

# Anabaptist History - Part 1

by Walter Beachy

---

*Knowing history is essential to understanding our roots, developing a Biblical worldview, and contending for the faith.*

**Duration:** 53:11

**Scripture:** Jude 1:3, Revelation 22:18

**Topics:** "Anabaptist History"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by discussing the importance of knowing history and encourages the audience to learn about their own family roots. He shares a personal story about his grandmother who had polio and emphasizes the need to appreciate and learn from the past. The speaker then introduces the book of Jude and highlights a phrase from it that will serve as the theme for the week. He mentions the availability of outlines and overheads for the sermon but acknowledges that they may not be ideal for this particular setting.

---

## Transcript

Well, it's a joy for Mary Jane and me to be here. First time to be with you here in this particular church because you're so young, right? Although as I look out over the congregation, most of you by comparison are young in years as well. And if we're talking about history, Mary Jane and I are history for most of you.

Or at least according to one of the students in my class at Rosedale years back, I was telling them, some of you like history. When you're about 20, that was the mean age of students there, I said when you're about 20, 20% of young people like history. Which means 80% don't.

But the amazing thing is by the time you're 60 years old, those numbers invert. And 80% like history and 20% don't. I said just hang in there by the time you're 60, you might like history if you don't now.

And one of the guys popped up and said by that time you are history. So I guess we are history in that respect already about 15 years. I usually take a little time, and I see a number of people here I don't know, and I'm assuming you don't know me, know us, just to share a little bit about my testimony and pilgrimage and so on.

Very few, just a few minutes. Mary Jane and I, well I grew up as the youngest of 12 in an older Amish family in Plain City, Ohio, that's a little west of Columbus. And I had good parents, good older siblings,

though as one of the young boys I had one brother and two sisters who wanted to make sure that any slack in mom and dad's discipline for the last couple of us was made up for by them.

So I had a couple older siblings I didn't like for a while. The one sister would twist my ear, and the other one would take a hold of my hair back here, and I had a lot more then, and practically lift me, you know. And I had a very sensitive scalp, and I would moan, and my brother just older than me, his scalp wasn't sensitive at all, and he would howl as if it was killing him, you know.

And so he didn't get hurt as bad as I did. But life isn't fair, did you know that? But I had good parents and a good family. I have no complaints about that.

But I had a wicked heart, just like all of us are born in sin, with a sinful nature. And it was not until I was 15 years old, and after one year in a parochial school, the first eight years, I had had public schooling. And then my parents sent us to a parochial school that was just starting then.

And I had been to school there one year, and we had a Bible study course. And it was a very divisive thing among the Amish, in that the more traditional Amish were afraid that if they would teach Bible in the school, the one bishop actually said that the young people will become dissatisfied and high-minded and think they know more than the bishop, which I'm afraid probably did become true, as far as knowing the Scriptures, because he didn't read German very well, and he thought that was the only Bible to use was the German. That was not the bishop I grew up under, but one of the other bishops.

But anyway, at the age of 15, in the month of April, I gave my heart to the Lord in a revival meeting in one of the Mennonite churches in the area, the Sharon Mennonite Church. And then I began, my brother and I, who had also gotten saved two years older, we began to attend the United Bethel Church. And my father was not happy with that, but he was open-minded enough to recognize all the problems that were going on in the Amish church at that time, that he did not deny us the privilege of going to United Bethel, and that's where we were baptized in June of 1950.

So now you can figure out how old I am if you do your math. But in any case, that's where Mary Jane corralled me. And no, I actually corralled her.

We got married in 1955. We were a bit young, but no one had told us that. We were 20.

And the Amish would court at 16, you know, and some of them married before they were 20. I wanted to move our wedding date up because I had been drafted during the Korean War and was in 1W service in Cleveland, Ohio, living in a little trailer and batching it, and I'm not a batcher, and I hate to do dishes. In any case, I called Mary Jane one time and said, Would you mind moving the wedding date up a little? We were going to get married in June.

