

Menno Simons and Dietrich Philip's View of the Church

This is an ongoing project from years of research and compilation concerning the view of the Church according to Menno Simons and Dietrich Philips who were both respected co-laborers in the first Dutch Mennonite Church. Though the compiler loves the basic Biblical Church model of their writings, these quotes are not necessarily intended to reflect the views of the compiler. They were collected and organized with the desire that we could hear them in their own words, be able to better understand the original Anabaptist/Mennonite view of the Church and also that these quotes would be made accessible to others for further study and research.

I have chosen Menno Simons and Dietrich Philips as the main sources for this project because ...

1. They are the earliest primary sources of Dutch Anabaptism.
2. They provide plenty of content to sufficiently lay out their Church model and view.
3. They testify of being in agreement. (...in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. Matt. 18:16). Menno says:

“Neither are we so divided as he says; for Dirk (Dietrich Philip) and we are of the same mind, and I trust, through the grace of God, we will ever remain so.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 96)

4. They are the best representation of the view of the Church that was commonly taught and believed by almost all early anabaptist believers at their time, yet one will find that in the late 16th century and throughout the 17th c. there were new variations of the Church model that were developed and taught by some Mennonite leaders. (for example, the Flemish Mennonite leader Claes Ganglofs.)

Whether your Church tradition agrees with these Anabaptist writers or not, I believe we all can learn and be edified from their teachings. It is my hope that the reader will carefully prove these quotes by reading the primary sources as a whole and in context and above all, prove all truth claims by the Word of God which is the final authority in which all true believers must submit.

Any thoughts or questions, I would love to hear from you!

May God Bless you!

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This document will be made available at www.mennochurchviews.com

1. Church? Kingdom? What’s the difference?

Is the Church a part of the kingdom, or are they the same thing?.....7

Are the ordinances set in order for the kingdom?11

2. Is there Salvation Outside the Church?12

3. What incorporates us into the True Church?

Water baptism or Spirit baptism?16

What is water baptism for?23

How did baptism change throughout history?27

4. Who is the Church?

Composed of all true believers or specific group of true believers?28

Dietrich Philip’s concluding thoughts to his article “Church of God”36

Who is protected and preserved within the Church (Ark)?.....37

Who is the Church the Mother of?38

Who is the Church and bride which Song of Solomon 1 and 2
is speaking of?39

What about children?40

5. Who is part of the one Sheepfold?

All true believers or a particular group of true believers?41

6. What are the visible signs of the True Church?47

7. What are the visible signs of the False Church?50

What was the lifestyle of the false church in Menno’s time?50

8. What is the Visible Church?

True believers shining forth Christ’s image, or a specific
body of true believers?67

9. Who are qualified to observe the ordinances of Christ?

All true believers or a specific group of true believers?71

10. How Does a non-true Church Community become Part of God's True Church (Community)?

Unite to a specific True Church, or Seek to become a True Church
based on the Word?76

Can any Church begin to be a true Church? Dietrich Philip’s
concluding thoughts to his article “Church of God”79

Why should one be rebaptized by water?.....80

11. By what Authority may the Church govern its members?

Scripture alone, or man-made commandments and traditions
along with Scripture?.....82

Does the Church have authority to enforce the councils and
customs of man?97

Are all things truly pure that are not forbidden in Scripture?101

Does the Church have the authority to declare something pure or impure without the scriptures' command?	101
Can we worship God through man-made teachings and practices?	102

12. What are the Keys of binding and loosing?

The Church's own authority, or the Word of God, which the Church must govern and judge by?	107
What are the candlesticks in Revelation pointing us to?	116
What should Church leaders do when the scriptures prove them to be mistaken in their teachings?	117
Menno's Testimony of his own misinterpretation of the Word and his need to realign to the scriptures.....	119

13. How does God speak to us today?

Through scripture alone, or both scripture and new revelation?	122
Should the church spiritually sense or feel evil in the hearts of man or is the Church to only judge by visible evidence?	126

14. What about the True Church Lineage?

Continued Faith throughout the centuries or Restored Church in the 16th century?	127
Was water baptism restored?	131
How would this restored Church be rebuilt?	132
How can a newly restored Church reinstate leaders?	133
How does the restoration of the Church pattern Old Testament events?	134

Would a restoration ever happen again? If not, how long would this restored Church last?	145
What about early church leaders that are often mentioned as part of the lineage such as the Church Fathers, the Donatists and the Waldenses?	149
What about the Melchiorites (Munsterites) who came to exist because of the spread of the Swiss Anabaptist movement that began in 1525 when Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz and George Blaurock baptized each other, is it true that the Dutch Anabaptists were baptismally linked to them as most Historians claim?	151
Would Menno and Dietrich treat the Munsterites as excommunicated brothers acknowledging that they were once a united Church?	152
Is a Church lineage needed?	153

15. Are there any other sources that would give evidence to the Melchiorite connection to the Dutch Mennonites?

A Confession by Obbe Philips – Recollections of the Years 1533-136....	155
The Origins of the Dutch Anabaptist View of the Incarnation.....	160

Bibliography..... 167

Menno Simons and Dietrich Philip's View of the Church

1. Church? Kingdom? What's the difference?

Is the Church a part of the kingdom, or are they the same thing?

“The Almighty, eternal Father, through his eternal Wisdom, Christ Jesus, **has instituted and commanded all things in his kingdom, that is, in his church**, relating to doctrines, sacraments and life, according to his divine counsel, will and wisdom. “

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 23–24)

“Therefore may nothing else be preached in **Christ's kingdom and house, the church**, except her King and husband's own commands and words, according to which she and all her servants must conform.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 57)

“The other prince is the prince of darkness, anti-christ, and Satan. This prince is a prince of all evil, as rebellion, bloodshed, uproar and murder, which agree with his proper nature, arts, and doings, Jn. 8:44, **his commandments and teachings and his kingdom, body and church are of the same nature**, 1 Jn. 3. Here

we need not much Scripture. Seeing, hearing and daily occurrences and experience prove the truth.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 308)

“The Scriptures teach that there are two opposing princes and two opposite kingdoms. The one is the Prince of peace; the other the prince of rebellion. Each of the princes has his particular kingdom and as the prince is, so is also the kingdom. The Prince of peace is Christ Jesus; **his kingdom is the kingdom of peace, which is his church**; his messengers are the messengers of peace; his word is the word of peace; and his body is the body of peace; his children are the seed of peace; and his inheritance and reward are the inheritance and reward of peace, Heb. 7; Isa. 9; Dan. 2:7; Luke 1; Isa. 52; Rom. 10; Jn. 14; Col. 3; Zech. 8. In short, with this King and in this kingdom and reign it is nothing but peace; every tiling that is seen, heard and done is peace.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 306)

“We teach and confess that we know of no sword, nor commotion in **the kingdom or church of Christ**, other than the sharp sword of the Spirit, God’s word, as is abundantly shown in our writings, which is sharper and more piercing than any two-edged sword, and it proceeds from the mouth of the Lord, whereby we make the father at variance against the son, and the son against the father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother, and daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 82–83)

“He is the head of all principalities before whom every knee shall bow, and whom all tongues shall confess that he is the Lord, and that besides him there is no other, Isaiah 45:23; Phil. 2:10. **Therefore his word shall avail, and his command shall stand, and not that which the world adds to his kingdom or church, in which all regenerated children, who are of his Spirit, are not now circumcised unto Christ, with hands,** as was the case with literal Israel, but the impure foreskins of their hearts are circumcised with the Lord’s word, Spirit and power, that they may become in spirit a new, regenerated Israel and people of God, by dying unto their sinful flesh, and by smothering the old man through the circumcision of Christ, which purifies and changes their hearts through his word and Spirit.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 44–45)

“As such exceeding grace of God has appeared unto us poor, miserable sinners, that we, who were formerly no people at all, and who knew of no peace, are now called to be such a glorious people of God, **to be a church, kingdom, inheritance, body and property of peace**; therefore we desire not to break this peace, but, by his great power by which he has called us to this grace and portion, to walk in this grace and peace, unchangeably and unwaveringly unto death, 1 Pet. 2:9.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 306)

“The merciful and gracious Lord grant and give you and them wisdom, that you may learn to know of what spirit and kingdom you are the children, what you seek, what prince you serve, what

doctrine you maintain, what sacraments you have, what fruits you produce, what life you lead, and in what kingdom, body and church you are incorporated. This is our sincere wish.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 308)

“Behold, worthy reader, all those who are born of God with Christ, who thus conform their weak life to the gospel, are thus converted, and follow the example of Christ, hear and believe his holy word, follow his commands, which he, in plain words commanded us in the holy Scriptures, form the holy, christian church which has the promise; the true children of God, brothers and sisters of Christ; for they are born with him of one Father, and of the new Eve, the pure, chaste bride. They are flesh of Christ’s flesh, and bone of his bone, the spiritual house of Israel, the spiritual city, Jerusalem, temple and Mount Zion, the spiritual ark of the Lord, in which are hidden the true bread of heaven, Christ Jesus and his blessed word, the green, blossoming rod of faith, and the spiritual tables of stone, with the commands of the Lord written thereon; they are the spiritual seed of Abraham, children of the promise, confederates of the covenant of God, and partakers of the heavenly blessings.

These regenerated have a spiritual king over them, who rules them by the unbroken sceptre of his mouth, namely, with his Holy Spirit and Word, he clothes them with the garment of righteousness, of pure white silk; he refreshes them with the living water of his Holy Spirit, and feeds them with the bread of life. His name is Christ Jesus.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 170–171)

“The church is a kingdom of the Most High, exalted above all the kingdoms of the earth, in which the saints shall have

spiritual dominion (Dan. 7:27), and are the victory over the whole world by their faith, anal Jesus Christ, the brightness of the everlasting light, the express image of the Person of God, is the light of his church,”

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 403

Are the ordinances set in order for the kingdom?

“Fifthly, that Christ, as well as Moses, **ordained and appointed in his kingdom, community, or church, prophets, preachers, teachers, ceremonies and ordinances, which are to be observed by all true christians for ever.**”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 69)

2. Is There Salvation Outside the Church?

"We would pray to God for grace, would clothe ourselves in sackcloth and mourning garments, would truly repent, reform the wicked life, follow after righteousness, **and with our new and spiritual Noah, Christ Jesus, enter into the new and spiritual ark, which is his church; ever being careful and fearful that the deluge of the coming wrath of God, will not unexpectedly overtake us with all the unbelieving and impenitent, who acknowledge neither God nor Christ, neither Spirit nor word, as it overtook the corrupt antediluvian world as mentioned;**"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 120)

"I must therefore now also write briefly of the church of God, how it was in the beginning, by what means it was established, how it was gathered from all nations, how it may be recognized, and distinguished from all sects, what ordinances it has of God, how the ministers must be qualified, how every member must walk, how beautiful and glorious the church is. For since all mankind is invited into the church of God, and every one says, "Lo, here is Christ" (Matt. 24: 23). "The temple of the Lord, are these" (Jer. 7:4; Mic. 3:11), and all sects presume to be the church of Christ and desire to be known as such, **therefore it is necessary for all lovers of the truth to know which is the true Christian church, and that they must ally themselves with this same church if they desire to be saved;** for those who now reject the proffered grace of God, who will not repent, believe the gospel nor obey it, despise the ordinances of God and will **not enter into the communion of the body of Jesus Christ** (Matt. 3: 2; 22: 7; 23:12; Mark 1: 4; Luke 3: 4; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13), will hardly be able to escape the judgment of God, forasmuch as Christ himself says that no man can come unto the Father but by him (John 14:6),

and that whosoever abides in him shall bear much fruit; but that whosoever does not abide in him is as a withered branch of a vine John 15:2-7), and that he that believes not in him is condemned already, etc. (John 3:18). Therefore let every one hasten to Christ, to the hill of Zion, and go to the house of the living God to hear the law of the Lord and the gospel, that they may be grafted into Christ and preserve their souls unto eternal blessedness. Amen. (John 3:36; 10:38; 1 John 5:10)."

Dietrich Philips Hand book pg. 367-368

"Now, in order to rightly understand the figure of the deluge it must be noted that **Noah is a figure pointing to Christ, the household of Noah to believing souls, the ark to the church,** and the deluge to baptism; for, as Noah was in his time a preacher of righteousness, so also is Christ Jesus the true Preacher of righteousness, and the true Schoolmaster sent by God (John 8:17; 14: 24; 16: 5) . As Noah at God's command prepared the ark for the preservation of his own life and the lives of others, so also has Christ Jesus built and prepared a spiritual ark, that is, his church, and made and set it up through his apostles as workmen, and wise master builders (1 Cor. 3:10, 11; 0:9, 10), for the eternal preservation and happiness of all his children and household (Eph. 2:17), of whom he himself has said: "Behold I and the children which God hath given me" (Heb. 2:13; Isa. 8:18)."

Moreover, like as no one outside of the ark of Noah was able to preserve his life, but as all that were outside of the ark perished from the face of the earth by the water (Gen. 14:18), so also no one is able to preserve his soul or be saved unless he is in the ark of Jesus Christ; for outside of Christ and his church there is no salvation nor eternal life (Acts 4:12). No man cometh unto the Father but by Christ alone (John 14:6). All is concluded in him; all grace and truth came by him, and of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace.

Whoever believes and abides in him has eternal life, but whosoever does not believe in him is condemned already (John 3:18); upon him the wrath of God abides. And whosoever does not remain in him will be cast forth as a withered branch (John 15:6). Hence as the flood destroyed every living creature that was outside of the ark, while the ark was preserved by the same water (Gen. 6:17, 18), so also in baptism all carnal desires must perish and be put to death (Rom. 6:2; Cal. 2:12, 13), but the soul will, by the power of the word, Spirit and blood of Christ, be preserved in his ark unto everlasting salvation. Moreover, like as few, that is, eight souls, were saved in the ark and preserved alive (1 Pet. 3: 20), **so also there are few who, with Noah, find favor in the sight of God, in this that they truly believe in God, enter the Christian church** and are so baptized in the name of the Lord that they comprehend, possess and preserve the power, significance and mysteries of the true faith and of the baptism of Christ to the (renunciation of the world) dying unto the flesh, and of the resurrection unto eternal life, even as the Lord himself testifies, that there are few who find the strait and narrow way, that few are chosen, that few believe and are saved (Matt. 7:13, 14; 20:16).”

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 30-31

“In Christ Jesus is also repeated God's dealings regarding Noah and the ark; the flood, and the. saving of the few souls (1 Peter 3: 19); for Christ is the true, spiritual Noah, the preacher of righteousness, and the members of his household are the children of God (Matt. 12: 49), the true Christians: he has proclaimed to the corrupt world the divine wrath that is to come, and has threatened the impenitent and unbelievers with the judgment and condemnation (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 11: 20; 23:1-37); **he has hereby also built an ark, that is, the holy Christian church for the protection and preservation of all believing souls, and all who**

willfully despise God's word and have rejected the proffered mercy of God, have closed their eyes to the light of the gospel, and therefore have remained outside of the ark (John 5: 38: 8: 24), are destroyed by the punishment of God; yea, upon them will come the wrath and indignation of heaven, in that day when God shall judge the world by Jesus Christ (Rom. 2: 8. 9). **But as many as have received Christ (John 1:12) in true faith and have entered into his ark, they will be preserved therein unto eternal life, and the covenant of God will be renewed and confirmed** to them by the rainbow, which represents Jesus Christ the true sign of grace in heaven, at the right hand of the almighty Father (John 3: 36; 6: 47; 8: 31; 11: 26; 14: 21; Heb. 1: 3; Gen. 9:13; Eph. 1: 3), and they will be blessed of God with heavenly blessings, to grow spiritually (1 Peter 3: 9); and to increase, winning many children through the gospel of Jesus Christ (Gal. 3: 26; 4: 6) even as the apostle did, converting many thousands to God by the preaching of the word of God and operation of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 41; 4: 32; 8:11; 10: 44; 16: 5)."

Dietrich Philip Hand Book Pg. 330-331

3. What incorporates us into the True Church?

Water baptism or Spirit baptism?

"My faithful reader, understand well what these words of Paul mean. This paternal adoption unto membership; this great favor, love and grace through Christ Jesus; this holy, unblamable life in love, of which Paul speaks, is taught by the gospel. All who rightly believe this, and who are, through faith, truly converted, changed, renewed and born of God, and have the Holy Spirit, are children of the covenant, are graciously accepted of God, and are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; even before they have the sign of baptism.

