The Church of Monett

"Knowing therefore the Terror of the Lord we persuade men."

The Root and the Fruit of the Modern Salvation Message

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How the Mennonites came to accept the Protestants revival

After settling down into the American dream, the Anabaptists began looking for something to wake them up from the dead spiritual state they had fallen into through acquiring large land holdings, and amassing wealth. Here´s what Stephen Scott has to say in his investigation of Mennonite history…

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> At first the Mennonites resisted the stirrings of the religious world around them. Then the **Methodist-inspired revival movement** swept through the Pennsylvania German population in the late 1700s **attracting many Mennonites**. By the mid 1800s, scattered upsurges of revivalism and progressivism had created significant movements, many of which became alienated from the main body of Mennonites. By the last third of the 19th century , most Mennonites were ready for change. They were no longer content with the time honoured ways of their ancestors.. Two men were responsible for leading the Mennonite Church into the modern world.

> In 1858 a twenty three year old lad of Mennonite background far from his Bucks County , Pennsylvania , home **responded to an invitation given at a Presbyterian revival meeting** in Chicago. The youth was **John Fretz Funk** and this simple event began a course of inalterable change in the Mennonite

church. Funks conversion led him into the exciting world of **American revivalism**, and he would ultimately be instrumental in leading most of the Mennonite church into this new realm.

While **John Funk was enamoured by the vitality of Evangelicalism**, he did not wish to abandon his own ancestral faith. In 1859, Funk returned briefly to Pennsylvania where he was baptised into the Mennonite church. Funk deeply appreciated the Mennonite church but felt that much could be gained by the aggressive methods of **evangelical Protestantism**. ….

….Although Funk used much material written by Mennonites, **he also published a large percentage of writings from evangelical protestants. Funks publications succeeded in planting popular American Protestant ideas throughout the Mennonite church.** John F Funk was ordained as a Mennonite minister in 1865, widening his sphere of influence….

…..He also travelled widely among Mennonite communities and helped conduct the first series of ¨Protracted ¨meetings - as revival meetings were then called- in the Mennonite church at Masontown PA in 1872. In 1879 , John F Funk invited a promising young Mennonite preacher from Virginia , John S Coffman , to join his work….

…. Coffman conducted his first series of revival meetings in Michigan in 1881 and had hundreds of speaking engagements over he next several years…

…… The radical changes that John F Funk and John S Cofman helped bring about in the Mennonite Church during the last third of the 19th century have been viewed by some historians as the ¨great awakening¨. Funk and Coffman are looked upon as heroes of the faith who rescued the church from oblivion. Some recent historians not wishing to infer that **the era before Funk and Coffman was one of spiritual deadness and Lethargy** have more charitably referred to this

period as a time of ¨Quickening¨.. To be sure the late 1800s saw sweeping changes in the Mennonite church , forever transforming its emphasis and image….¨¨*Source ¨An introduction to Old Order and conservative Mennonite Groups¨ by Stephen Scott. Peoples place books ·12..*

*More quotations frm different authors relating to thi subject are needed to be objective

History Repeats Itself

Coming out of dead Catholicism and looking for something else, Luther thought he was promoting a true revival, by going back to what the primitive churches had lost. However, he didnt realize he was just following the notion of original sin and total depravity as interpreted by Augustine of Hippo. This with many other of Augustine's doctrines which were far removed from what the primitive Christians actually believed.

Following suit, the Mennonites who were caught in the dead traditions of religion were looking for something else, hoping to return to what they had lost. However they failed to realize they were only being influenced by modern evangelical protestants with a lot of zeal and not the simple teachings of Christ like their forefathers. Maybe none of them ever stopped to ask if the protestant evangelical message was the same as was their early Anabaptist forefathers message? If it was the same, then why didn't these revivals ever result in the Protestants being able to give up armed conflict , cover their woman , and separate themselves from the world?

If there was no real power in the evangelical revivals to produce separation from the world like the Primitive Christians and the Early Anabaptists had amongst themselves , than can we really expect any different results amongst plain people embracing the same ideas? Perhaps that's why there is such a fear amongst them of going worldly? Or maybe Luther finally defeated the Anabaptists?

Chapter 6 →

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