Well, she said, She doesn't mind, but you have to talk to Dad about it. And I said, Put him on. So anyway, he came on and wondered if I didn't like my own cooking, and I said, Yeah, that's part of it.

But in any case, he said, I don't want my daughters to marry as teenagers. And Mary Jane's birthday was March 25, and so we got married April 9, two weeks later. And that's now this past April, 55 years ago.

And it's been a good 55 years, it really has. We have five children, three boys and two girls. They all married, had 18 grandchildren.

Six of those grandchildren are now married, and several of them have babies, so we have four great-grandchildren. So we started out the two of us, and now when we get together, there are 40. There you can do the math with 18, six doubled, and four great-grandchildren.

In 1965, then, I was ordained to the ministry at United Bethel and began to attend the Rosedale Bible Institute as a student. Got involved there, was actually on the staff there and in administration a combination of 32 years. And pastored until October of 99, when I asked to be relieved at the age of 65 to do itinerant ministry and overseer work, which I've been doing now going into the 11th year, about ten and a half years already.

One thing I would say about Mary Jane, in case you don't know her, haven't known the history of her problem in the past, she's not using a cane because she is so old and decrepit. In fact, she does not want to be called old. She's just getting older.

That ER on the end is very important to her. And she says, I can't call her old until she's 90. And I said, I probably won't be around to do it.

But in any case, Mary Jane had polio when she was 17 and was hit from the diaphragm down. Her legs were weakened, although she had five babies normally and did everything moms do. Except that she couldn't run and she couldn't kick my shins.

Her legs were just too weak for that kind of thing. So she's had to use the rolling pin and now the cane. No, she hadn't done that either.

But when you see her walking slowly and doing the stairs slowly, it's not because she is really that old. She is a victim of polio. And she had what they call post-polio syndrome back in 1989.

And that's when she began to use a cane. We thank God together for his grace to us, his love for us in Jesus, and just find life as Christians and ministry to be a real blessing and privilege from the Lord for us to serve him in that way. I invite you now to turn with me to the little epistle of Jude.

I'd like to pick out a phrase there as something of the theme and motivation for this whole week through Thursday night. And let me just say this too. I sometimes use overheads and make outlines available, but I think with the arrangement here, the overhead may not be the ideal with the posts and all of that.

So I think what we'll do is just make more outlines. I think we can do that. I brought 20 along and should have brought a few more.

I had a few more printed. But we'll make outlines and share those beginning tonight. But for this morning, we'll want to basically introduce the week and the input of the week.

Before we go into the passage in Jude, let me just tell you a bit about my own interest in history. And then I'll talk a bit more about how important it is to know history. I would ask students at Rosedale classes, sometimes as many as 30 in a class, how many of you know your grandparents' names including your grandmother's maiden names? And you'd be amazed how many did not know their grandmother's maiden name.

And then most hands went up on everything but that particular issue, your grandma's maiden name. And then I'd ask how many of you know your great-grandparents' names, including maiden names. And

sometimes one or two students would know.

The rest didn't know. And I said, let me encourage you that within 20 years after you die, if you live a normal lifetime, within 20 years after you die, your own offspring will not even know you ever lived. And they won't know your name.

Isn't that encouraging? Well, we really ought to do a little more about finding out who we are and what our roots are. And we can learn even from the bad things of our forebears. We can learn by bad example.

You agree with that? We can be challenged by that and even the need to break some bondages at times. The other is that we would find things to be encouraged about. Now, I don't know if I'm very romantic or not, but I got goosebumps when my uncle told me that my great-great-grandfather walked from Holmes County, Ohio to Somerset, Pennsylvania to visit his girlfriend.

Because his family had moved. He was like 19 or 20, wasn't considered of age until 21. And he had this girlfriend back in Somerset where they lived, and the family moved to Holmes County, Ohio.

My grandfather then moved from there to Plain City back in 1904 when my father was 12. But my Uncle Jonas could not recall if the girl he visited became his wife then. And that's bugged me ever since.