Behold, thus we are, by God's choice through faith in Christ Jesus, and through the inspiring power and renewing of the Holy Spirit, embodied into the body of Christ, which is the true church, and become flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone; and not through any outward sign."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 47)

"But if they should say we are one church with the Munsterites, because they and we are baptized with one baptism, then we would reply that if outward baptism has the power to make all those who are thus baptized with one baptism, one church, and that it causes all those who are thus baptized to share in the unrighteousness, wickedness and corruption of every individual, then our adversaries may well consider what kind of a church or body theirs is, as it is evident and well known to every body that perjurers, murderers, highway-men, thieves, &c., have received the same baptism which they have. If we, then are Munsterites because of our baptism, they must be perjurers, murderers, highway-men, thieves, &c., on account of their baptism. This is incontrovertible.

O, no. The Scripture does not teach that we are baptized into one body by any mere sign, as water, but that we are baptized into one body by one Spirit, 1 Cor. 12:13."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 301–302)

“Say not, beloved reader, as the ignorant do, that we thereby condemn our children because we do not suffer them to be baptized. **O, no. For the Scripture does not connect the kingdom to words and water, but to the election and grace of the Father, in the merits of the death and blood of Christ.**

Christ has promised the kingdom to small children, without baptism, Matt. 19:14; Mark 10:14; Luke 18:16. On account of this promise we are exceedingly rejoiced, and give thanks unto the Lord for the grace shown our children. **Therefore, take heed, and mistake not; for to connect the election, grace, favor and kingdom of God to words, works, signs and the elements, is quite contrary to the merits, death, blood and word of the Lord; yea, open deceit, abomination and idolatry."**

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 269)

“Moses believed the word of the Lord, and erected a serpent; Israel looked upon it and was healed, not through the virtue of the image, but through the power of the divine word, received by them through faith. **In the same manner salvation is ascribed to scriptural baptism, Mark. 16:16; the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2:38; the putting on of Christ, Gal. 3:27, and incorporation into his church; not on account of the water, or the administered sign (else the kingdom of God would depend upon the elements and signs), but on account of the power and truth of the divine promise, which we receive by obedience through faith."**

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 27)

"Therefore I would briefly state: **That if he can at any time prove to us by the unadulterated, divine Scriptures and truth,** that John the Baptist practiced infant baptism any where; or that it was commanded of Christ and taught and practiced by the apostles; or, that it was, through the ordinance of the Lord, gradually practiced upon children, as he writes it was; or, that bringing to him is called baptism and baptism bringing to him, in the Scriptures; or, that Christ and the apostles have baptized the children that were brought to them; or, that Christ baptized them with a spirit that was powerful in works (the Spirit of God is never idle); or, that small children have faith, or that they are penitent, that they bury their sins and are circumcised through faith and thereby arise with Christ in newness of life; or, that circumcision is called baptism, and baptism circumcision; or, that they have the answer of a good conscience; **or, that baptism, anywhere in the Scriptures, is called a sign of the covenant of grace, a sealing of the promise, and an incorporation into the church,** or that unconscious children speak with tongues as the believing members of the house of Cornelius did, of whom Peter says, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Acts 10:47, or, that the true, primitive church practiced it by the apostolic doctrine, usage or command; or, that God is powerful through works which he has not ordained, **then we will lay aside our pen, repent and confess before the whole world that our cause is mere deceit, and nothing but falsehood, in this respect."**

The Complete Works of Menno Simon_(Vol. 2, p. 56)

"In the sixth place, **Paul teaches, saying, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit," 1 Cor. 12:13.**

By these words of Paul the baptism of the believing is again plainly taught and confirmed, and, on the other hand, the anti-

christian, infant baptism is rejected and made of none effect, because God, the merciful Father, in his holy gospel, points us to faith, alone, through Jesus Christ, and to the new birth. Because the believing or regenerated act rightly before God, and diligently seek and fulfill his holy will according to the grace they have received—therefore we must forcibly acknowledge that we cannot be led to this godly gift of faith and of regeneration, otherwise than by the word of God, through his Holy Spirit. All writing, reading, and teaching is in vain, when the Holy Spirit of God, the true Teacher of all righteousness, does not quicken, pierce and turn the hearts of the disciples or hearers, by the only means for this purpose given of God, which is his word.

Since we are baptized by one Spirit into one body, according to the teaching of Paul, and since this same Spirit must quicken and turn the hearts by the word of God—therefore it incontrovertibly follows that none should be baptized but those alone whose hearts are quickened and turned by this Spirit through the word of God.

All those, then, who hear the holy gospel of Jesus Christ and sincerely believe it and are thus inwardly quickened and pierced by the Holy Spirit (let them be of whatever nation or sex), are baptized by this quickening Spirit into one holy, spiritual body, of which Christ is the head, that is into the church. And thus Paul has taught by this Scripture in conformity to the command of Christ, Mark 16:16."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 219)

"Like as natural bread is made of many grains, broken by the mill, and kneaded together with water, and baked by the heat of the fire; **so is the church of Christ made up of many true believers, broken in their hearts, with the hammer of the divine word, and are baptized with the water of the Holy Ghost, and with the fire of pure, unfeigned love, into one body, 1 Cor. 12:13.** And as the natural body is in harmony and peace with all its

members, and as each member naturally discharges its duty to promote the good of the whole body; thus it also becomes the true and living members of the body of Christ, to be in harmony, of one heart, one mind and one soul; “

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 43)

“Inasmuch as we have heard the word of peace, namely, the consoling gospel of peace, from the mouth of his messengers; **therefore we, by his grace, have thus believed and accepted it in peace, and have committed ourselves to the only, eternal and true Prince of peace, Christ Jesus, in his kingdom of peace and under his reign, and are thus, by the gift of his Holy Spirit, by means of faith, incorporated into his body,** and henceforth we look with all the children of his peace for the promised inheritance and reward of peace, Rom. 10:15; Isa. 52:7; 9:6; Luke 2:7.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 306)

"Therefore it is reasonable and christian-like that we, poor, outcast bearers of the cross, should be united in the perfect bonds of true love, **and that we should cling together as the members of one body, “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body and made to drink into one Spirit,” 1 Cor. 12:13.**

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 181)

“The Holy Ghost we confess to be an eternal and Holy Spirit, who in spirit is both of the Father and of the Son, a Spirit of truth and of all heavenly wisdom and of all divine comprehension, and the dispenser of faith and of all spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12: 3; John 14: 26; 16: 7; 1 Cor. 2:10; Rom. 12: 3; 1 Cor. 12:13), a Comforter of

our conscience, through whom all Christians pray and cry, Abba, Father; through whom they are enabled to truly call Jesus Christ Lord, **through whom they believe and upon their faith are baptized into one body,** through whom they are sealed unto the day of their redemption (John 15:26)”

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 13

“Now it is clear and evident that all Christians are born of God (who is a Spirit), therefore they also are spiritual, yea, partakers of the divine nature, as the apostle Peter says: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be the partakers of the divine nature having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"(2 Pt 1:4) Thus then Christians are one in Spirit with God, of whom they are born.”

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 276

“ANSWER: That children are not saved by outward baptism, but by the grace of Jesus Christ, we have already sufficiently proven with clear and incontrovertible evidence from the holy scripture, and will, by God's grace, hereafter explain the same still further; but the above quoted statement of the apostle does not refer to infants, but to adults and those who have understanding. Why? **Because the apostle here writes expressly of the baptism of the Spirit and of incorporation into the church of Christ, which takes place through the spirit of faith, for these are the words: "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."** From these words it is readily seen that Paul here speaks specially of that baptism which is of the Spirit, and therefore means those who understand and believe; for they are qualified for such baptism while children are not; for what is the baptism of the Spirit other than that we

receive from God our heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33), by which we learn to truly know God and to truly believe in Jesus Christ, as the apostle testifies, saying "that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but the Holy Ghost, who divides unto every man the gifts of faith and all spiritual, gifts severally as he will" (1 Cor. 12: 3, 11). **Faith, therefore, is the gift of the Holy Spirit by which all believers are gathered into one body, and are then baptized as a testimony and proof of the true, real inner life and of their spiritual fellowship with Christ and all the saints.** Since, then, infants have not the spirit of faith, how are they to be baptized by this same Spirit into one body with all believers? Or, if someone would (though wrongly and by force) maintain. the idea of infants having the gift of Spirit and of faith, then must infants also by the same Spirit not only be baptized with believers into one body, but also partake of the Lord's Supper; **for all who have, by one Spirit, been baptized into one body and made to drink one Spirit, and thus have become one body and one bread in Jesus Christ, must also, according to the ordinance of the Lord and the teaching of the apostles, break bread one with another (1 Cor. 10:16; 11:19).**

In conclusion this is the idea: If infants must be baptized, then they must also observe the communion of the Lord's Supper, for the apostles brake bread with believing and baptized Christians (Acts 2:46). And now, since infants are not (and rightly so) admitted to the Lord's Supper, it is openly shown that infants are considered as being without understanding and faith, exactly as the scripture, as well as daily. observation amply teaches and shows. Or, if infants are credited with understanding and faith (though against the plain words of scriptures, Deut. 1:39), then. **it is wrong to keep them from the Lord's Supper; for to those who have true faith in Jesus Christ, and through, the Spirit have been baptized with all believers into one body, the Lord's Supper may not be denied; yea, being one body and one bread with all believers, they must also with them partake of one bread."**

“Thus, then, this communion of Christ and the believers is renewed and confirmed by baptism and the Lord's Supper. **For all believers are baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13). Although they all became one body with Christ by faith, even as Paul had, before baptism, been chosen of Christ, and filled with the Holy Ghost; likewise also Cornelius and the others who in his house heard the word of the apostle had received the Holy Ghost before they were baptized (Acts 10:44), nevertheless they were by one Spirit baptized into the communion of the body of Christ,** that is, they were confirmed therein, reminded thereof, and in the outward fellowship of the saints added to the Christian Church.”

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 78

“The church is a congregation of penitent, God-fearing, believing and regenerated people of God, who obey the Gospel of God and are baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13; Gen. 3); the spiritual Eve, of the heavenly Adam; the free Sarah who receives the seed of the divine ward from God the Father, the true Abraham (Ram. 5; Gal. 3), from which the children are born through true faith in Jesus Christ, without which faith it is certain and true that no man can please God, nor be saved.”

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 486

What is water baptism for?

"Beloved reader, it is true by this commandment the holy church is also extended to the Gentiles, to the fulfillment of the prophetic Scriptures which long before had seen this through the Spirit, as Paul proves, Rom. 15. Yet the word stands firmly with

regard to both Jews and Gentiles, namely, whosoever believeth and is baptized, shall be saved. Faith is before baptism. For faith is the beginning of all righteousness which avails before God, from which faith, **baptism is the result as a sign and token of obedience.**"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 197)

"The believing receive remission of sins not *through* baptism, but *in* baptism, in this manner: as they now, sincerely believe the lovely gospel of Jesus Christ which has been preached and taught to them, which is the glad tidings of grace, namely, of the remission of sin, of grace, of peace, of favor, of mercy and of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, so they become of a new mind, deny themselves, bitterly lament their old, corrupted life, and look diligently to the word of the Lord, who has shown them such great love; to fulfill all that which he has taught and commanded them in his holy gospel, trusting firmly in the word of grace, in the remission of their sins through the precious blood and through the merits of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ.

They therefore receive the holy baptism as a token of obedience which proceeds from faith, as proof, before God and his church, that they firmly believe in the remission of their sins through Christ Jesus, as was preached and taught them from the word of God;"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 201)

"Here Peter teaches us how the inward baptism saves us, by which the inner man is washed, and not the outward baptism by which the flesh is washed; for only this inward baptism, as already stated, is of value in the sight of God, **while outward baptism follows only as an evidence of obedience which is of faith.**"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 28)

"Inasmuch as there is but one literal baptism taught in Scripture, which baptism shows and is proof of the answer of a good conscience toward God, as Peter teaches, and thus by this Scripture of Peter, infant baptism is prohibited; for they cannot have this consciousness like the believing."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 203)

"Faith, therefore, is the gift of the Holy Spirit by which all believers are gathered into one body, and are then baptized as a testimony and proof of the true, real inner life and of their spiritual fellowship with Christ and all the saints."

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 54

"The holy apostle Peter also explains the same and says, that "even baptism doth also now save us; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God (or the covenant of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. 3:21.

Here Peter teaches us how the inward baptism saves us, by which the inner man is washed, and not the outward baptism by which the flesh is washed; for only this inward baptism, as already stated, is of value in the sight of God, **while outward baptism follows only as an evidence of obedience which is of faith; for could outward baptism save without the inner washing, the whole Scriptures which speak of the new man, would be spoken to no purpose. The kingdom of heaven would be bound to elementary water; the blood of Christ would be shed in vain, and no one that is baptized could be lost. No, no! outward baptism avails nothing so long as we are not inwardly renewed, regenerated, and baptized of God, with the heavenly fire and the Holy Ghost. But when we receive this baptism from above, we will be constrained through the Spirit and word of God, by a**

good conscience, which we thereby obtain, to believe sincerely in the merits of the death of the Lord, and in the power and benefits of his resurrection; and henceforth, because we are inwardly cleansed by faith, and the spiritual strength which we have received, we submissively covenant with the Lord, through the outward sign of baptism, which is enjoined on all the believers in Christ, even as the Lord has covenanted with us in his grace, through his word, that we will no longer live according to the evil, unclean lusts of the flesh, but walk according to the witness of a good conscience before him."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 28)

"To this end also the two rites or signs of the Lord-baptism and the Lord's Supper-are instituted, namely to testify, to and remind us of this covenant. For although the real and true saving sign of the gracious covenant of God is Jesus Christ (John 3:14; 1 John 4:13), and the Holy Ghost is the sealing of all the promises of God (Eph. 4:30), nevertheless the almighty God at all times gave testimony to and confirmed his covenant with outward signs."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 452

"Thus, then, this communion of Christ and the believers is renewed and confirmed by baptism and the Lord's Supper. For all believers are baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13). Although they all became one body with Christ by faith, even as Paul had, before baptism, been chosen of Christ, and filled with the Holy Ghost; likewise also Cornelius and the others who in his house heard the word of the apostle had received the Holy Ghost before they were baptized (Acts 10:44), nevertheless they were by one Spirit baptized into the communion of the body of Christ, that is, they were confirmed therein, reminded thereof, and in

the outward fellowship of the saints added to the Christian Church."

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 78

How did baptism change throughout history?

"In the third place, we are informed by historians, ancient, and modern, and also in the decrees, that baptism was changed both as to its mode and time of administering. In the beginning of the holy church, persons were baptized in common water on their first profession, upon their own faith, according to the Scriptures. Afterwards a change was made; they were examined seven times before being baptized; after that, they were baptized at two stated periods; namely, at Easter and Whitsuntide. Higinus, the tenth pope, instituted godfathers, in the year A. D. 146. Finally, Luther tells us, that in the year A. D. 407, Pope Innocent confirmed infant baptism by a decree,"...

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 30)

4. Who is the Church?

Composed of all true believers or a specific group of believers?

"Answer. I understand it that **all those who, from the time of Adam to the present time, and also hereafter, had, have and shall have the Spirit, mind and nature of Jesus Christ, and who did, do and shall walk as obedient children by virtue of such a spirit, in truth, were, are and shall be the Lord's church, kingdom and people.**"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 40)

"Should any one ask: Where is this church? we answer: Wherever God's word is rightly taught, believed and obeyed; for they are Christ's disciples who have, believe and keep his word (John 8:31; 17: 6). Where such. disciples of Christ are gathered in his name, there he is in the midst of them (Matt. 18:20; Luke 24:14, 15). Now, if Christ is in the midst of them, then they are a church of Christ;

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 202

"Behold, worthy reader, **all those who are born of God with Christ, who thus conform their weak life to the gospel, are thus converted, and follow the example of Christ, hear and believe his holy word, follow his commands, which he, in plain words commanded us in the holy Scriptures, form the holy, christian church** which has the promise; the true children of God, brothers and sisters of Christ; for they are born with him of one Father, and of the new Eve, the pure, chaste bride. They are flesh of Christ's flesh, and bone of his bone, the spiritual house of Israel,

the spiritual city, Jerusalem, temple and Mount Zion, the spiritual ark of the Lord, in which are hidden the true bread of heaven, Christ Jesus and his blessed word, the green, blossoming rod of faith, and the spiritual tables of stone, with the commands of the Lord written thereon; they are the spiritual seed of Abraham, children of the promise, confederates of the covenant of God, and partakers of the heavenly blessings."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 170–171)

"Therefore the church of God is a church of holy beings, namely, of the, angels in heaven and of the believing regenerated men on earth, who have been renewed in the image of God. These are all united together in Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:6; Col. 1:27), as Paul explains in his epistles, especially, to the Hebrews, when he writes: "Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to, an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb. 12: 22-24).

