts as far as I was able in opposing them by preaching and exhortations I conferred twice with one of their leaders once in private and again in public But my admonitions availed nothing because I did that myself, which I knew that was not right In other words, I was a hypocrite my words had no value to them Afterwards the poor straying flock who wondered a sheep without a shepherd After many severe edicts and slaughters assembled near a place of residence called the old cloister And here's a scene that really mattered to minnow So all these radical and a Baptist are out there But some are into the Munster stuff and some are there and now they gather around this place called the old cloister Probably to remember what happened during the peasant revolt.

They were gonna take over a monastery, you know They that was their right to do they wanted to to do some of these things and they gathered at the old cloister and alas Though the ungodly doctrines of Munster and in opposition to the Spirit the word and the example of Christ drew the sword to defend Themselves which the Lord commanded Peter to put up in his sheath and they were killed They were you know, I'll put down there one of them they believed to be Minnow Simon's younger brother was there The great and mighty God has made known and revealed the word of true repentance The word of his grace and power now the conviction starts to come heavier after this had transpired the blood of the slain Although it was shed in air grieved me so sorely that I could not endure it I could find no rest in my soul I reflected upon my carnal sinful life my hypocritical doctrine and idolatry in which I continued daily and the appearance of Godliness, I saw that these zealous children Willingly gave their lives and their estates though They were in error for the doctrine and for their doctrine and faith And I was one of those who had discovered some of their abominations as yet I myself remain steadfast with my unrestrained life and my Defilements, I wished only to live comfortably and without the cross of Christ. I Just want to live a comfort. I just want to be just leave me alone.

I I just want to live comfortably God wouldn't let up on them Thus reflecting upon these things My soul was so grieved And I could not endure it I thought to myself I Miserable man, what shall I do if I continue in this way and live not agreeably to the Word of the Lord? According to the knowledge of the truth, which I have obtained if I do not rebuked to the best of my limited ability the hypocrisy The impenitent carnal life the perverted baptism the Lord's Supper in the false worship of God Which the learned teach if I through bodily fear do not show them the true foundation of the truth Neither show all my powers to direct the

wondering flock Who would gladly do their duty if they knew it to the true pictures of Christ? Oh how showed their shed blood Though shed in error rise against me at the judgment of the Almighty and pronounced sentence against my poor Miserable soul and he begins to be convicted about these his brother in their life and everything My heart trembled in my body I prayed to God with sighs and tears that he could give to me a troubled sinner the gift of his grace and Create a clean heart within me that through the merits of his crimson blood He would graciously forgive my unclean walk and unprofitable life and bestow upon me wisdom Spirit candor and fortitude that I might preach his exalted and adorable name and holy word Unprevented and make manifested his truth to his praise and he was Beautifully born again and and talked about a new changed life and this Testimony of this converted life began to be something very big to minnow. It began part of him Later on as he as he was even going through that He still he hadn't had been baptized a group of the brethren's had come to him and said no we need you We need your gifts and your talents Why don't you break with this and following him wrestling you heard some of the wrestling passages there earlier? He finally broke with it Finally said I've got to do this and he ends up throwing his lot in with the brethren and he was baptized a year later he was ordained and quickly his gifts came out and he began to be very big in all the different areas and Spreading the truth in the in the gospel all around Turn to page 19. I made a little poster there one a dead or alive the authorities quickly began to see that he was very big of a very much of a threat and there was edicts and Proclamations that gets him all over the place some man Was ended up being tortured on the wheel put on a wheel and killed and Tortured just because he let minnow stay there in the evening and preached that night.

The authorities came very much against him There they had different posters that would be put up and trying to get him a hundred gold guilders were at his head for For anyone who could stop him that Charles the fifth said that any crime Complete pardon would be given to you if you could just get a hold of minnow I don't care what you did and Charles the fifth wanted him stopped at all costs, but they couldn't stop him They couldn't stop him and he began to be involved involved with a difference and spreading the the the Anabaptist faith there in this area and I wanted to just in this last few minutes give a few also writings to give you a bit of a spirit of of the importance of this new birth and some of the some of the what Christianity meant to minnow and For all these churches these thousands of believers that he spread around. What was some of the things that he spread? I'm gonna be reading you right out of this the works of minnow Simons in these last few minutes and I'm gonna be quoting from the pathway version and so The testimony that I gave was from page five, but also some some little tidbits. I'm going to give on his conversion is from 169 In this he in another place, let me just jump in here real quick in another place in his He talks about I think it's Psalm 25 again it says a beautiful language of how he was penitent before God and it can come under the conviction of sin and how Christ saved Him and how what born-again meant to him but in page 169 of this I'm just going to give you a few things and this is on track called a new birth He says my beloved my beloved reader take heed to the word of the Lord and Once learn to know the true God.