Bugging me right now. I just think it would have to be, but it would help me to know that it was. You may say that's a silly little thing, but it's kind of the human interest and influence kinds of things that we can learn from our parentage.

And my great-great-grandfather lived during the time of Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War. And maybe it sparked my interest a bit in that I remember when I was six we visited an old Amish lady who was 103. So there was 97 years between us.

Yeah, no, there was more years between us than that. But, no, it was fewer than that, 91. But she was that close to 100 years old.

So let's just round figure it. She spanned a century for me. And I didn't even know about the Civil War, I don't think, but I remember as they visited my father asked her if she remembers when Abraham Lincoln was shot.

She said, oh, yeah. She said they didn't find it out until the next day. They lived in Virginia.

So they were in the Confederacy. But she said they found it out the next day. And she was a 23-year-old mother of two.

And I remember her very distinctly because I couldn't believe. I was asking then who was Abraham Lincoln and my older siblings told me. And this was way back in 1865.

But when I would tell that story to some of the students, they would look at me and say or think, and some said it, man, you must have been born a long time ago. No, it wasn't so long. And the clincher for me now is I am already a great-grandpa.

And I'm wondering if our little great-granddaughters, and we have four granddaughters, I'm not sure where the boys are yet, but those little four great-granddaughters, I wonder if 30 years from now, if the Lord tarries, they will even know. I think they will. I hope they will.

But I hope that they will have memories and those stories that encourage them about their great-grandma and grandpa. But the bottom line is not just in the family. It's in the history of the church, the Christian family, that we really ought to know our history.

Well, let's go to this and I may come back and share just a few more things, but time keeps moving on, I see. Here in Jude, let me read his greeting starting at verse 1. Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ and called, mercy unto you and peace and love be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men and so on. I'll stop reading there. By the way, this sounds pretty Calvinistic too, doesn't it? Men before ordained to such condemnation.

I'll tell you very frankly, I cannot reconcile the infinite knowledge and wisdom of God and His sovereignty over the affairs of people and nations and the free will of man. With my puny little mind I can't bring those two together. And I say, I don't argue with Calvinists.

The only thing that really concerns me about their doctrine is the hyper-Calvinist who would make the assumption that once you're saved, you can live a life of sin and you're still going to make it to heaven. That I believe to be error. But there is so much in Scripture that sounds like Calvinism.

Meaning, God is sovereign, God is in control. Let's put it in a present day perspective. I think I'm probably right in saying that most of you are not enthralled with our present president.

I'm judging your response here now. I'm not either. But you know what? That wasn't a surprise to God.

And someone reminded me, and so rightly so, I just made the comment, I don't involve myself except in prayer, in politics. That's a personal choice. But, I said, I'm thinking that in four years time, President Obama may have this country pretty well wrecked economically and his influence is certainly not Christian.

Or with a Christian orientation even. And then he made this comment, but he said, God is in control. And he may be preparing us Christians to go through a time of testing like we've not gone through.

And then I thought about some of the people over in Sudan. I was there last November for the second time. And visited a little town where in the southern part of Sudan where more are Christian than Muslim.

For 22 years, the central government in the northern two-thirds of the country persecuted the Christians in the south, trying to force them to become Muslim. It was like a government war of jihad. And they wouldn't cave.

But in that particular little town called Kadba, they were strafed and bombed and so on until finally they fled as refugees. Hither, thither, and yon. A few of the Christians who were born-again evangelical Christians fled north to the capital city of all things.

But at least there they could find food and shelter and get lost among the other Christians that were already there because the central government did allow Christians to meet, but they were not allowed to

proselytize. Now those who are genuinely Christian did anyway, but they always ran the risk of the rest. And the first time I was there in 2007, I was warned that they're going to invite Muslims to the preachings they scheduled.

And there were 31 commitments to the Lord, first-time confessions of faith in Jesus. But if the special police would have found out and would have come to that meeting and found any Muslims attending, they would have arrested all of us in leadership. And as an American citizen, I would have spent the night in jail.