From these words it is to be clearly understood that the innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and the spirits of just men made perfect, together with all believers which have been added thereto, all together comprise the church of God, over which God, the righteous judge, rules, of which Christ is the Head, and in which the Holy Spirit dwells (Eph. 1: 22, 23; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21, 22, etc.)."

Dietrich Philips pg. 369-370

"In the sixth place, Paul teaches, saying, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles,

whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit," 1 Cor. 12:13....

All those, then, who hear the holy gospel of Jesus Christ and sincerely believe it and are thus inwardly quickened and pierced by the Holy Spirit (let them be of whatever nation or sex), are baptized by this quickening Spirit into one holy, spiritual body, of which Christ is the head, that is into the church. And thus Paul has taught by this Scripture in conformity to the command of Christ, Mark 16:16."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 219)

"If some one says that there is no church of God, he must also say that there is no believer on earth, yea, that God's word is nowhere on earth; for where the word of God is, there is also a church of God, whether it be small or great. Moreover the church of God is not invisible only (as some allow themselves to imagine, and thus fancy to themselves an invisible Christian body), but also visible; for the believers know one another and consort with those of their kind, just as the whole animal world does (according to Sir. 13: 15-18), and love one another, because they are the children of the same heavenly Father, are born of the same God, are begotten of the same seed, and partakers of the same divine nature, and endued with the same Holv Spirit (John 1:13; 1 John 5:6; 1 Pet. 1:23). From this comes the difference between brotherly love or kindness and universal love or charity (2 Pet. 1:7), and for this reason the apostles addressed all their epistles to Christians, to their brethren and fellow-believers and not to the world, which would not have been the case if they had not known the Christians, nor recognized any difference between the Christians and the world."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 202-203

"All who are thus born of God, changed and renewed in the inner man, and translated from Adam into Christ, are ready to obey the word of the Lord, and say with holy Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" They deny themselves with all their minds and hearts; they submit to the word and ordinances of the Lord, without dislike or opposition; they receive baptism according to the command of the Lord, Matt. 28:19. They become and manifest themselves as fruitful branches of Christ, the true Vine, and joint heirs in the church of the Lord, John 15:5. They receive forgiveness of their sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; they put on Christ; enter the ark of safety, and are secured from the dreadful flood of wrath, which, like a net, will come upon all them that dwell upon the earth."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 27)

"Thus, also, the holy, christian church must be a spiritual seed, an assembly of the righteous, and a community of the saints; which church is begotten of God, of the living seed of the divine word, and not of the teachings, institutions, and fictions of man. Yea, they are those who are regenerated, renewed and converted; who hear, believe, and fulfill all the commandments and will of God; who "have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts;" who "are all one in Christ Jesus." "Joint heirs with Christ," and heavenly and spiritually minded with him, Gal. 5:24; 3:28; Rom. 8:17. These are the holy, christian church, the community of God, the body and the bride of Christ, whom he hath trusted, cleansed and sanctified; but "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." This holy, christian church has a spiritual Prince over her who rules her with the unbroken rod of his divine word; a Master, or Teacher who teaches the commandments of eternal life; and a Bridegroom whose voice she is ever ready to hear, that is, Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 6:11; Rom. 8:8; Ps. 2:9; Jn. 6:68; 3:29.

If, now, I contend against his scepter, trample upon his

commandments and teach or write aught against his heavenly doctrine, then I teach and write against the doctrine of the holy, christian church. For this holy, christian church has but one doctrine which is fruitful and godly, which is the limpid, pure and unmixed word of God, the lovely gospel of the grace of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; 1 Pet. 1:25. All teachings and decrees which do not accord with the doctrine of Christ, are but teachings and commandments of men, be they teachings and opinions of doctors, decrees of popes, councils or anything else; they are doctrines of the devil, and are accursed, Matt. 15:9; 1 Tim. 4:1; Gal. 1:8, 9. Since we write and teach nothing but the pure, heavenly word, and the perfect ordinances of the holy gospel of Jesus Christ and of his apostles; therefore we do not teach and write against the teachings of the holy church, but we sustain them."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 193)

"Those who are one with Christ in Spirit, love and life; who teach that which was commanded by Christ, such as repentance and the peaceable gospel of grace, which he himself received of God, and taught to the world, all those who hear, believe, keep and fulfill the same in true fear, are the church of Christ, the truly believing, christian church, the body and bride of Christ, the ark of the Lord, the mount and paradise, the house, people, city and temple of God, the spiritual Eve, flesh of Christ's flesh and bone of his bone, children of God, the chosen generation, the spiritual seed of Abraham, children of the promise, branches and trees of righteousness, sheep of the heavenly pasture, kings and priests, a holy begotten people which is God's own. Besides, they are chosen to proclaim the power of him who has called them from darkness into his marvelous light, Col. 1:14; 1 Cor. 12:27; Heb. 12:22; Matt. 5:14; 2 Cor. 6:16; 11:5; Eph. 5:30; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rom. 9:8; Isa. 61:3; Ps. 95:7; 79:13; Rev. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:9.

All those who have not the Spirit, love and life of Christ, nor

sincerely desire them, have no share in the glorious Jerusalem of God, that is, in Christ's church; no matter whether they be teacher or disciple, prince or subject, man or woman; besides they have neither prayer, nor God, nor Christ, nor promise, nor remission of sins, nor any sure consolation in eternal life, so long as they do not sincerely repent, receive God's word, and fulfill it in the true fear, as Christ himself says, "He that believeth not is already condemned," Jn. 3:18."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 345–346)

"This is a description or lifelike portrait of the Christian church, as she exists here in Spirit, and hereafter in the perfection of heavenly existence. For, in the first place the holy city is the church, whose citizens are the Christian believers and members of the household of God (Eph. 2:19), and it is called a city for the reason that as in a city there must be concord, the citizens must hold firmly together, living and acting according to the same policy, ordinances and law, if the city is to continue to exist, so it must also be in the church. There must be unity of spirit and of faith (1 Cor. 1: 9); 10: 21; Rom. 12:16); there the same rule of the divine word must govern the walk and conversation of its members, and the divine policy which this city has received of God must be concordantly observed. Therefore also the prophet declares that Jerusalem is built as a city that is compact together (Psa. 122: 3), whose citizens are united, whereby there is portrayed to us the unity of the church of God, of which the scripture says much (Psa. 128: 6-9; Eph. 4: 3; Col. 3:16; Gal. 3: 28; John 17:11, .etc.)"

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 401-402

"The church is a congregation of penitent, God-fearing, believing and regenerated people of God, who obey the Gospel of God and are baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12; Gen. 3); the spiritual Eve, of the heavenly Adam; the free Sarah who receives the seed of the divine word from God the Father, the true Abraham (Ram. 5; Gal. 3), from which the children are born through true faith in Jesus Christ, without which faith it is certain and true that no man can please God, nor be saved."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 486

"But what constitutes the church of Christ which has received from Christ the authority, not only to choose teachers and leaders, but, what is still more, to bind and to loose (Matt. 16: 19; 18: 18), and to remit and to retain sin (John 20:23), is clearly shown by the scripture in many passages, namely, that it is a congregation of believers, that is, of quickened (Eph. 2:1, 5), holy and regenerated people, who wholly believe the word of God (John 8: 30; Josh. 14: 8; Jas. 2:10), rightly teach the same and make it fruitful, who properly use the sacraments of Christ, properly keep the ban, walk in love, and in all things deal and do according to the gospel; yea, the church of Christ is the fellowship of saints, elected by the grace of Jesus Christ according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth (1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Thes: 2:13), brought together by the preaching of the gospel, and baptized, united and welded together by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4, 5), so that it is the body of Christ, his bride, taken from his side, made of one flesh and bone, washed in his blood (Eph. 5: 30), sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the word (Eph. 5: 26) and with the Spirit (Col. 1:14); for therefore he permitted his side to be opened and pierced upon the cross, letting water and blood flow therefrom (John 19: 34) that he might gather; purify and save his church. Therefore, also, she is his virgin bride, his chief joy, the holy city,

the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, and he illuminates her with the glory of God and of the Lamb (Rev. 19: 7, 8; 21: 2)."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 201-202

"Whoever does not willfully err, to him a plain way is hereby pointed out. If you, then, would be a true member of the church of Christ, you must be born of the word of God; be of a christian mind: bring forth christian fruits; walk according to his word, ordinance and command; die unto the flesh and the world; lead an unblamable life in the fear of God; serve and love your neighbors with all your heart; confess the name and glory of Christ, and be prepared for all manner of tribulation, misery and persecution for the sake of the word of God and its testimony, John 3:3, 4; 15:4; 8:31; 1 Pet. 1:23; Phil. 2:15; Rom. 8:14."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 84)

"Further, that Christ is king of his believing church is clearly testified to by the Scriptures. Thus speaks Isaiah, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end," Isa. 9:6.

The house of Jacob is the believing church as is generally understood. Of this, Christ is king, as the angel clearly testified; and as Jeremiah says concerning Christ, that he would be a king who should reign and prosper, Jer. 23:5. Also Isaiah says, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment," Isa. 32:1.

As Christ is king, both of all the earth and of his believing church, as we have shown by the plain Scriptures, according to

the grace received of God, how can John Van Leyden, now, call himself a joyous king of all, who is become the joy of the miserable?"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 428–429)

"But in the most holy body of Jesus Christ is a true and orderly state of things according to the word of God, as the true doctrine, faith, baptism, supper, love, life, worship and true excommunication; and therefore also grace, favor, mercy, remission of sins, prayer, God's promise and eternal life. Behold, brethren, where these are, there also, is the true body of Jesus Christ, of which Christ Jesus is the head. They are the true brethren of Jesus Christ who with him are born of God the Father; the spiritual Mount Zion which will never be moved; the spiritual house of Israel which is wisely ruled by Christ Jesus our only King, according to the Spirit, with the unbroken scepter of his divine word; the spiritual Jerusalem in which the great King, the blessed Christ Jesus has placed the glorious, kingly throne of his honor; the spiritual temple of the Lord in which his holy name is sincerely glorified;"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 221)

Dietrich Philip's concluding thoughts to his article "Church of God"

"Thus has the Holy Spirit portrayed to us in the scripture the church of Jesus Christ, from which we may understand how the church here must be qualified, how glorious she is, and how she shall be eternally in heaven, when all these things shall come to pass and be fulfilled in the fullness of power and glory. **And now, in whatever church this is begun and may be seen and found,**

there is the true church of the Lord, the city of the living God, the new Jerusalem, come down from above. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and wordmongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Rev. 22:14, 15).

May God, the Father of all mercy, **who by his grace has called us into the church of his dear Son preserve us therein and strengthen us unto his heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ.** Amen."

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg.407

Who is protected and preserved within the Church (Ark)?

"In Christ Jesus is also repeated God's dealings regarding Noah and the ark; the flood, and the saving of the few souls (1 Peter 3: 19); for Christ is the true, spiritual Noah, the preacher of righteousness, and the members of his household are the children of God (Matt. 12: 49), the true Christians: he has proclaimed to the corrupt world the divine wrath that is to come, and has threatened the impenitent and unbelievers with the judgment and condemnation (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 11: 20; 23:1-37); **he has hereby also built an ark, that is, the holy Christian church for the protection and preservation of all believing souls, and all who willfully despise God's word and have rejected the proffered mercy of God, have closed their eyes to the light of the gospel, and therefore have remained outside of the ark (John 5: 38: 8: 24), are destroyed by the punishment of God; yea, upon them will come the wrath and indignation of heaven, in that day when God shall judge the world by Jesus Christ (Rom. 2: 8. 9). But as many as have received Christ (John 1:12) in true faith and have**

entered into his ark, they will be preserved therein unto eternal life, and the covenant of God will be renewed and confirmed to them by the rainbow, which represents Jesus Christ the true sign of grace in heaven, at the right hand of the almighty Father (John 3: 36; 6: 47; 8: 31; 11: 26; 14: 21; Heb. 1: 3; Gen. 9:13; Eph. 1: 3), and they will be blessed of God with heavenly blessings, to grow spiritually (1 Peter 3: 9); and to increase, winning many children through the gospel of Jesus Christ (Gal. 3: 26; 4: 6) even as the apostle did, converting many thousands to God by the preaching of the word of God and operation of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 41; 4: 32; 8:11; 10: 44; 16: 5)."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 330-331

Who is the Church the mother of?

"Thus the Jews were the first, and the grace of God was offered to them first; but they rejected Christ, therefore they became the last (Acts 13: 46). It must also be noted that Zarah, who in his birth had a scarlet thread bound to his hand, signifies to us that to the Jews was given a law that punishes and kills, for according to the law (by which many sins were punished with death, 2 Cor. 3: 6-9) much blood was shed, which shedding of blood and the sternness of the law are represented and prefigured by the scarlet thread which Zarah had upon his hand. But Pharez represents the Christians, for because of him the middle wall of partition between him and his brother was parted, therefore his name was called Pharez. **Thus also for the sake of the Christians the middle wall of partition which was between the Jews and the Gentiles was taken away by Jesus Christ, who of two people made one (Eph. 2: 14-17),** and as Pharez at the time of birth, from being the last, became the first by breaking the middle wall that was between the two (for so long as it was not broken he could riot become the first), **and in like manner as the Gentiles accepted Jesus and believed in him were born of God unto the Christian Church, which is the mother of all Christians**

(Gal. 4:26), and as Christ by his death took away all that separated them from God, so they, by the death of Christ and by their faith in his name, have, from being the last, come to be first."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 272-273

Who is the Church and bride which Song of Solomon 1 and 2 is speaking of?

"Here in Christ and his church is also repeated Solomon's Song, of the King and his bride (Sol. Song 1 and 2). Here the Bridegroom, Christ, kisses his bride with the holy kiss of peace and rejoices at her beauty, and the fine fragrance of her ointments, that is, of the inner gifts, virtues, and anointment of the Holy Spirit with which she is adorned and anointed (Psa. 45:12-15; Rev. 19: 7, 8; 1 John 2:27). Here the full spiritual significance of the figure is brought out in the words of the Bridegroom to the bride: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land; the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with tender grapes give a good smell" (Sol. Song 2:10-13). That is, the dispensation of the law has passed away, the wrath of God is appeased. the punishment of the Lord has been taken away, (Roan. 6:10, 11, 14; 11:25,.26), the joyful dispensation of grace has come, the comforting gospel is heard, the sweet fruits of righteousness are in bloom, the land is fruitful in faith and in the knowledge of God, the plants of the Lord are shooting forth, the branches of the vine Jesus Christ are budding, and give forth a sweet fragrance or savor of life (Isa. 6:13; John 15:2), through the power of Christ which is in them. **Thus it was in the time of the primitive apostolic church, and still is every day at this time with all believers."**

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 353-354

What about Children?

"Again, Children are entitled to the kingdom of heaven, and are under the promise of the grace of God, through Christ; as has been said; and therefore we truly believe, that they are blessed, holy and pure, acceptable to God; are under the covenant, and in his church, but by no means, through any external sign; for there is not a word in all the Scriptures whereby to maintain, that children should be admitted into the covenant and the church by such a sign. Besides, it is very evident that they cannot be taught or admonished by word, or sacrament, as long as they are without the ability to hear and understand."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 34)

5. Who is part of the one Sheepfold?

All true believers or a particular group of true believers?

"The Lord further speaks through the same prophet, "So shall they be my people and I will be their God, and David my servant shall be King over them; and they all shall have one Shepherd," Ezek. 37:24. We have heretofore clearly proven by the Scriptures that God the Father has placed no other king over Zion, than his Son Jesus Christ, and that he gave him an eternal kingdom, therefore it is needless to go over this again; and that God the Lord says, "David my servant shall be King over them, and they all shall have one shepherd," is also understood to be said in regard to Christ; for no man can be our only shepherd; and although God gives "some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers," Eph. 4:11; yet the only Shepherd is Christ, and nobody else, as may be plainly understood from the words of Christ, **"Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd," Jn. 10:16.**

All the believing are the sheep of Christ and there is but one fold, of which Christ is the Shepherd. From this it must follow that Christ is the only Shepherd, and that no one else can be the only Shepherd. For this reason Peter calls Christ, the chief Shepherd; and Paul says, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will," Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:4.