I warn you faithfully to take heed He will not save you nor pardon your sins nor show you his mercy and grace except according to his word Namely if you repent if you believe and if you are born of him If you do what he has commanded and walk even as he walked in other words Unless you completely give your life in totality to Christ. It's empty he's saying that just an empty mental faith is not what he's talking about and Talking about his his concept of a of a clear baptism a clear conversion before baptism Let me give you some of those and I'd like to say a few points on this Okay, let me give you a little disclaimer. He's obviously talking to a people who believe in infant baptism Right, and that's his big thing.

But when you hear what he has to say, I'm gonna ask you the question Do you think this theology still holds of the importance of a new birth in our life before our baptisms? And listen what he has to say He says behold This is true regeneration with its fruits. He's talking about true salvation Behold, this is true regenerations with its fruits Of which the scriptures speak and comes through faith in the Word of God without which no one Who has arrived to the years of understanding can be saved as Christ said? Verily verily I say unto you thee except a man be born again He cannot see the kingdom of God in John 3 3. Yay Listen to this It is all in vain if one were even baptized of Peter or Paul or Christ Himself if he were not baptized from above with the Holy Ghost and with fire Matthew 3 verse 11 as Paul says in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision but a new creature And next page 29. We do not read in Scripture that the Apostles baptized a single believer while asleep They baptized those who were awake and not the slumbering Interesting point, huh? What do you think interesting? again, he carries this sort of thought and then one of his most famous passages in Book two this pathway version divides it in two different books if I can find it here book two 246 and I gave you that he's talking about again this whole balance between his belief just in the head is belief a changed life What is it and here's again on some of his teachings on what does a Christian look like Like and on page 246 towards the back of the pathway version.

It says this behold most beloved reader and and as Somewhat inheritors of this tradition through the years. Let's all listen behold Get back to the center Most beloved reader thus true faith or True knowledge begets love and love begets obedience to the commandments of God Therefore Christ Jesus says he that believeth on him is not condemned Again at another place verily verily I say unto you he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me Hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death into life For true Evangelical faith is of such a nature that it cannot lay dormant But manifests itself in all righteousness and works of love it dies unto flesh and blood destroys all forbidden lust and desires Cordially seeks serves and fears God clothes the naked feeds the hungry Consoles the afflicted shelters the miserable aids and consoles all the oppressed Returns good for evil serve those that injures it prays for those that persecute it teaches admonishes and reproves with the word of the Lord seeks that which is lost Binds up that which is wounded heals that which disease and saves that which is sound the persecution suffered Suffering and anxiety which befalls it for the sake of the truth of the Lord is to it a glorious joy and consolation Wow True faith is going to take you to Christ and it's going to show itself out as a Manifestation of Jesus Christ being lived out in the real world and that's the kind of thing that is expressing The last one I'm going to give you is in page 81 of the first section of the pathway version and He talks about non-resistance. He talks a lot about non-resistance, but this one comes out very nice and then I'll Will end with this All right All right, he's talking to exhortation to all in authority Kind of a bold title.

He said no my brother my beloved sirs It will not acquaint you in the day of the righteousness of God. I tell you the truth in Christ Notice the right notice the rightly baptized disciples of Christ who are baptized inwardly with the Spirit and fire and Externally with water who are baptized according to the Word of God No of no weapons other than patience hope quiet and God's Word Paul says the weapons of our warfare are not carnal But mighty through God for the pulling down of strongholds casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ 2nd Corinthians 10 for and he explains our weapons are not weapons with which cities and countries are desolated walls and gates broken down and Human blood shed in torrents like water but they are weapons with which the spiritual kingdom of the devil is destroyed and the ungodly passions are Annihilated and the filthy the flinty like a flint rock hearts are broken. They have never been sprinkled Those hearts those rocky hearts that are broken that have never been sprinkled with the

heavenly dew of the Holy Word We have and know no other weapons besides the Lord knows even if we should be torn into a thousand pieces and as many false witnesses were to rise against us as there are spears of Grass in the fields and grains of sand upon the seashore that they have no other weapons But the weapon of the Holy Ghost again Christ is our fortress Patience our defense the Word of God our sword and our victory is a candid firm unfeigned faith in Jesus Christ We let those take spears and swords who alas Regards human blood as swine's blood alike he that is wise let him judge what I mean well so you can see the passion the The spirit the the faithful spirit of this true conversion this this need for a true changed life The focus coming back and saying true faith is going to look like this if you open up Matthew 25 And it talks about feeding the poor helping the visiting those in prison If true faith isn't producing a Christianity that looks like Christ Menno Simons is saying it's not true evangelical faith Reality is what he's calling for so that was the the from him spread many things and and he starts to spread these churches all around and a little later He lives a long time.

He's able to avoid persecution for a long time and then the church gets a little bigger and a little bigger and a little bigger and Gets a little bit more lax with the persecution middle Simons is finding himself in a house of a little a Lord who Allowed him some protection and he has time to think and to write and a little later in his life We get into tomorrow of what happens to the church when it begins to divide So this is the passionate beginnings and tomorrow. We're going to look at Lord willing the division Of what happened with these churches and I hope that we can learn some lessons from them And so for the Silas if you can close us in prayer

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