And the next morning they'd have put me on an airplane out of there. They'd get rid of Americans that cause any problems. Real quick like, because they didn't want to hassle with the American government.

And at that point, the embassy was closed. It has since opened, but then it was closed. So I went knowing that.

But I thought to myself, those Christians when I was down in Khadbar just last November, they had started moving back down. And one of the young men that had fled north and was in the church there, is pastoring there now, Pastor Paul. And they're building homes with their bare hands, making mud bricks, laying those up until they have a room that might be 16 by 16 for a family.

And put real steep rafters of tree branches and stuff, tree trunks, real steep so that in the rainy season, they can put thatched roofs on there. And in the raining season, if it's quite steep, it'll actually not leak. And they can manage to live there.

Dirt floors, no glass or screens in the windows, kind of a homemade door to get in. They live in there, cook in there in the rainy season, cook outside otherwise, and sleep in there. One of the elders and his wife and three children live in a little hut probably 16 feet square.

And they're happy. In fact, they show more happiness in church than we Mennonites here in America. I think anyway.

That's true here too. We don't get very excited. I've been told we Mennonites are stoical because we're Germanic.

And I tell them I notice that when I'm in ball games. But here's the point. God is in control.

And history has not gone on without God's input. And yes, there is what can be called the permissive will of God. And many, many rulers have been wicked men.

But God has had His people in spite of that. And when this was written here in June, about the middle to the latter part of the 60s, that's not the 1960s, but the 60s, second generation or at the end of the first generation of Christian history, He's talking already about errant, deviant, heretical doctrine coming into the church. And then makes this observation.

He wrote to encourage them to earnestly contend. That's actually two English words to capture a very strong Greek word. That in street language we could say today, Give it all you've got to have the faith.

Contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. And he's referring there to God's revelation through the prophets, and Moses in the Old Testament, and then Jesus and the apostles after Him. So he's actually saying, Do your best, give it your best, to have the faith that God delivered to the saints.

Because deviation is already coming in. Which just reminds me, just this past week, I had two new tires put on our van. They do wear out.

And it was a young man who has a business in our area, from our church actually. And he was telling me that his brother got caught up with a teacher somewhere out of Arkansas, I think. In the Holmes County area.

Who is teaching them that Paul is the apostle to the Gentiles. So we can only go, as Gentiles, we can only go with Paul's writings. The way the whole conversation started was that Ray said to me, I've got a question for him.

He said, Are the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are they for Gentile Christians? I said, Where are you getting that? And then he told me that his brother has been persuaded that you only go by the Pauline epistles. Which would be Romans and then the pastoral epistles. And maybe Hebrews.

Some say that, others don't. I don't know what this teacher from Arkansas says. But I said, That is a very old heresy.

The way I knew that was because, and it still bugs me, I can't think of a fancy name they had for it. But it was an old heresy. Someone else thought of that.

This late in history, it's pretty hard to be original, you know. But, in any case, if we don't know history, we tend to make its mistakes. Have you ever heard that statement? One thing we learn from history is that we don't learn from history? I would modify that.

In my teaching over the years, and in schools, other than Bible schools, the interest level in and even the lessening of teaching history that is happening today, in many of our public schools in America right now, people graduate from 12 years of schooling and they don't know the names of the founders of this country. And know very little about how this country originated. And what its basic beliefs were.

They just don't know that. Where else in the world don't they teach people, young people, about their nation's history? Because I think there is an intention to change things radically. And you have to re-educate people to do so.

But we need to know history to have a Biblical worldview, a Christian worldview. This book is the book of history. It even goes back beyond and before creation.

Now it starts by saying in the beginning, apparently the beginning of the cosmos, God created. But it goes beyond that, by telling us that even before the foundations of the world, Jesus was already crucified, meaning the plans were made. And another real interesting thing about time and history and how God looks at all of that, you remember that when John had the vision that we now know as the book of Revelation, that at one point he saw all the redeemed of every ethnic group.