Thus Christ is the only Shepherd; for all the believing must hear his voice and the voice of no other."

"As a hen gathers her chickens, he would gather us under the wings of his love; and as a faithful shepherd of his sheep, he would bring us to the right fold of his grace; bring us into the chamber of his covenant, and kiss us with the lips of his peace; wash us from all our uncleanness, and make us his bride; redeem us from the dominion of hell and, death, and lead us into the kingdom of heaven, and of eternal life. In short, he would release us from the power of darkness and the devil, and receive us and make us holy as his chosen children and heirs."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 142)

"Since then matters stood thus between Israel and Edam, how can a Christian be compared to Esau? For Christians are never two separate peoples who hate and persecute one another as Esau hated and persecuted Jacob, but they are called of God to peace (1 Cor. 7:15), yea, they are baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13), and are thus knit together, and whoever is not of one heart, soul and spirit with the body of Christ is no Christian. Moreover, of two people, that is, of the Jews and Gentiles, Christ, by his death and precious blood, has made one (Eph. 2:-14); he has gathered all his sheep into one fold (John 10:16), which is readily understood to mean the unity of Christians, and that therefore no Christian may be considered an Edomite or a son of Esau."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 268-269

"May the almighty God and Father of all mercy and grace, who from the beginning chose the believers and ordained them unto salvation, enlighten all zealous and well-intentioned hearts with the glory of his holy Spirit, and gather all the scattered

sheep into the unity of the true faith under the one Good Shepherd and Bishop of all believing souls, that is, under Christ Jesus, to whom be praise and honor forever. Amen."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 92-93

"Therefore all our desire and prayer to God is that he would give us his grace that we may abide in Jesus Christ, his beloved Son, continue in his doctrine and follow in his steps. **He is our Shepherd, and we are the sheep of his pasture (Isa. 40:11; Ezek. 34:23).** He is our Lord and Master, and we are his servants and disciples (Matt. 10:12-14; John 10: 26, 27; Matt. 23:8-10; John 13:13), to serve him in all obedience, and to keep his commandments.

Now, since we are all the sheep of Jesus Christ, the only Good Shepherd (John 10:11; Isa. 40:11; Ezek. 34:12, 23; Heb. 13: 20, etc.), we must therefore all pass along the same way and follow one Shepherd. If we are all servants and disciples of the one Lord and Master, we must hear his doctrine alone; and keep his commandments only (John 14: 21; 15:10; 1 John 2: 5; 5: 3); for both his word and his command are "Spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63)', and "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:1.6), and lives according to it (1 Cor. 1:18). Therefore we must wholly believe the doctrine of Jesus Christ; first of all keeping his commandments, and in the next place not introduce nor accept any strange doctrine, so that true peace may be and remain with us. **For hereunto are we called; yea, for this reason Christ reconciled us to. God by his precious blood that we might have peace with God and one another in truth and in righteousness (Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:13-16), and for this reason we are all baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13). Yea, for this reason Christ is the head of us all (Eph. 4:15), and his Holy Ghost is the life of all, so that we should all alike hold fast to Christ, become conformed to him (Rom. 8: 29), move forward in the same one Holy Spirit, speak through him alone, and by**

him be brought into all true peace and into the fulness of love and unity."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 257-258

"Thus the church of God from the beginning existed in Christ, by whom all things are renewed, yea, that there is united into one body all that are in heaven and on earth (Col. 1:16, etc.), by whom the church of God was made more glorious and more numerous, for then shadows, types and figures had an end, but the true realities came into being (Col. 2: 9; Rom. 10: 4); grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17). Then were sought the lost sheep of the house of Israel and led by Christ into the right fold (Matt. 10:6; Isa 53:6; Jer. 50: 6, 17; 1 Pet. 2:25, etc.). Then did the Gentiles of all nations come unto mount Sion to learn the law of the Lord our God, and to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to walk in the way of the Lord. Then was the prophecy fulfilled that the desolate should be comforted, and the shame and contempt of the unfruitful be forgotten (Isa. 54:1) because her Maker became her husband, his name is the Lord Sabaoth, the Redeemer and Savior of Israel, the Lord and God of the whole earth. Then did Jerusalem arise and shine and the glory of God rise upon her and cause her brightness to shine, so that the Gentiles could walk in her light, and the people of the earth in the brightness that had risen upon her. Then were given to the believers, through the knowledge of Jesus Christ, by God, the most precious promises, that they should be made partakers of the divine nature, if so be that they have escaped the corrupting lusts of this world (2 Pet. 1:5). In short, then appeared the true knowledge of God and Christ like a bright and morning star (Rev. 22:16)"

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 374-375

"Therefore we may neither begin nor finish anything but what Jesus Christ has taught us by word and example for he is the Beginning and End of all things, he is the Captain of our faith unto whom we must look, he is the true light come into the world that we should follow him (Rev. 1: 8.; 22: 3; Heb. 12:1, 2; John 1:4; 8:12; 9:5; 12:48). He is the only way to the Father, he is the true Door to the sheep; whosoever enters by him is brought into the true fold and finds the pasture of eternal life"

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 240

"Now, since we are all the sheep of Jesus Christ, the only Good Shepherd (John 10:11; Isa. 40:11; Ezek. 34:12, 23; Heb. 13: 20, etc.), we must therefore all pass along the same way and follow one Shepherd. If we are all servants and disciples of the one Lord and Master, we must hear his doctrine alone; and keep his commandments only (John 14: 21; 15:10; 1 John 2: 5; 5: 3); for both his word and his command are "Spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63)', and "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1:16), and lives according to it (1 Cor. 1:18). Therefore we must wholly believe the doctrine of Jesus Christ; first of all keeping his commandments, and in the next place not introduce nor accept any strange doctrine, so that true peace may be and remain with us. For hereunto are we called; yea, for this reason Christ reconciled us to God by his precious blood that we might have peace with God and one another in truth and in righteousness (Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:13-16), **and for this reason we are all baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13). Yea, for this reason Christ is the head of us all (Eph. 4:15), and his Holy Ghost is the life of all,** so that we should all alike hold fast to Christ, become conformed to him (Rom. 8: 29), move forward in the same one Holy Spirit, speak through him alone, and by him be

brought into all true peace and into the fulness of love and unity. But there are at this time many who with the heathen are seeking after wisdom and are not satisfied with the doctrine of the gospel, even though in Christ Jesus are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and the knowledge of God (Col. 2: 2, 3), wherefore also Paul gloried in not knowing anything but Jesus Christ and him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2).”

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 257-258

6. What are the visible signs of the True Church?

THE TRUE SIGNS BY WHICH THE CHURCH OF CHRIST MAY BE KNOWN

- I. By an unadulterated, pure doctrine, Deut. 4:6; 5:12; Isaiah 8:5; Matt. 28:20; Mark 16:15; John 8:52; Gal. 1.
- II. By a scriptural use of the sacramental signs, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; 1 Cor. 12:13; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 3; Matt. 26:25; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:22, 23.
- III. By obedience to the word, Matt. 7; Luke 11:28; John 7:18; 15:10; Jas. 1:22.
- IV. By unfeigned, brotherly love, John 13:34; Rom. 13:8; 1 Cor. 13:1; 1 John 3:18; 4:7, 8.
- V. An unreserved confession of God and Christ, Matt. 10:32; Mark 8:29; Rom. 10:9; 1 Tim. 6:13.
- VI. By oppression and tribulation for the sake of the Lord's word, Matt. 5:10; 10:39; 16:24; 24:9; Luke 6:28; John 15:20; 2 Tim. 2:9; 3:12; 1 Pet. 1:6; 3:14; 4:13; 5:10; 1 John 3:13

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 83)

“In the second place, in our tract **on the Church of God**, we have described how she may be know and distinguished from all sects, what ordinances she must keep, and thus prove that she is the Church of God. But now let everyone notice carefully among what people such conditions are found (Matt. 3:16; 28:19; John 3: 3; 2 Tim. 3), namely a sincere confession of the one eternal God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, true dividing discernment of the teaching of the law and of the gospel which bears fruit; The true new birth, True ministers of the holy Word, The right use of the sacraments of Jesus Christ, Proper observance of the washing of the feet of the saints (John 13: Matt. 18:3; 1 Cor. 5),

true evangelical separation from the world, and, in short, who keep all the ordinances and have all the characteristics of the Church of God. Read the holy scripture and note therein the characteristics which designate and portray to us the Church and measure us by this plummet and test us with this touch-stone, and that shall determine whether we or our opponents are nearer the truth, yea, whether we or they can be considered the Christian Church.”

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg.149

“I have now briefly pointed out and discussed what the church of God is, how, and by what means it is built up, what ordinances and rules are included, by what symbols it is portrayed, how it may be recognized, and how distinguished from all sects: for in all false and antichristian churches these things are not found, namely, no real new birth, no real distinction between law and gospel, that brings forth fruit, and by which people truly repent and are converted from unrighteousness unto God (Matt. 3:8; Luke 3:8), no true knowledge of the only and eternal God, who is life eternal, the fullness of wisdom and of righteousness, that is manifested by the keeping of the commandments of Christ (John 17:3; Wis. of Sol. 15:3), no true knowledge of the pure, holy, and spotless humanity of Jesus Christ, no faith that produces fruits, no scriptural baptism or Lord's Supper, no Christian washing of the feet of saints (John 13: 5-17) in the quietness of true humility, no key to the kingdom of heaven, no evangelical ban or separation, no shunning of the temples of idolatry and of false worship, no undissimulated brotherly love, no godfearing life, no keeping of the commands of Christ, no persecution for righteousness' sake. All these ordinances and evidences of true Christianity are found in, no antichristian churches in true form

and condition, but everywhere the reverse, as may be clearly seen in these days, if so be that a man has eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand (Matt. 13: 9, Rev 2:7 ; 3:6)”

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. Pg. 399-400

"O dear Lord! thus is thy precious word every where esteemed of this vicious world as fables of Æsop; as if Omnipotent Majesty, the Eternal Wisdom and Truth had taught and commanded some things to no purpose. **No, my good reader, no; his name is the Sovereign Lord; his word is his will; his command is eternal life. All things which he has taught and commanded us, he will undoubtedly have us to observe; if we do not, woe to us. Christ says, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you," John 15:14. "My counsel," says the prophet, "shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," Isa. 46:10. Therefore, O Creature, do not longer fight against God. Give ear to him and obey his voice, for it is his divine counsel, word and will. Who are you, that you would contend with God? Christ's sheep hear his voice. True christians believe and obey."**

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 38)

7. What are the visible signs of the False Church?

THE TRUE SIGNS BY WHICH THE CHURCH OF ANTI-CHRIST MAY BE KNOWN

- I. By a light-minded, easy and false doctrine, Matt. 7:16; 15:9; 16:4; Rom. 16:26; 1 Tim. 4:2; 2 Tim. 2:16, 17.**
- II. By an unscriptural use of the sacramental signs, as infant baptism and dispensation of the supper to the impenitent, 1 Cor. 11:19, 20.**
- III. By disobedience to the word, Prov. 1; Tit. 1:15, 16; Matt. 7:26; 25:26.**
- IV. By hatred of the brethren, 1 John 3:15.**
- V. By hypocrisy and denial of the name of God and Christ, Matt. 10:33; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26.**
- VI. By tyranny and persecution against the godly, John 15:20; 16; Rev. 12:13.**

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 83)

What was the lifestyle of the false church in Menno's time?

"If I travel east, west, north or south, I find in all places, nothing but vain obstinacy, perversion, blindness, avarice, pride, wantonness, rioting, drunkenness, pomp and splendor, strife, envying and ungodliness. I find (I repeat), violence, false doctrine and an impure, deceptive employment of thy sacraments, throughout the world; I find the influence of tyrants triumphing in the courts of all princes; that the learned speak

like the beast, are ambitious, avaricious, gluttonous, earthly and carnally minded, and teach according to the lusts and desires of men; there are scarcely any who seek for truth, and if there are, they must bear thy cross; therefore are my cheeks wet with tears day and night;"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 227–228)

"But every where we find hateful, envious, obdurate, malicious hearts, an aversion and despising of the divine word, lust and love of this world, haughtiness, pride, pomp, lies, knavery, disgrace, adultery, whoredom, robbery, burning, slaying, cursing, swearing, and all manner of malice.

Behold, you withered trees, and careless shepherds, these are the fruits you bring forth, and the sheep you pasture, these are the churches and disciples you comfort with the blood of the Lord, preach to them grace and peace, and to whom you dispense baptism and the Lord's Supper. If I write not the truth, reprove me.

O beloved sirs, so entirely have you lost every christian virtue, and understanding, besides, the light, and the Scriptures; you hold captive in ungodliness under the power of hell, the poor, ignorant people, whole kingdoms, cities and countries; yea, the whole wide world, and that, O God! for such small hire, namely, for one hand full of barley and one piece of bread, as the prophet says, O, that my words might be a lie, and not the truth; sunshine is clear, but still clearer is the truth which I write.

"And this is not enough for you, O you men, that you so miserably deceive the poor wretched souls; and besides this, you also rebuke, defame, belie, and betray all those who seek and fear God with all their hearts, rebuke all unrighteousness with doctrine and life, and so willingly walk in Christ. You deprive them of their possessions and lives that you may be greatly honored among the people, and be not evil spoken of in your doings, that you be not hindered I in your unlawful gain; and

that you may enjoy an easy and voluptuous life to the end of your days."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 90)

"Behold, such a faithless, impenitent, tyrannical, idolatrous, refractory, disobedient, blind, carnal people they are, who imagine that they are the believing church, and the lawful bride of Christ. These poor children do not observe that all under heaven is spoiled, even as the prophet complains that "there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land; **by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood,"** Hos. 4:1, 2. The world, says John, lieth in wickedness. **If we come to the lords and princes, there we find such pride, arrogance, pomp and wantonness, such banqueting, eating and drinking to excess, with some, such adultery and whoredom, and such unreasonable, blind idolatry, and with many, such unmerciful, raging tyranny** that they are in truth more like proud Nebuchadnezzar, drunken Belshazzar, and Nabal, and blood thirsty, vain Antioch, Nero, and Maximinns, than christian, believing lords and kind princes. If we come to the judges and rulers, to each in his station, with some **we find only violence and injustice, with some nothing but avarice, astonishing practices; they steal honestly and rob honorably; pass sentence for gain and gifts; honor the high and despise the poor, do not justice to the poor widow, orphan and the oppressed stranger, execute their office and power with rigor, and not fraternally; serve princes and not God,** as the prophet Micah laments, What the prince desires, the judge does, so that he will again reward him. Alas! **where shall we find one, who loves God with all the heart,** hates avarice, seeks the truth, who will defend the godfearing, and do him justice?"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 160)

"Therefore, brethren, it is nothing but opinion and human righteousness, to teach, without the word of God, that infants should be baptized, that they may be the better trained in the word of God and his comandments; as we find to the contrary that, although these parents have their infants baptized, they yet, from youth on, are trained by these same parents in this Adamic nature, in all manner of pride, pomp, avarice, vanity, lying, cursing, swearing, dancing, singing, foolishness, artfulness, hatred, enmity, revengefulness and to the accursed life of this world, the same, as from the beginning the heathen have done who never confessed God."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 204–205)

"They say that they believe, and yet there are no limits nor bounds to their accursed wantonness, foolish pomp, show of silks, velvet, costly clothes, gold-rings, chains, silver belts, pins, buttons curiously adorned shirts, handkerchiefs, collars, veils, aprons, velvet shoes, slippers and such like foolish finery; never regarding that the enlightened apostles, Peter and Paul have, in plain and express words forbidden this to all christian women. If this is forbidden to women how much more then should men abstain from it, who are the leaders and heads of their women. Notwithstanding all this they still want to be called the christian church."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 144)

"But if we come to the rulers and potentates, there we find nothing but haughtiness and pride, splendor, dancing, whoring, pleasure riding, sporting, stabbing, killing, warring, destroying cities and countries, and living according to the lusts of the flesh. If we come to the subordinate officers, and judges, there we find insatiable avarice, treachery and roguery, cunning devices to defraud the helpless and God-fearing (the good and pious I do

not mean); they seek gifts and presents; the right of the righteous they pervert, and willingly accept of gifts to shed innocent blood; they persecute the truth; they reject what is right and good; the fear of God is not before their eyes. If we come to the divines whether preachers, priests or monks, there we find such an idle, lazy, wanton and carnal life, such a corrupted, anti-christian doctrine and understanding of the Scriptures; such hatred, envy, defaming, betraying, lying and uproar against all the pious, that I would be ashamed to mention it before the virtuous and honest. The common people run, as a frantic heifer, as the prophet laments, Hos. 4. They lie, cheat, curse and swear by the wounds and sacraments of the Lord, by his judgment, hand, power, suffering, death and blood. I am ashamed that I have to think of these scandalous abominations. They gamble, drink and quarrel. In short, neither their superfluous, wicked lives, nor their great folly can be prevented; yet it must be said, that the mentioned lords, judges, learned and common people, are the truly regenerated church and baptized congregation of Christ."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 173–174)

"You will also, through the grace of God, find how far you and your spirit, faith, baptism, supper, conduct, church and actions are outside of Christ's Spirit, doctrine, commands, prohibition, ordinance and usage. Say, O you kings and rulers of the land, Where is your faith and love, with their pious nature? Where is the fear of your God? Your lamp and light? Your humble heart, dead unto sin? And your unblamable, godly life, which is out of God? Is it not all world and carnality which you seek and follow? We generally find in your houses and courts nothing but extravagance, pomp and showy clothing, hardness and presumptuousness of heart, insatiable avarice, hatred, envy, backbiting, betraying, whoredom, debauchery, gambling gaming, eating, drinking, dancing, swearing, stabbing,

housebreaking, &c. This is your chivalric custom and court conduct during the whole course of your lives; and you never once reflect on the misery, tribulation, humility, love and righteousness in which the Lord of lords, and King of kings, lived before you, what he taught the children of men, and what pattern or example he left them; the affliction and misery of the wretched reach not your ears; the sweat of the poor we find on your houses, and the innocent blood on your hands; you receive gifts and presents to pervert judgment, and you take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed. The prophets of Jezebel, and the priests of Baal, sensualists and flatterers, are much respected with you, they set upon soft cushions, and live well. ... But they who have met in the name of Baal, a meeting of all manner of mischief, who exceed Sodom and Gomorrah far in wickedness, where all manner of inhuman things are carried on between man and man; and between woman and woman; as it is in Spain, in Italy, and in the cloisters, in public brothel-houses, theatres, fencing-schools, and the accursed drunken taverns, where many live in open disgrace, and act so shamefully against God's word. Such live unmolested and at peace."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 79–80)

"Sooner far would they see them, for the sake of the truth of the Lord, bound hands and feet, and dragged before lords and princes, than to see them marry rich persons, who fear not God, neither walk in the ways of the Lord, but pass away time in splendor, with music, in excessive drinking, dancing and singing; sooner far would they see them scourged from head to feet, for the sake of the glory and holy name of the Lord, than to see them adorn themselves with silks, velvets, gold, silver, costly, striped and fashionable clothes, and the like vanity, pomp and haughtiness."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 151)

"I would further say that it is my fixed opinion that the beforementioned alms, of which he boasts, are not the two mites or pennies of the widow's necessities; but only a small crumb of their abundance, riches and wealth. This I frankly assert, and I have not the least doubt that if they would apply, to the support of the poor, their silk, damask and the superabundance of clothes in which they go splendidly attired, the ornaments of their houses, the golden and silver rosaries, the useless, costly ornaments, gold rings, chains, silvered and gilt swords, besides, the booty of the persecuted which may be found in the houses of some, then the poor would not, in the least, suffer from want."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 28)

"If Gellius would knock at the innermost heart of his followers, and of himself, with the hammer of the law, and zealously enkindle in them the fire of the holy gospel, so that they would, in true repentance, change their unclean, obdurate hearts, and abandon their heathenish pomp and splendor in their houses, and clothes, their vain show of gold and silver, their extravagance, avariciousness, drinking and carousing, and would enter with Christ into newness of life, then I would admit that that which he has written here concerning the Lord's Supper, did well compare with their walk. But as it is, he consoles the poor with an empty purse, only, and acts in a manner entirely contrary to that in which he should. For the signs of the New Testament are in themselves quite powerless, vain and useless, if the signification, namely, the new, penitent life, is not there, as has been said above in treating of baptism."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 65)

"Beloved lords, observe. You all boast that you are christians and have the word of God, while it is manifest that so many of the lords and princes, daily shed human blood like water, by

their ungodly warring and tumult; that they rob many innocent people of their homes and property, that they cause many afflicted orphans and helpless children to be made; and that many of them drink and carouse day and night; abuse the creatures of God above measure, namely, wine, beer, victuals, clothes, &c., all of whom are deserving of excommunication and can not stand the test of the Scriptures, as, I presume, many of the learned and preachers themselves, well know; "

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 71)

"The Scriptures plainly teach, that "the just shall live by faith," and that a "good tree brings forth good fruit." We certainly know that an humble, lowly-minded soul will never magnificently array itself in gold, pearls or other costly apparel; that those who fear the Lord, will be honest, chaste, sober; they will not talk, drink, sing and dance with dishonorable women: for the knowledge, fear and love of God and his word forbid them:"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 70)

"They are wholly bent upon this; some they seduce with fair words, others by false promises and gifts, some by giving them wine to drink; by dancing, and songs of levity, some by courteous flattery, by amorous tenderness, and the like artifice; yea, some deceive by their affected sighings and weepings, so that they can only accomplish their ungodly designs, and gratify their lusts, then all is right, and they rejoice."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 146)

"As we find many wicked men who shamefully seduce poor, simple hearts; so on the other hand we find impudent women

and girls, who are often the first cause that such disgrace is sought and sometimes practiced upon them. Although many are not guilty of the deed, nevertheless, they are not guiltless, that they make so free with other men and associates in open triflings, singing, dancing, drinking, kissing, courting, flirting, and the like vanity and abominations, whereby they kindle the fire of base passions, which continue till consumed, as may be seen."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 146)

"Besides he must be so pure and chaste in his walk that he is not allowed to have a legitimate or wedded consort, although the Holy Scriptures allow it, but the Pope has forbidden it. All these and other abominations he calls and teaches to be the holy worship, and the most holy, christian faith. Such fruits are begotten and produced by this evil tree, by the faith that is within him; and after he has orderly, sumptuously and well performed his carnal holiness, he proves his inward holiness, by seeking the best female company, wine and beer; drinks, sings, dances, laughs, shouts, scolds, fights, curses, swears, boasts, plays, courts and defiles himself with his female servant, his neighbors daughter, or wife whose husband perhaps is at sea, or some other place, trying to earn a livelihood by the labor of his hands."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 205)

"What I write. I consider unquestionably true; I write it from a true testimony of my own conscience, as before Almighty God, before whom I am, that all true, believing parents are thus minded towards their children, that they would far sooner see them set in a dungeon for the sake of the word of the Lord and his testimony, than be with the deceiving priests, in their idolatrous; churches, or with drunken, erroneous interpreters in taverns, or

in company with scorers, who despise the name of the Lord, and hate his holy word. Sooner far would they see them, for the sake of the truth of the Lord, bound hands and feet, and dragged before lords and princes, than to see them marry rich persons, who fear not God, neither walk in the ways of the Lord, **but pass away time in splendor, with music, in excessive drinking, dancing and singing;** sooner far would they see them scourged from head to feet, for the sake of the glory and holy name of the Lord, **than to see them adorn themselves with silks, velvets, gold, silver, costly, striped and fashionable clothes, and the like vanity, pomp and haughtiness.** Yea, far sooner would they see them exiled, burned at the stake, drowned, or placed on the wheel, for righteousness' sake, than see them live out of God, in all earthly and carnal lusts, than to be emperors and kings, and then be damned."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 151)

"Beloved lords, this is God's word. This is the price and measure after which you and we should strive. Whosoever does not strive after and conform himself to this measure, cannot be a christian. Therefore examine your teachers well; earnestly and diligently consider whether or not they point you to this narrow way. **I presume that they preach peace to you; make your pillows soft and agreeable, and that they do not severely reprove your court-manners and practices, such as, dancing, drinking, fornication, gambling and debauchery in general.** In short, that you build the wall, and they daub it with untempered mortar, Ezek. 13:10."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 305)

"O, dear Lord, this is spoken by God's eternal truth, which cannot lie, and how ungodly you ignorant people live, and how far

you are from the innocence of children, your fruits testify; for you despise God and his word; you hate all righteousness and truth, many of you live as the irrational creatures, others quarrel, curse, swear, are covetous, practice usury, lie, cheat, injure and defraud one another; fidelity and piety are seldom found among you, faithlessness, and knavery, alas, every where; eating to excess, gambling, gaming, drinking and carousing are pastimes amongst you: to pollute women and defile virgins is called courting and loving. To take the advantage of, and defraud one another, is called understanding and wisdom; you are valiant at beer and mighty at wine; unrighteousness and destruction are in all your ways, the poor and weak you oppress, and you revile the afflicted, the god-fearing and pious; you think and practice nothing but evil, you are without understanding, says the prophet, as a frantic heifer. Pomp and splendor you call the fashion and custom of the country."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 92–93)

"All their delight is in covetousness, avarice, pride, pomp, gold, silver, money and possessions; in buying and selling, they cheat and deal treacherously; their common life is drinking, gambling, cursing, swearing, hatred, strife and fighting; they follow the flesh in its lusts; they defame and seek the calamity of their neighbor, his dishonor, disgrace and shame. In short, they say, with the fool, in their hearts, "There is no God," Ps. 14:1."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 116–117)

"But the abominable, shameful sins and offenses, such as adultery, fornication, hatred, envy, inebriety, pomp, splendor, cursing, swearing, gambling, desire of filthy lucre, abuse of the ordinances of Christ and fraud I verily, detest from the inmost of my heart, and they should never, by the grace of the Lord, be

practiced by any sincere, godfearing christians, inasmuch as they hate and oppose them;"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 345)

"... how they dare swear by the Lord's sacred flesh, blood, death, wounds and sacrament, and how they are decked with different, vain ornaments. Let him take a view of the taverns, fencing-schools, the houses of ill-repute, &c., of which there is no lack in Germany;"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 75)

"If it is but reported (when an innocent sheep has been slaughtered), that he was an anabaptist, it is sufficient; they never inquire what he professed and what scriptural grounds he had; what his conduct and life were, whether he injured any one, or not. Neither do they reflect, that it must be a special power and work which restrains one wholly from drunkenness, lasciviousness, pomp and pride, from all vanity, abominable lying, carnal life and from all idolatry;"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 149)

"As the teachers are serving their bellies, avaricious, desirous of shameful gain, earthly-minded, as Paul says, not to say proud, lazy, vain, drunken, spiteful and envious, so are also minded, all those who are taught and begotten of them, as may be plainly seen, inasmuch as both teacher and church live and walk so shamefully that all heaven must be ashamed and astounded thereat. For their avarice, unchastity, pride, pomp, greed, drunkenness, hatred, envy, fornication, adultery, blood-thirstiness, usury, fraud, vanity, and all manner of shame have no limits or bonds. Moreover, we find open fencing-schools,

gambling houses, houses of ill-fame and drinking houses."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 343)

"Those who believe, while they worship and honor a mouthful of bread and a drink of wine as the Son of God; while they ascribe to themselves, without the word of God, the power over the living and the dead; **and while they place in Christ's stead a sinful man, a child of perdition, whose natural pride, pomp, greed, cruelty, uncleanness and idolatry are beyond description, 2 Thess. 2:4."**

"I say, by the grace, Spirit and power of the Lord, **therewith to circumcise all flesh, high, low, rich, poor, learned or unlearned, of all pride, vain show, pomp, avarice, usury, smuggling, lies, deceit, robbery, shedding of innocent blood, hatred, envy, adultery, fornication, unchastity, unnatural desires, gluttony, wine-bibbing, drunkenness, debauchery, cursing and swearing, blindness, vanity, and of the fearful, unbecoming idolatry;** that all of them, no matter who they be, by the pure fear of the Lord, of whom comes the sure knowledge of the judgment of God, become first inwardly humble before him, and then, by the sure knowledge of his blessings, so abundantly shown to us, be refreshed and consoled by Christ Jesus, and thus willingly renounce, by the power of their faith, working by love, **their own wisdom, intelligence, philosophy, sophistry, unwillingness, sloth, evil lusts, unbelief, disobedience, and the very erroneous, carnal, mad life of this world,** and enter into all divine wisdom, truth, love, zeal and soberness; the true sacraments and true religion, in full obedience to God and Christ and in all the christian fruits which flow from a pure heart, good conscience and unfeigned faith, Tit. 2:7; 1 Pet. 1:23; Eph. 6:7; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 1:16; 19:15."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 327)

"...for all those who are baptized in infancy, are called christians and are accounted partakers of the Lord's grace, merits,

death and blood, and are called his people, although the whole course of their lives, is entirely heathenish, wild and dissolute; yea, they indulge in nothing but gluttony, drinking, gaming, whoring, cursing and swearing, as though the water in baptism could make and preserve them christians."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 30)

"In truth, I know not, how the infernal Behemoth could be more devilish and cruel than you or your members, who imagine that they are the church of Christ. God preserve us! You disgrace families, you persecute the pious and god-fearing; you encourage open brothels, tippling houses, boxing schools, gaming boards, and the like disgraces, idolatrous houses and images, with all false service and the like, without measure and bounds. I will not touch upon your intolerable, blasphemous cursing and swearing, lying, defrauding, drunkenness, whoring, pomp, splendor, &c. What more shall I say, I will forbear; for it strikes me that none can be found under the broad canopy of heaven, who can minutely relate the gross abominations, wicked acts, abuses and scandals of your fellow-believers in infant baptism; a righteous person must be astounded at those great sins."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 175)

"They begin to sing a *psalm*: *Der Strick ist entzwei und wir sind frei, &c.*, i. e. The cord is cut asunder and we are at liberty, while the smell of beer and wine issues from their drunken mouths and noses. Any one who can but read this *distich*, if he lives ever so carnally, is a good evangelical man, and a fine brother. And should some one come, who would, in true and sincere love, admonish or reprove them, and direct them to Jesus Christ, to his doctrine, sacraments and unblamable example, and show that it does not become a christian to carouse and drink, and to revile and curse, &c., he must from that hour hear, that he is a

legalist (*Werkheiliger*), one who would take heaven by storm, or a factionist, a fanatic or hypocrite, a defamer of the sacrament, or an anabaptist.

Therefore awake, and behold the doings of the world. On every hand you see nothing but sensuality, wine-bibbing, infernal pride, lying, fraud, avarice, hatred, strife, adultery, fornication, war, murder, hypocrisy, open blasphemy, idolatry, and false worship, Hos. 4:11; Mic. 6:14; Gal. 5:19–21; in short, nothing but a powerful persecution of all that God teaches, commands and enjoins. Who can relate the terrible and alarming condition of the world at the present time? yet they (the wicked) want to call themselves the holy christian church. Oh, no! they who do such things, saith Paul, shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:5.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 17).

“Therefore, do not hear those who seek fat prebends and a lazy life, they deceive you, they teach you according to the lust of your hearts; they flatter you for the sake of unlawful gain, they preach to you wanton deception according to their own opinion, and not out of the mouth of the Lord; they fatten their bodies, and have fine times, from the fatness of your poor souls (beloved sirs, understand rightly what I mean), although they boast much of the gospel;”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 79).

“I repeat it, hearken not, follow not, and believe not the multitude of the learned, who suffer themselves to be called doctors, lords and masters, for they are sensual and bloodthirsty, but seek and follow the faithful in Christ, who are called the curse and filth of the earth, among these you will find Christ’s Spirit, truth, power, works and life. You will also, through

the grace of God, find how far you and your spirit, faith, baptism, supper, conduct, church and actions are outside of Christ's Spirit, doctrine, commands, prohibition, ordinance and usage.