That's basically the Greek there. He saw all the redeemed of every ethnic group. That's even the Pennsylvania Dutch.

We're an ethnic group. Those of you who aren't Pennsylvania Dutch or something else, you know, you have some parentage back there. And we're all made from one blood.

The Bible says God made. This thing of interracial marriage is not even possible. Did you know that? Because there is only one race.

There are different ethnic groups, but only one race. That's one of the mistaken things in education that's still being promoted today. But anyway, I must move on and just talk a little bit more about the importance of knowing enough history to have a proper world view.

What I want to do basically this morning is to convince us of two things, that it is important for us and our children to know where we come from as Anabaptists. Frankly, I think in America we have lost a lot of the strengths of our origins, our beginnings. We really have.

I think we've lost more than we're aware of. And I hear sometimes, probably with good intention, I hear people talking about Anabaptists, meaning our early Anabaptist forefathers, as if the big issue with the Anabaptists was that they dressed plainly. I even heard references to the plain coat and the cape dress, and especially the cape dress, as being a mark of early Anabaptism.

It's not so. There was no substantial evidence of different dress from the common people. Now, they would have shunned the vanities of the wealthy.

They did that. But they could dress like the common people for nearly 250 years. And in fact, as recently as the latter part of the 1800s, my grandfather and great-grandfather's era, the difference between Amish and Mennonites was almost indistinguishable.

You know what the big difference was? The Amish hung on to the hooks and eyes when buttons became popular in the middle of the 19th century, 1800s. And the Mennonites, they thought, there's nothing moral about buttons or hooks and eyes. And so, for a while, we were distinguished between Mennonites and Amish, like in Lancaster and Franconia and Virginia and so on.

The other people would talk about those who were buttoners, knetfe, when they were talking in German. And they would use it then themselves. We're good at that.

That's how we got the name Mennonite. Others called us that, and then we finally called ourselves that. But the Mennonites were called the buttoners, and the Amish were called the hookers.

Doesn't work today, but it's simply, in German, it's Heftler, the ones who went with the hooks and eyes. My 87-year-old banker, when I started farming in 1957, old Mr. Atkinson loaned me the money to start farming. But he looked at me and he said, Walter, I've got a question for you before I loan you money.

I said, what's that? He said, I want to know why you left the Amish. He was Methodist, a devout Methodist. And I said, well, I don't really feel like I left so much, although, yeah, I'm not associated with the Amish church now.

But I said, I explained what happened, and I don't have time to go into all of that. But there was a lot of kind of empty, legalistic traditionalism without real spiritual life. My own father said that, and later in his own spiritual journey said that had he and mom been a bit younger, they'd have probably left too.

But their church by that time became New Order Amish and was much more spiritual. So they remained Amish until they died. Did you know there aren't any Amish in heaven? Did you know that? Not any Mennonites either.

We won't be designated that way. But anyway, I explained my journey and my conversion experience. He said, I buy that.

But he said, you know what, I'm warning you. He said, my mother and your grandmother would have been contemporaries. And he said, if you would have seen, as I did, my mother and your mother, grandmother, on the streets of Plain City, from across the street, you could not have told the Methodist from the Amish.

Now if you would have gotten a little closer, my mother might have had a little bit of lace, but nothing ostentatious. That means showy. But anyway, he said she just didn't wear anything like that.

She was a very plain woman. She would have had snaps and buttons on her dress where your grandmother would have used pins. And I think many of the Amish women still use pins.

Sounds dangerous to me, but they survive it. But in any case, he said, just looking at them, you would have not noticed. Oh, he said, my mother wore no jewelry except a very plain wedding band.

And I didn't know it then, or I would have told him, my great-grandma, who was Amish, wore a wedding band. And then in her older years, when she was widowed, the church decided not to go there after all, not to wear wedding bands. That was in the middle of the 1800s.

And so they asked her to take off her wedding band, and she wouldn't do it. It runs in the family. But anyway, they let her die with her wedding band.