Say, O you kings and rulers of the land, Where is your faith and love, with their pious nature? Where is the fear of your God? Your lamp and light? Your humble heart, dead unto sin? And your unblamable, godly life, which is out of God? Is it not all world and carnality which you seek and follow? **We generally find in your houses and courts nothing but extravagance, pomp and showy clothing, hardness and presumptuousness of heart, insatiable avarice, hatred, envy, backbiting, betraying, whoredom, debauchery, gambling gaming, eating, drinking, dancing, swearing, stabbing, housebreaking, &c. This is your chivalric custom and court conduct during the whole course of your lives; and you never once reflect on the misery, tribulation, humility, love and righteousness in which the Lord of lords, and King of kings, lived before you, what he taught the children of men, and what pattern or example he left them; the affliction and misery of the wretched reach not your ears; the sweat of the poor we find on your houses, and the innocent blood on your hands; you receive gifts and presents to pervert judgment, and you take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed.** The prophets of Jezebel, and the priests of Baal, sensualists and flatterers, are much respected with you, they set upon soft cushions, and live well. But those who with Micah, preach to you adversity and truth, must expect imprisonment, bonds, and death, and are deserving of all disgrace; yea, it has come so far (may God make it better) that where four or five, ten or twenty have met in the name of the Lord, to speak of the word of the Lord, and to do his work, in whose midst Christ is, who fear the Lord with all their heart, and lead an unblamable life before all the world, that if they be apprehended, and complaint brought against them, they must then be devoured by fire, or be destroyed by the sword, or sink into the depths of the waters. **But they who have met in the name of Baal, a meeting of all manner of mischief, who exceed Sodom and Gomorrah far in wickedness, where all manner of**

inhuman things are carried on between man and man; and between woman and woman; as it is in Spain, in Italy, and in the cloisters, in public brothel-houses, theatres, fencing-schools, and the accursed drunken taverns, where many live in open disgrace, and act so shamefully against God's word. Such live unmolested and at peace."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 79–80).

"Faithful reader, consider well that which I write. They boast that they are called in accordance with Scriptures, as you may hear; although it is obvious and palpable that they lead a life as the one portrayed by Peter and Jude. Many of them are so fallen in the fullness of Bacchus that they, alas, live night and day as swine in full rest; their tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean, as the prophet says, Isa. 28:8; they fearlessly walk after their own lusts, as Jude says; and they esteem as joy the temporal, lusty life, says Peter; they are spots and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you. Some of them, also, are open fornicators and adulterers. How their wives, as a general thing, conform themselves to Scriptures, may be educed from their fruits. Others are so avaricious that they have become open usurers. They are so intent upon perishable lucre, money and possessions that I dare truthfully say that they, through the easy doctrine of their gospel, have become lords upon earth; yet, most of them are loved of the world and highly esteemed by the ignorant. Their pomp, laziness, ease-seeking, vanity, light-mindedness, pride, &c., baffle all description to say nothing of their tyranny, lying, brawling, slandering, betraying and uproaring against all who seek and fear the Lord."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 20).

8. What is the Visible Church?

True believers shining forth Christ's image, or a specific body of true believers?

"Hence we conclude that since the word of God has now come to the light, there must also be a church of God; for the word of God does not remain void (Isa. 55:10, 11). Or, if someone says that there is no church of God, he must also say that there is no believer on earth, yea, that God's word is nowhere on earth; for where the word of God is, there is also a church of God, whether it be small or great. Moreover the church of God is not invisible only (as some allow themselves to imagine, and thus fancy to themselves an invisible Christian body), but also visible; for the believers know one another and consort with those of their kind, just as the whole animal world does (according to Sir. 13: 15-18), and love one another, because they are the children of the same heavenly Father, are born of the same God, are begotten of the same seed, and partakers of the same divine nature, and endued with the same Holy Spirit (John 1:13; 1 John 5:6; 1 Pet. 1:23). From this comes the difference between brotherly love or kindness and universal love or charity (2 Pet. 1:7), and for this reason the apostles addressed all their epistles to Christians, to their brethren and fellow-believers and not to the world, which would not have been the case if they had not known the Christians, nor recognized any difference between the Christians and the world.

The Christian church is also, in one respect, manifest to the world, even as Abraham by his faith, righteousness and excellent deeds according to God's word is manifest to the world (Gen. 15: 6; 22: 1-1.2) and has been left to us in the scripture as an example, for our instruction and admonition, that we should follow in his steps (Rom. 4: 3; Gal. 3: 6, 7; Jas. 2:23), in sincere trust and fruitfulness of works as God commands. Yea, Christ Jesus, our Lord and Master (Matt. 23: 8), who opened for us the

way and is the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12: 2), by word and work manifested himself to the world, and taught and commanded his disciples to do so, saying: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). Paul also admonishes the believers to so walk that their good conversation might become manifest to the unbelievers, and says: "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:14-16). And Peter says that the ungodly and blasphemers know the Christians when they no longer run with them, as in time past, in their abominable, riotous and ungodly ways (1 Pet. 4:3, 4).

Herewith is shown sufficiently that the church of God is not only invisible, but also visible, and in part manifest to the world. Moreover it is not in one particular place or location, like the figurative Jerusalem, which was at no other place but in the land of Judah alone, but the heavenly Jerusalem is everywhere, wherever God's word is rightly taught, believed and obeyed, and the sacraments of Christ are rightly observed according to the word; for the Lord has added the sacraments to his gospel and made them dependent thereon, and commanded that not only should his gospel be preached, but that his sacraments also should be observed and kept (Gal. 4: 26; Rev. 21: 2; Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 16:15, 16; Matt. 26: 26-28; Mark 14: 22-25; Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11: 23-26) . Thus did the Lord ordain, and thus it shall remain to the end; "for," says Christ, "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). Hence we will yet say that where God's word is rightly taught, believed and kept, and the sacraments of Christ are properly observed, there is the heavenly Jerusalem, there God the almighty Lord and the Lamb dwell (Rev. 21: 2; Heb. 12:22), even as Christ himself testifies, saying: "He that bath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:21,

23). And in another place God says: "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Lev. 26:12; Ezek. 36:28; 2 Cor. 6: 16)."

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 202-204

"The church of the Lord, although existing in spirit and in truth, is nevertheless also visible, as I explained in my book on The Sending of Preachers, and still declare. The reasons are as follows: **1. The name church or congregation indicates that it is not only invisible, but also visible,** for the term used is "ecclesia," that is, a gathering or meeting or congregating together, and the term applied to the person addressing the congregation is "Ecclesiastes." Hence Solomon is called "Ecclesiastes" (preacher), because he spoke to the congregation or church of Israel. Now, it is certain and incontrovertible that as Solomon was, as a preacher, visible, so the church also was visible to whom he addressed his words. **2. Christ Jesus himself chose his apostles (John 15:16), and gathered them together as a church, and was not always invisible in Jerusalem and Judea. 3. The apostles, according to the command of the Lord, through the preaching of the, gospel, in faith and truth, and by proper Christian baptism, and the power and unity of the Holy Spirit, gathered a church out of all nations (Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16). This was not an invisible body, for they, did not write nor send their epistles in a general or indiscriminate way to all people, but specifically denominating the believers and God-fearing people, and designating many places and calling many persons by name. How is it possible for all this to be invisible?"**

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. pg.483-484

[Menno quoting Gellius] *"In the fourth place he writes, "That they, invisible to the eyes of man, which cannot search the heart, but only before the eyes and judgment of God, are the true church of Christ and of God, which are found in the visible church that is, among the number of the elect; since God, through the preaching of his holy gospel and through the use of his holy sacraments, powerfully works in them, and whereby many are again born unto life everlasting, who are only known to Him who knows his people, and who searches the hearts of men. These are the true bride of Christ."*

Answer. In part I admit this to be right, however with this understanding; that the visible church, in which the invisible (as he calls them) should be included, must be salutary in doctrine, sacraments and ordinances, and unblamable in life before the world, so far as man, who is able to judge only that which is visible, can see.

Since it is as clear as day that Gellius and his like preachers are blamable in every thing, because they adulterate the word of God, abuse the sacraments, flatter the world, upbraid the pious, do not separate their church from the world, and none of their disciples reprove such open transgressions and abuses, but every one is satisfied with his doctrines and sacraments, follows and maintains them; **therefore they all act the hypocrite, walk upon the broad way, hate the cross of Christ and lay it upon others. Notwithstanding all this, that the invisible church should still be among them, I cannot admit; and for this reason; for I know to a certainty that it never fails, that where the true church of Christ is, there she will be made manifest among this wicked and perverse generation by words and work, for she can as little be hidden as a city upon a hill, or a candle upon a candle-stick, Matt. 5:14; Phil. 2:15."**

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 86)

9. Who are qualified to observe the ordinances of Christ?

All true believers or a specific group of true believers?

"This church has power through Jesus Christ (from whom it receives all things) to choose leaders and ministers. Should any one ask: Where is this church? we answer: Wherever God's word is rightly taught, believed and obeyed; for they are Christ's disciples who have, believe and keep his word (John 8:31; 17: 6). Where such. disciples of Christ are gathered in his name, there he is in the midst of them (Matt. 18:20; Luke 24:14, 15). Now, if Christ is in the midst of them, then they are a church of Christ; and if they are a church of Christ, then they must also have the power or authority which Christ gave to his church. But the power which Christ has given his church (namely, not only to choose teachers and ministers of the word, but also to bind and loose, to forgive and retain sin,) has already been sufficiently treated and explained above (Matt. 16:19; 18:18; John 20: 23)."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 202

"Herewith is shown sufficiently that the church of God is not only invisible, but also visible, and in part manifest to the world. Moreover it is not in one particular place or location, like the figurative Jerusalem, which was at no other place but in the land of Judah alone, but the heavenly Jerusalem is everywhere, wherever God's word is rightly taught, believed and obeyed, and the sacraments of Christ are rightly observed according to the word; for the Lord has added the sacraments to his gospel and made them dependent thereon, and commanded that not only should his gospel be preached, but that his sacraments also should be observed and kept (Gal. 4: 26; Rev. 21: 2; Matt. 28:16-

20; Mark 16:15, 16; Matt. 26: 26-28; Mark 14: 22-25; Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11: 23-26) . Thus did the Lord ordain, and thus it shall remain to the end; "for," says Christ, "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). **Hence we will yet say that where God's word is rightly taught, believed and kept, and the sacraments of Christ are properly observed, there is the heavenly Jerusalem, there God the almighty Lord and the Lamb dwell** (Rev. 21: 2; Heb. 12:22), even as Christ himself testifies, saying: "He that bath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:21, 23). And in another place God says: "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Lev. 26:12; Ezek. 36:28; 2 Cor. 6: 16)."

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 203-204

"Fifthly, that Christ, as well as Moses, ordained and appointed in his kingdom, community, or church, prophets, preachers, teachers, ceremonies and ordinances, which are to be observed by all true christians for ever."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 69)

"In the first place, we confess that we must believe all that is written of the Lord's Supper, especially what our Lord Jesus Christ in his great love commanded the believers to do in remembrance of his death as an admonition to promotion and strengthening of Christian love and unity, in such form, that he took the bread in his hand, and, after blessing it, broke it and gave it to his disciples to eat (Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; Matt. 26:26), and said: "This is my body which is given for you." After this he gave his disciples the cup that they should all drink out of it, and said:

"This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you; this do in remembrance of me."

This institution and ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ is to be observed by all Christians. At a meeting of Christians bread and wine are to be set forth, and the death of the Lord is to be proclaimed by a minister of the word and taken thoroughly to heart by every Christian, and because of which thanks are to be given to God, after which the bread is to be broken and received and eaten by every Christian, and the wine is to be drunk in true faith and in remembrance of the fact that Christ Jesus. gave his body for us and shed his blood for us. This must be firmly believed, without doubting, for we maintain that above all other things one must believe, and that faith must conform to every word of God."

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 67

"1. There must be a Christian congregation that has assembled in the name of the Lord and that declares and shows the Lord's death with a true faith and sincere, openhearted confession, **that just as Christ Jesus gave and left to his apostles and all believers the eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine, so he freely gave them his body and blood as a gift for an eternal salvation (1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:23).**

To this belongs a calling to remembrance, and a thoroughly sincere commemoration of, the suffering and death of the Lord, of the conformity to his suffering and death, of unity of the- Spirit and of faith, of love to God and fellow-men, all of which belongs especially to the observance of the Lord's Supper (Phil. 3:10).

2. **We believe that this Supper must be partaken with those only who are the friends of God, the true Christians, who have accepted the gospel and thereupon have amended their lives, and who, upon confession of their faith, have been properly baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matt. 28:19), and in this faith are faithfully solicitous**

to lead a Christian life, and diligently meditate upon conformity to Christ, his suffering and death, his burial and resurrection; in short, to be one body with Christ and all the saints. These, and no others, are, according to the teaching of the gospel, to be reminded by this Supper and confirmed in the fellowship of Christ and all the saints.

3. This Supper is to be observed concordantly by all believers (as many as are gathered together) and not by one alone, as some do. For thus the Lord ordained, and thus he desired it to be observed; all Christians must know how to conform thereto; for if it is not right to despise or alter a testament executed by man. how much more so is it to despise the testament of Jesus Christ or to break his commandments (Gal. 4:14).”

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 87-88

“...for all who have, by one Spirit, been baptized into one body and made to drink one Spirit, and thus have become one body and one bread in Jesus Christ, must also, according to the ordinance of the Lord and the teaching of the apostles, break bread one with another (1 Cor. 10:16; 11:19).”

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 54

“...for to those who have true faith in Jesus Christ, and through, the Spirit have been baptized with all believers into one body, the Lord's Supper may not be denied; yea, being one body and one bread with all believers, they must also with them partake of one bread.”

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 54

"But what constitutes the church of Christ which has received from Christ the authority, not only to choose teachers and leaders, but, what is still more, to bind and to loose (Matt. 16: 19; 18: 18), and to remit and to retain sin (John 20:23), is clearly shown by the scripture in many passages, namely, that it is a congregation of believers, that is, of quickened (Eph. 2:1, 5), holy and regenerated people, who wholly believe the word of God (John 8: 30; Josh. 14: 8; Jas. 2:10), rightly teach the same and make it fruitful, who properly use the sacraments of Christ, properly keep the ban, walk in love, and in all things deal and do according to the gospel; yea, the church of Christ is the fellowship of saints, elected by the grace of Jesus Christ according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth (1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Thes: 2:13), brought together by the preaching of the gospel, and baptized, united and welded together by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4, 5), so that it is the body of Christ, his bride, taken from his side, made of one flesh and bone, washed in his blood (Eph. 5: 30), sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the word (Eph. 5: 26) and with the Spirit (Col. 1:14); for therefore he permitted his side to be opened and pierced upon the cross, letting water and blood flow therefrom (John 19: 34) that he might gather; purify and save his church. Therefore, also, she is his virgin bride, his chief joy, the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, and he illuminates her with the glory of God and of the Lamb (Rev. 19: 7, 8; 21: 2)."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 201-202

10. How Does a non-true Church Community become Part of God's True Church (Community)?

Unite to a specific True Church, or Seek to become a True Church based on the Word?

“Lastly, most beloved, if you want to be the true church of Christ and boast of the truth, grace, word, Spirit, and blood of the Lord, then separate, first, all your preachers who are urged by the unclean spirit and flesh, who, therefore are not of the church of Christ, namely, all those who are desirous of filthy lucre, as was said above. Again, also, all drunkards, wranglers, flatterers, proud, envious and avaricious; for all these testify by their fruits that they have not the Spirit of Christ. And if they have not the Spirit of Christ, how can these poor, miserable men, then, teach and impress the Spirit, power and will of God, the word of grace, and the word of eternal life, which they do not confess? Yea, brethren, it is impossible for me to teach the things which I do not know myself, and how shall I serve in the house of the Lord while I myself am a castaway? Judge for yourselves.