I've been bugged as to whether or not they took it off afterward, or if she was buried, a body was buried with the wedding band on it. But here's the point. There wasn't much difference.

And Mr. Atkinson, you could look out the bank window and see the steeple of the Methodist church on North Chillicothe. And he pointed out toward the steeple. He said, look at us now.

The Bible doesn't mean much to us anymore in the Methodist church. And he said, I'm afraid that same thing will happen to you Mennonites. And guess what? It's happening.

And I'm not talking about neckties and dress particularly. Although in a culture like ours with so little restraint, if we're going to be genuinely Christian, we will wind up looking different. Not just for difference sake, but to apply biblical principles.

Whereas back 150 years ago, much more of the culture was influenced by Christian principles. And so dress differences were very small. I have no bone to pick with plain coats and cape dresses.

But that's not the Anabaptist conscience. It's not our roots. It's not our vision.

It's not who we were and really who we are. That is an American adaptation to a culture that changed rapidly after the Civil War. Have you ever heard the term in history of the gay 90s? Gay then meant happy.

Happy 90s? 1890s? Everything was looking up. Economically and otherwise. Inventions were pouring in to the U.S. Patent Office.

In fact, in the 1978 era, in there somewhere, the head of the Patent Office told the President that probably the Patent Office can close soon because surely nearly everything that can be invented has been invented. And it has mushroomed since. He was quite wrong.

But in that particular time, up to World War II, is when the major differences between the Amish and conservative Mennonites and the culture began to happen. That's how recent it is. That doesn't say there isn't validity to it in light of our culture.

After all, our culture is very immodest and very hooked on beauty and all of that. So we do have to make some judgment calls that they didn't used to have to make. I'm not belittling that, but I'm saying that's not who we are and that's not the real issue.

The issue has to do with what we think of this book, the Bible, and what we do with its teachings, how we apply it in our lives. And that's what I want to share in the history of that in this week together. I'm just about out of time, but I want to tell you just a few things.

And if you want to take down notes, you can. You'll have your outlines hopefully tonight that you can add notes if you'd like. But I'd just like to emphasize in closing how important it is to have a biblical Christian worldview.

Now everybody has a worldview. There are no exceptions. Let's just think of it in terms of every young adult to adult, although even children have a developing worldview.

But as responsible people before God, young adults and adults and on up, we do have a worldview. There's no one who doesn't have. It's not like one time I was to preach at a particular church when our family was still growing, so Mary Jane had stayed home.

And that morning in Sunday school, I sat in the Sunday school class, first time, just kind of getting acquainted with the church there. And they were studying in the book of Galatians, I forget the exact reference now, where Paul said, let no man spoil you through vain philosophy. And the teacher went into about a five minute tirade against philosophy and said, here Paul clearly condemns philosophy, and yet it's taught in our schools.

Well, there are a lot of things to be concerned about in our schools, and how you teach philosophy is certainly one of them. But what he didn't realize was that he was articulating his own philosophy while he was saying you shouldn't have any. Well, you have, I have, everybody has a worldview.

And in fact, when mine was a-borning, I had Mennonite cousins and uncles and aunts, and we were Amish, and we kept Grandma Miller, Mom's dad, at our house until he died when I was 14. So when my cousins and uncles and aunts would come to visit, the Mennonite cousins and aunts, uncles, when they would come to visit, we had that exposure to the Mennonites. And I had this sense that I was going to be a preacher from as far back as I can remember, and of course I thought in terms of being an Amish preacher then.

At an Amish funeral, one of them, I told them that, and then one of them said, it's not too late yet to be an Amish preacher, but I don't think I'll go there. But in any case, I was concerned about these Mennonite cousins of mine and I distinctly recall when I was in 3rd grade, so I would have been 8 years old, turned 9 that fall, so I could have been 9. We had, every month, we had a preacher come in. This is a public school, the Plain City Elementary School.

Every month they had a preacher come in from the area and we would have assembly. Everybody, 1st through 12th, went, well it wasn't elementary, it was the school, it was 1 through 12. Didn't have kindergarten then.