Secondly, cleanse your church, also. Exclude, according to the word of God, all adulterers and fornicators, drunkards, slanderers, swearers, those who lead a shameful and inordinate life, the proud, avaricious, idolatrous, disobedient unto God, whoremongers and the like, that you may become the holy, christian church which is without spot or blemish, which is as a city built upon a rock. In case these are truly observed and found with you, and, besides, a free, christian doctrine, the true ministration of the sacraments of Christ, not according to the opinion of men or of the learned, but according to the true doctrine of Christ and his apostles—again, the fear and love of

God, and an unblamable life, according to God's word, then you will ever have us as your brethren; for it is such we seek. But if you remain as you are, then I say publicly, Better to die than to enter into your doctrine, sacraments, life, and church, as was said above."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 346)

“It is for the beforementioned reasons that we will not hear nor attend your preaching, nor partake of your supper. **For we shall never desire to enter into your church and to become one body with you until you sincerely repent and embrace a free, christian doctrine, not hired nor sold out, but solely urged by the Holy Spirit through brotherly love, a true use of the sacramental signs, according to the command, doctrine and usage of Christ and his apostles, and an unblamable life and walk, led in the love and fear of the Lord. If we do so before these are found with you, we are sure that we sin against God and his holy word,** from which may the kind, merciful Father save us. For before God, it does not become us to commit ourselves to such doctrine, admonition and church, who first, err in doctrine, and secondly, do not in the least show by their lives that they are the truly regenerated children of God, or the true church of Jesus Christ. But most beloved, it behooves you, as you have not the unblamable doctrine and walk of Jesus Christ, to **renounce your doctrine and life and voluntarily bid adieu to all the lusts of the flesh, to seek the kingdom of God in sincerity of heart, to enter with us, into all obedience to our beloved Lord Jesus Christ with all your strength, if you do not desire to err willfully, that we together, may become the holy, christian and unblamable church,** godly, holy, clean, obedient unto God, serving all mankind, powerful in truth, shining forth in righteousness, dead unto sin, living by the Spirit, nay, in all things christian, heavenly and unblamable in Christ Jesus.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 344)

“But, as we can substantiate these assertions by the power of the truth, why, then, must we yet hear so many evil words? It were, indeed, high time that the preachers would quit their deceiving, that they and their disciples, who, where and what they be, would awaken, that they would tremble at the wrath and punishment of God, would repent, conform themselves to the Spirit, word and example of the Lord, and establish a true christian church, in accordance to the command of the Scriptures, and that they disclaimed and abjured their borrowed names and false boastings, as evangelical teachers, faithful shepherds, soul-savers, and preachers of the holy word, which they, to the dishonor of God, merely claim in appearance.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 68)

“We call on all, poor, deceiving teachers and false sects, great and small, who are against the Spirit, ordinances, word and life of Christ, sincerely to repent, and help us to resist, not by violence, tyranny or sword; as, alas! it is the custom with you, but by the Spirit of Christ, with doctrine, exhortation and the like virtuous services and mild means, so that they may turn from evil, and hear and follow Christ.

Permit all faithful messengers and servants of God to preach Christ, to use his sacraments and ordinances according to the Scriptures, lead a penitent and unblamable life, and gather unto Christ a glorious church, that they may, through the Spirit and grace of God, according to the Scriptures, win and bring unto Christ an unspotted, pure virgin.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 133)

“Herewith is shown sufficiently that the church of God is not only invisible, but also visible, and in part manifest to the world. Moreover it is not in one particular place or location, like the

figurative Jerusalem, which was at no other place but in the land of Judah alone, but the heavenly Jerusalem is everywhere, wherever God's word is rightly taught, believed and obeyed, and the sacraments of Christ are rightly observed according to the word; for the Lord has added the sacraments to his gospel and made them dependent thereon, and commanded that not only should his gospel be preached, but that his sacraments also should be observed and kept (Gal. 4: 26; Rev. 21: 2; Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 16:15, 16; Matt. 26: 26-28; Mark 14: 22-25; Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11: 23-26). Thus did the Lord ordain, and thus it shall remain to the end; "for," says Christ, "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). **Hence we will yet say that where God's word is rightly taught, believed and kept, and the sacraments of Christ are properly observed, there is the heavenly Jerusalem, there God the almighty Lord and the Lamb dwell** (Rev. 21: 2; Heb. 12:22), even as Christ himself testifies, saying: "He that bath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:21, 23). And in another place God says: "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Lev. 26:12; Ezek. 36:28; 2 Cor. 6: 16)."

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 203-204

Can any Church begin to be a true Church?

Dietrich Philip's concluding thoughts to his article "Church of God"

"Thus has the Holy Spirit portrayed to us in the scripture the church of Jesus Christ, from which we may understand how the church here must be qualified, how glorious she is, and how she shall be eternally in heaven, when all these things shall come to

pass and be fulfilled in the fullness of power and glory. And now, in whatever church this is begun and may be seen and found, there is the true church of the Lord, the city of the living God, the new Jerusalem, come down from above. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and wordmongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Rev. 22:14, 15).

May God, the Father of all mercy, who by his grace has called us into the church of his dear Son preserve us therein and strengthen us unto his heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ. Amen."

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg.407

Why Should One Be Rebaptized by water?

"Reply to the base charge of being Anabaptists. We must also be called anabaptists by the learned, because we baptize at the confession of faith, as Christ commanded his disciples to do, and as the holy apostles taught and practiced, as did also the worthy martyr Cyprian, all of the African bishops; and besides, because we, with the Nicene Council, cannot accept the heretical baptism which is of anti-christ, as christian baptism; and because we are also informed by the Scriptures that St. Paul rebaptized some of those who were baptized with the baptism of John which was from heaven, because they did not acknowledge the Holy Ghost, Acts 19:3. Inasmuch as we but baptize according to the command of Christ and according to the teaching and practice of the holy apostles; nor do any more than Cyprian did, together with the council of Carthage and Nice, in this matter (although we acknowledge that we do not believe in all their doctrine); and, in as much as we rebaptize those who are not baptized with a divine baptism (as were those who were baptized of John), but

with the baptism of anti-christ, and had at the time of their baptism no knowledge of divine matters, as both nature and the Scriptures teach, since they were yet unconscious infants, and as we are for this reason called anabaptists by the learned; therefore, indeed, Christ and his apostles, Cyprian and his bishops, the Nicene Council, the holy apostle Paul also must have been an anabaptist. This is incontrovertible."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 318)

*"Answer. These very offensive words, like ***anabaptists, secretly coming, hedge-preaching, pernicious seed, &c.***, alas, plainly show the disposition of the man who penned them. Yes, my readers, Gellius knows as well as I do, what Christ has commanded concerning baptism, and how the holy apostles practiced it. **Again, that Paul rebaptized some who were baptized of John (although John's baptism was from Heaven) only, because they were not informed concerning the Holy Ghost; that the worthy martyr Cyprian and the African bishops, together with the council of Nice, did not acknowledge the baptism of heretics, as baptism, on account of their being outside of Christ's church, and without his Spirit and word.**"*

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 7-8)

"..we have not practiced rebaptism, but prove and practice thereby the true, only Christian baptism, which avails before God, which takes place in Spirit and in truth, which is practiced according to the scripture and is received upon confession of faith, the praise for which is not of men, but of God (Matt. 18; Matt. 3:1; Mark 16:15, 16; Matt. 28:19; Acts 2: 41; - 8: 36; 10: 47; 16:31; 18:8; 22:16)."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 147-148

11. By what authority may the church govern its members?

Scripture alone, or man-made commandments and traditions along with Scripture?

“Behold, beloved reader, I admonish and advise you, if you seek God with all your heart, and do not wish to be deceived; depend not upon men and their doctrine, no matter however old, holy and excellent they may be esteemed; for the divines, both ancient and modern are opposed to each other; but put your trust, alone in Christ and his word, in the sure instruction and practice of his holy apostles, and you will through the grace of God, be perfectly safe from all false doctrines and the power of the devil; and may walk with a free and pious mind before God.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 37).

“Beware of all innovations and strange doctrines not contained in the word of Christ and his apostles, nor conformable thereunto. Show forth, at all times, Christ and his word. If any man introduces a doctrine differing from that taught by Christ and his word, let him be excommunicated.” “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” He is the precious corner-stone in Zion, which shall abide forever. Hear, believe, trust, follow, hope and abide in him; press diligently after him, conforming yourselves unto his Spirit, word and life, and you shall neither deceive nor be deceived”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 271)

"For whoever loves or honors any creature more than the Creator, or instead of, God; whoever looks upon any doctrine of men as being equal to or above the word of God, and trusts, seeks, or hopes for righteousness or salvation in any kind of false worship which God has not instituted by an express declaration in God's word, without doubt worships the molten calf, and is counted by the Lord as an idolater. However gloriously he may embellish or adorn his idolatry with the appearance of holiness, calling it true worship, before the Lord, it is nevertheless nothing but idolatry (Deut. 5: 6; 12: 4); for God will be God and Lord alone and acknowledged as such; neither will he be served according to our own notions, but according to his word alone (Isa. 28:9; Matt. 15:2, 3)."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 341-342

"The holy divine scripture teaches us everywhere that we shall accept, believe, and observe nothing but God's word and command alone, and that we shall neither add to nor take from Gods word (Deut. 4:2), and that God will not be served with the doctrines and traditions of men (Matt. 15:9), and that every plant which God the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up (Matt. 15:13), and that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump (1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9).

Many ancient and modern teachers have examined into and concluded and therefore also publicly wrote and declared that whatever God has not commanded, that he has prohibited. Hence all worship and service that is not ordained or instituted by an express command of God, is wrong, no matter how much gloss or disguise may cover it.

Hence to undertake to establish a form of worship or service according to human reason without God's command is simply setting up idolatry; for he will not be superseded by us; he proposes to teach and show us how we are to serve him, his word is to be present to enlighten and guide us; yea, without his

word all is idolatry and mere lies, no matter how glorious and beautiful it may be.

Therefore let every individual see that he is sure that his worship and service is founded on God's word and not on what he himself may consider good, or proper, for let him who worships, without having the testimony, know that he is not serving the true God, but his own imaginary idol, that is, his own opinion and false ideas, and hence is serving the devil himself; thus wrote Martin Luther in his Preface to the Prophets.

But we have not made this reference to such teachers with the idea that it should form the basis of our hope or trust. Never! God's word is unto us a sure and all-sufficient and an unwaveringly solid foundation of truth. We have merely done so on account of our opponents, to show that we are not the first who have repudiated the doctrines and commandments and ceremonies of men and looked upon them as idolatry."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 33-34

"If, now, I contend against his scepter, trample upon his commandments and teach or write aught against his heavenly doctrine, then I teach and write against the doctrine of the holy, christian church. For this holy, christian church has but one doctrine which is fruitful and godly, which is the limpid, pure and unmixed word of God, the lovely gospel of the grace of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; 1 Pet. 1:25. All teachings and decrees which do not accord with the doctrine of Christ, are but teachings and commandments of men, be they teachings and opinions of doctors, decrees of popes, councils or any thing else; they are doctrines of the devil, and are accursed, Matt. 15:9; 1 Tim. 4:1; Gal. 1:8, 9. Since we write and teach nothing but the pure, heavenly word, and the perfect ordinances of the holy gospel of Jesus Christ and of his apostles; therefore

we do not teach and write against the teachings of the holy church, but we sustain them."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 193)

"From all this the indisputable conclusion follows that true Christians must serve God according to his word alone..."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 162

"...God hates all false doctrine; and therefore the apostles admonish us that we shall abide in God's word alone, as John says, "Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father," 1 Jn. 2:24."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 434–435)

"Praying you, I say, not to follow in this and other matters, human wisdom, but the wisdom of God; not intelligence, but Scripture; not flesh, but Spirit; not the writings and opinions of the learned, but alone the testimony of Christ and his apostles, fearing God in purity of heart from your inmost souls, as I should, also myself, **that we may not be like unto them who are ever learning and never come to the knowledge of the truth."**

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 339)

"What am I that I should boast of, seek and teach any thing else than the ever blessed Christ Jesus alone, his word, sacraments, obedience and his god-pleasing, virtuous and unblamable life. He is the only one of whom it is written: That he

was begotten of the Holy Ghost; that he knew no sin; that guile was not found in his mouth, that his doctrine, word, will, and commandments are life eternal, Matt. 1:25; Luke 1:31; 1 Pet. 2:22; Isa. 53:12."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 248)

"I will, by the grace of the Lord, change my heart in regard to this matter, and follow your doctrine. **But, above all, brethren, I want you to understand that I will not accept nor listen to human doctrines, nor cleverness, nor garbling of the Scriptures, nor flatterings, nor presumption, in regard to this but solely to the plain Scriptures, truth and immutable testimony; as we have presented to you, in this matter of our confession, nothing but scriptural truth and immutable testimony. But if you cannot advance such, then give heed, keep your peace and leave us our faith in peace; for, most beloved brethren, before God, I seek nothing but the pure, unadulterated word of God and its testimony.**"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 348)

"Now, it is an established fact that "the Spirit quickeneth," and that Gods Word is Spirit and life (John 6:63) and alone is food for the soul."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 112

"That is, faith trusts in the invisible God, and hopes for his grace, and seeks after the things that are not seen and eternal (2 Cor, 4: 1.8; Col. 3: 2); for **faith has three characteristics by which it may be known and rightly distinguished- from all unbelief.**

The first characteristic is that nothing but God's word is believed, for faith comes by the hearing of the word of God (Rom. 10:17; Psalms 116:10, 111, and not from the doctrine of

men; for faith looks to God alone, and believes him faithful and true in all his words and promises, and all carnal men deceitful (Jer. 17: 9); hence faith judges not by the word of men, however plausible and good it might appear to be, but by God's word alone.

The second characteristic is that faith believes all God's words, and makes no exceptions; for all God's words are as a fire (Jer. 23:29), and a shield to all who put their trust in him (Psa. 119:114), and God has so earnestly commanded that nothing should be added to or taken from his word (Deut. 4: 2; 12: 32; Josh. 1: 7; Prov. 30: 6; Rev. 22:18, 19, etc.), but to -do according to all his words and commands. And Christ says in the gospel: "Man shall live . . . by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4: 4; Luke 4:4; Deut. 8:3; Psa. 104:29). Therefore all words of God must be believed, and not only some, according to our fancy, and the others rejected.

The third characteristic of true faith is that faith seeks God alone and eternal salvation (Col. 3: 1, 2), seeks those things which are invisible and heavenly, lays aside everything that is temporal and transitory, knows no man after the flesh (2 Cor. 5: J 5), seeks not things human, but things divine. and looks not upon man's work and righteousness, but on Jesus Christ alone (Matt. 16: 12, 16)."

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 250-251

"From this it is evident that those who have true faith reject all the doctrines and opinions of men, and trust in God alone, take his word as truth, and confess all God's word as being right, and obey it, and with all diligence seek heavenly things. On the other 'hand, those who set the doctrines of men above or on a par with God's word, seek temporal things more than the kingdom of God and his righteousness (Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 4:8, etc.), are unbelievers, and however beautifully they may speak

of the scriptures and of faith, it is mere vanity and has no weight."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 251

"Before beginning a reply to this book it is (according to my understanding) very necessary to have a true test by which to prove all things (1 Cor. 1), a measuring rod by which to measure everything, yea, to lay a good foundation, upon which everything may be well built and grounded (1 Cor. 3:11). But the only touchstone and the only measuring rod is God's word, and the only foundation is Jesus Christ; therefore for the man who seeks and desires salvation there is nothing better or safer than to confess and believe from God's word, that saving grace, the steadfast, immovable truth, and a righteous and perfect life is embodied in and comes from Jesus Christ (John 1:17; Tit. 2:11), and that therein there can be no change whatever, for his words are Spirit, and they are life (John 6:63; 15:3). And in this manner God the heavenly Father has revealed his inner will and whole counsel to us, and nothing else (that is contrary to or not in conformity with the doctrine of Jesus Christ) may ever be brought forth either by men or angels or it will be accursed, as Paul expressly declares (Gal. 1: 8)."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 473

"All Scripture, both of the Old and New Testaments, rightly explained according to the intent of Christ Jesus and his holy apostles, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 2 Tim. 3:16; but whatever is taught contrary to the Spirit and doctrine of Jesus is accursed of God, Gal. 1.