But we'd go to the big gym for assembly and we'd have about a 15 minute sermon. Can you imagine that today's schools? No way they'd allow that. But they used to do it back then.

And I remember, I was struggling with my Mennonite cousins' lifestyles as an Amish boy, and listening to the preachers and critiquing them in fact. And then this one day, the Methodist Church had gotten a new preacher. They did about every week, pardon me, every year, not every week.

About every year they had a new preacher in the church there, Methodist Church. But this young man was on fire. All that he said, even in my 8 year old mind, seemed right.

And he was telling us students that we are sinners at heart. He was preaching like Wesley would have, you know. And that we need to repent of our sins and accept Jesus.

And the only thing that can make us righteous before God is the blood of Jesus. It all rang a bell, but I couldn't figure out how this Egyptian could preach. Let me explain.

In my world view, the Amish were the true spiritual Israelites. And the English, the non-Amish, they were the Egyptians. And the Mennonites had a leg in both worlds.

They were spraddling Egypt and Israel, Palestine. That was my world view on that issue. And I could not for a long time figure out how a man with a red necktie could preach the truth.

And he did. And I've said already, I've never worn a necktie, but if I would, I'd love red ones because that's my favorite color. But I don't think a red necktie under a plain coat would go either.

So I'll just forego the whole thing. But here's the point. My world view had to change.

And it changed as I got truth, facts. Your world view, my world view, is never complete because we learn all our lifetimes. And it has some error in it based on how little or how much truth we've put there.

And foundational to any world view, correct world view, is this book, the Bible. How well we know it and how deeply we believe it. That's what determines.

And then you have all this other information. Even non-Christians dig out truth. Mathematicians dig out truth.

Even non-Christians who are into counseling and that kind of thing, they dig out some truth. People who study human nature, they learn some truth. Not everything that non-Christians learn is untrue.

We can learn some things from them. But everything has to come under the authority of Scripture. Because this is what God has revealed to us.

And so our world view needs to be based on Biblical teaching, including the beginnings. How did everything start? Now that many Mennonite educators don't believe in the six days creation. They don't believe that the first 11 chapters of Genesis are really history.

They call it some kind of historical narrative. Now that that's happened, they are also unsure about endings. Will the world really end? They're not sure at all that it will.

That's because they don't really believe this book literally and deeply. We need to know all of that information. And then we will have the benefits of a focus on God and from God for understanding history.

It helps us understand our place in history. And of course it heightens our hope for eternity. And I would just add this in my own life, especially as a minister, I couldn't even begin to tell you how many times when I was exposed to different things as a pastor, I would know red flags, just kind of like that, because of something I knew about history.

I used to teach history from Pentecost to the Reformation in the 16th century for some years. And I've forgotten some dates and people and movements because I've not taught it for some years. But that informed me to where red flags would go up when I hear things like, for instance, I told you about this brother from our church whose brother had been told that we should only as Gentiles look at or go by Paul's writings.

That's an old error and obviously isn't according to the faith once delivered to the saints. They used to pass around all of what we have as the New Testament, except that the last two books that were written were the Gospel of John that was late in history and the book of Revelation that was written in the 90s. The Gospel, we're not sure, may have been written in the late 70s or 80s, but they passed those around after they were there.

But the early church saw the writings of the apostles as being inspired of God and they passed them around and read them in the churches. We need to know our history to be able to deflect that kind of error. Well, I have rambled on and many more things I could say.

All I could say though in closing is give me a chance to interest you in who we are and where we come from this week even if you don't like history. And you can tell me you don't like history. That's okay.

Just so you don't decide to stay home. Alright? God bless you. Good.

The other thing I would say is let's fill up the front a little more because we're not going to have a children's class in the evening, right? So we'll sit up a little more. Are we all agreed? Some of you aren't. But some of you are.

So that should help. God bless you. Good.

I'll turn it back to you.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20965.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/walter-beachy/anabaptist-history-part-1/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**