Inasmuch as there is but one corner stone laid of God, the Almighty Father, in the foundation of Zion, which is Christ Jesus, Isa. 28:16; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:6; upon whom alone we should

build conformable to his word, and upon none other; and as the whole world, to the contrary, have built upon strange corner stones, such as popes, councils, doctors, doctrines and commandments of men; upon wrong practices of long standing, and still continue to build upon pretending prophets; and as they thus so shamefully reject the only, noble and finished corner stone, the ever blessed Christ Jesus—therefore I can not be restrained, but must warn all godfearing souls in the Lord, by my writings, wherever they shall be taken, read and heard, that from this moment they may awaken, if they desire to be saved (whether I live or die by so doing), and that they may without delay, enter upon the wholesome doctrine, sacraments, obedience and life of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ; for in him alone is life eternal, as has been frequently said above.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 249)

"All who taught anything contrary to the word of Moses, were false prophets, for nothing was to be taken from, nor added thereto, but all appeals were to the law and the testimony, Deut. 4:2. All the prophets of the present day are false who teach contrary to the Spirit, word, commands, prohibitions, ordinances and example of Christ, even though such should exhibit themselves in appearance, as holier than John, more zealous than Elias, and more miraculous than Moses."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 97)

"Let every Christian ponder well these words, that an angel of God shall be accursed who teaches other than that which Paul and the other apostles taught. Hence no doctrine is of any value that does not harmonize with the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and man does not live by words which proceed from

the will or mouth of man, but alone by the words of God (Matt. 4:4), which have been made known to us by Jesus Christ and his apostles. Here is the bread of heaven; here is the water of life; if any man hungers after righteousness, he will find here the bread of life (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 5:6), and whoever eats of it becomes strong and sound in Christ; his soul will be satisfied, so that he will no longer hunger for the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. If any man thirsts for his salvation he will find here the purest well of water; and he that drinks out of this fountain, in him it shall be a well of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4: 14; 7: 38), **and he will never thirst again for the impure waters of the doctrines of men."**

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 137

"We humbly beseech and admonish all who fear God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of the Spirit, **that you would accept our plain and simple writing in good part, and interpret and understand it according to the unadulterated love and scriptural truth (Rom. 12:9), and exclude all human opinion, reasoning and subtlety, and take counsel with! the word of God alone, as we hope all who fear the Lord will do. "**

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 491

"Dear children, reform yourselves. **Every one who teaches you otherwise, than is testified by the word of the Lord, even though he were one who could dry up the bottom of the sea, and hurl the stars down from heaven, let him be abandoned, and let his doctrine be regarded as deceiving and erroneous, for, to all eternity there may no other foundation be laid, than that which is laid, Christ Jesus.** He is the corner stone and foundation in Zion, on whom all the building fitly framed together (according

to his will, Spirit and word), groweth into a holy temple unto the Lord."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 96)

"Thus we counsel and admonish all in general, of whatever name, rank, class or condition; that they would be pleased to take good heed to the word of the Lord, which we have here briefly presented, according to our limited gift; I hope, by the grace of God, that you will find nothing in it but the infallible truth of Jesus Christ, **for we have not directed you to men, nor to the doctrine, nor commands of men, but alone to Jesus Christ, and to his holy word which he taught and left upon earth,** and sealed it with his blood and death, and afterwards had it promulgated throughout the world, by his faithful witnesses and holy apostles.

Besides, we say, that all doctrines, which do not agree with the doctrine of Jesus Christ and his apostles, if ever so fair in appearance, they are accursed. For his word is the truth, and his command is eternal life, therefore, we kindly entreat you, from our inmost souls, **that you be pleased to accept and read with an understanding heart, this our *Instruction concerning the Spiritual Resurrection and New Creature*, and compare and prove it with the doctrines of the apostles; if it does not agree with theirs, let it be accursed, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."**

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 237)

"Let none be offended thereat. **But let all give heed to the word of God, and abide by it,** that they may be delivered from the strange woman, as Solomon says (by which woman we should understand all the false teachers), "Even from the stranger which flattereth with her words; which forsaketh the guide of her youth,

and forgetteth the covenant of her God," Prov. 2:16; 4:6, 7. **This is the true nature of all false teachers.**

First, they forget the pure doctrine of Christ, and choose a strange doctrine. They enchant others so that they can not believe the truth, and use smooth talk, as Paul says, "By good words and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple," Rom. 16:18.

Secondly, they leave their Master, Christ, whom alone, they should hear, as the Father testifies of him, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him," Matt. 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35. But this voice from the Father, all false teachers forget, and they leave their only Master, Christ Jesus; for as they are not of his sheep they hear not his voice, Matt. 23:9; Jn. 10:26."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 427)

"In the second place we desire with ardent hearts, even at the cost of life and blood, that the holy gospel of Jesus Christ and his apostles, which alone is the true doctrine, and will remain so until Jesus Christ will reappear in the clouds, may be taught and preached through all the world, as the Lord Jesus Christ commanded his disciples at the last moments while he was on earth, Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 243)

"Cyprian also was a Greek, as well as Origen, and lived twenty-five years after him. **If then infant baptism was the doctrine of the apostles and practiced by them, as Origen and Augustine assert, it must first be proved by the Scriptures, and in that case Cyprian must have committed a great sin to leave the observance of the doctrines and practices of the apostles at liberty. For any thing that is apostolic, dare not be changed by any man.** The word of Paul is indisputable, "Though we, or an

angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed," Gal. 1:8. Else we would be constrained to acknowledge, that the twelve apostles with their doctrine, were not the twelve foundations and twelve gates of the new Jerusalem, Rev. 21:12."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 37)

"Inasmuch as there is but one corner stone laid of God, the Almighty Father, in the foundation of Zion, which is Christ Jesus, Isa. 28:16; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:6; upon whom alone we should build conformable to his word, and upon none other; and as the whole world, to the contrary, have built upon strange corner stones, such as popes, councils, doctors, doctrines and commandments of men; upon wrong practices of long standing, and still continue to build upon pretending prophets; and as they thus so shamefully reject the only, noble and finished corner stone, the ever blessed Christ Jesus—therefore I can not be restrained, but must warn all godfearing souls in the Lord, by my writings, wherever they shall be taken, read and heard, that from this moment they may awaken, if they desire to be saved (whether I live or die by so doing), and that they may without delay, enter upon the wholesome doctrine, sacraments, obedience and life of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ; for in him alone is life eternal, as has been frequently said above."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 249)

"Beloved Sirs, awake, and mend your ways, for it does not become the creature to rise up against the Creator. Christ alone

will be the head of his church, the Teacher in his school; and he alone, the King who will judge his kingdom; not with the doctrines and commands of men, nor with slaying and murdering, but with his Holy Spirit, power, grace and word."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 24)

"But faith must be genuine, that is, of such nature and power, **and may be recognized in this that every word of God is believed, all doctrines of man are rejected,** all hope is, with the whole heart, placed upon the grace of Jesus Christ, all earthly things are cast aside, self is denied and heavenly things are sought after with all diligence (Deut. 4:1, 2; 12: 32; 1 Peter 1: 3; Heb. 12:10; Col. 3: 2; Phil. 3: 20; 2 Cor. 4:18), and out of pure fear of the Lord they hate sin and love righteousness (Psa. 45:7; Heb. 1:9), and thus show forth the fruits of the Holy Spirit."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 386

"Does not the whole Scripture teach, that Christ is the truth, and shall abide forever? Is not the apostolic church, the true christian church? We know that all human doctrines are chaff and froth, and that anti-christ has spoiled and corrupted the doctrine of Christ; why then do they hate me, because out of pure zeal I teach and propound the doctrine of Christ and his apostles unadulterated?" No one however, hates the opposers of antichrist but such as are his members. **Had I not the word of Christ, how cheerfully would I be taught it, for I seek it with fear and trembling; in this I can not be deceived. I have by grace, through the influence of thy Holy Spirit, believed and accepted thy holy truth as the sure word of thy pleasure; it will, also, never deceive me.** Let them write and vociferate, threaten, and dispute, boast, extirpate, persecute and destroy, as they please, still thy word will triumph and the Lamb will gain the victory. **Yea,**

I rest assured, that with this my doctrine, which is thy word, I shall, at the coming of Christ, judge and condemn, not only men, but also angels. And though I and my beloved brethren were totally extirpated, and taken from the earth, yet thy word would remain eternal truth."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 225)

"God is and dwells with those who are of a contrite and humble spirit (Isa. 57: 15; 66: 2), who fear his word and keep it. The new birth or life is where one does right and leads a holy life (1 John 2: 29; 1 Pet. 1: 22, 23), has a pure heart, a good conscience and sincere faith that cometh by the word of God (Rom. 10:17), for that purifies the heart and seals the conscience, and from this comes faith through the operation of the Holy Spirit (John 15:26). For this reason faith looks unto God and his holy word alone (Heb. 11), lightly esteeming every oppression endured for the Lord's sake and for the sake of his word, and heeds no creature who would hinder it; yea, faith leads and impels man to the point where he loves God his Lord above all creatures, and even above his life (Matt. 22:36; Matt. 16: 24-26)."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 166

(Menno addresses erring teachers who thought Elijah the prophet would make another appearance.)

"Secondly, Even though Elias himself were to come, he dare not teach any thing against the foundation and doctrine of Christ and the apostles, but he must, if he would preach aright, teach and preach conformably to the same, for, by the Spirit, word, actions and example of Christ, all must be judged, and receive the last sentence, otherwise the whole Scriptures are false.

Therefore, one of two things must follow, either that we are not to look for an Elias any more, since John was the Elias who was to come; or **if an Elias should come yet, he must propose and teach us nothing but the foundation and word of Christ, according to the Scriptures;** for Christ is the man who sits upon David's throne, and shall reign forever in the kingdom, house, and congregation of Jacob.

I would then, herewith sincerely admonish you all to weigh and prove all spirit, doctrine, faith, and conduct, with the Spirit, doctrine and conduct of Christ, and that ye be temperate. **All spirits which accord therewith, are from God, but those which are contrary, are from him, who from the beginning has turned Adam and his race aside from God, and has led them by lies onward to death.**"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 97–98)

"Therefore we may neither begin nor finish anything but what Jesus Christ has taught us by word and example for he is the Beginning and End of all things, he is the Captain of our faith unto whom we must look, he is the true light come into the world that we should follow him (Rev. 1: 8.; 22: 3; Heb. 12:1, 2; John 1:4; 8:12; 9:5; 12:48). He is the only way to the Father, he is the true Door to the sheep; whosoever enters by him is brought into the true fold and finds the pasture of eternal life; but whosoever does not enter by him, but climbs up by some other way, the same is a thief and a robber (John 10:1; 14: 6), as Christ himself says. **But those who do not enter by Christ, but as thieves and robbers climb in through some opening, try to be saved by some other way and means than by Christ Jesus alone, or who desire to serve God in some other manner than that which they have received from the commands, doctrine and example of Christ Jesus and his apostles,** for without Christ Jesus there is neither wisdom nor righteousness, nor holiness, nor salvation, nor truth, nor life. Therefore John says: "He that believeth on the Son hath

everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3: 36). That is: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in me hath both the Father and the Son."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 240-241

"Behold, dear brethren, against these doctrines, sacraments and life no imperial decrees, no papal bulls, no councils of the learned, no long usage, no human philosophy, no Origen, Augustine, Luther, Bucer, prison, banishment or murder can prevail; for it is the eternal, imperishable word of God; it is, I repeat, the eternal word of God, and will remain immutable forever."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 244)

Does the Church have authority to enforce the councils and customs of man?

"But still I would warn you not to call that which is right and pure, wrong and impure; nor that which is wrong and impure, right and pure; not to dissolve that which the Scripture binds, nor to bind that which it makes free, as some, alas, are in the habit of doing; so that not our self-chosen righteousness nor human propositions and holiness, but the word of God alone, be our guide and way. In love, take heed."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 291)

“Therefore may nothing else be preached in Christ’s kingdom and house, the church, except her King and husband’s own commands and words, according to which she and all her servants must conform.

This command and word (I say), Christ commanded all true messengers and preachers to observe, as he spoke; *Preach the gospel.* **He does not say, preach the doctrines and commands of man; preach councils and customs; preach glossy ordinances and opinions of the learned, but he says, “Preach the gospel,” and “teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you,” Matt. 28:20.**

My faithful reader, observe that all the true servants of God, both of the Old and New Testaments, taught nothing but God’s word, as may be seen and read in many places in the Scriptures.

Moses was found faithful of God in all his house. He regulated and taught nothing which God had not before commanded him, Num. 12:7; Heb. 3:2.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 57).

“It is our determination, in this matter as in all other matters of conscience, in view of the wrath of Almighty God, that we will not be influenced by lords and princes, nor by doctors and teachers of schools, nor by the influence of the fathers, and long established customs, for in this matter, neither emperors, nor kings, nor doctors, nor licentiates, nor councils, nor proscriptions against the word of God, will avail. We dare not be bound to any person, power, wisdom or times, but we must be governed alone, by the expressed and positive commands of Christ, and the pure doctrines and practices of his holy apostles, as remarked above; for if we do so, we neither deceive any one in this matter, nor are we deceived.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 31)

"But all those who are again enlightened by the Spirit and word of the Lord, born of God, and die unto the old man, sin; forsake all human misleadings, and rightly use the holy sacraments of the Lord, his ordinances and divine services, they are freed from spiritual Babylon, that is, from sin, hell, death, devil, from the doctrines and commands of men, from all idolatry and abominations, as Paul says. There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death, Rom. 8:1, 2."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 74)

"Therefore, it is not boldness, but obedience to do as the mouth of the Lord has commanded us. **But whether the preachers are not boldly opposing the Holy Spirit, who reject his doctrine, advice and ordinance as heretical and sectarian, and institute instead a doctrine and ordinance to suit their own taste, of which we find not a single word in the Scriptures,** I will leave all the pious to judge according to the word of the Lord.

As to his reference to Tertullius, Cyprian, Origenes and Augustinus, I would reply: If these writers can support their assertions by the word and ordinance of God, then we will admit that they are right. If they cannot do so, then it is a doctrine of men, and condemned by the Scriptures, Gal. 1:8."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 49)

"O my beloved, fear God and understand the truth. You direct the poor dissolute souls to the subtlety and philosophy of the learned, to the many councils, to customs and usages of long standing, to imperial edicts, to the doctrines and commandments of men, which are nothing but quicksands,

which cannot save the house from the tempest, but I do not so, but, with Moses, the prophets, apostles, angels, and the Father himself, I direct you to Christ Jesus, to whom all the emperors, kings, councils, usages and the learned, will have to yield; for his word is truth, and his commands are eternal life. To him every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; all who reject him, reject the Father that sent him, Phil. 2:10.

This I teach you; I direct you to his Spirit, word, life, command, prohibition, ordinances and usages, as to a sure and immovable foundation, laid in Zion, to a plain and safe way, prepared of God, who, according to his sure promises, will lead all the truly penitent and Christian believers into eternal life."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 90–91)

"In other words, "no man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other" (Matt. 6: 24). It is vain to try to serve God with the doctrines and commandments of men, yea, it is an abomination to God, for that which is 'highly esteemed among men is abomination before God. Now, the doctrines, traditions and commandments of men are highly esteemed by the world, for on their account is the word of God set aside (Matt. 15), as the Lord showed to the Pharisees; therefore they are an abomination to God."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 481

Are all things truly pure that are not forbidden in Scripture?

“It is true, that to the pure all things are pure, which are not contrary to the Spirit and word of God. For none are called pure in the Scriptures, except those who conform to the Spirit and word of the Lord. All who agree with the word, to them all lawful, pure things, are pure, such as eating, drinking, clothing, houses, manors, land, gold, silver, wives, children, goods, food, to wake, to sleep, to speak, to be silent, and all things which God has given us as necessities; because they are pure, they will also use all lawful, pure things purely; namely, in the fear of God, with thanksgiving and moderation, to the praise of God and to the service of their fellow man; to which end, these things were given of God, for the use of men.” All things prohibited of God, such as hypocrisy, unfruitful works, conformity to the world, living in affluence and splendor, and living in idolatry, are by all means, impure to the pure, to the faithful, obedient children of God; and the pure can never use things impurely through all eternity, according to the will of God; for the Spirit of God and his word forbid them.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 71)

Does the Church have the authority to declare something pure or impure without the scriptures' command?

“But still I would warn you not to call that which is right and pure, wrong and impure; nor that which is wrong and impure, right and pure; not to dissolve that which the Scripture binds, nor to bind that which it makes free, as some, alas, are in the habit of doing; so that not our self-chosen righteousness nor

human propositions and holiness, but the word of God alone, be our guide and way. In love, take heed.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 291)

Can we worship God through man-made teachings and practices?

“What then can I offer? He will take no other sacrifices than those alone which are commanded in his holy word, as Samuel spake unto Saul. “Behold to obey is better than sacrifice.” The Lord God of Israel spake through Jeremiah, saying, “Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I commanded you, so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God,” Jer. 11:4; 2 Cor. 6:17.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 238)

"From these words it is evident that **whatever God has not commanded and has not instituted with expressed words of scripture, he does not want to be observed, nor does he want to be served therewith nor will he have his word set aside, nor made to suit the pleasure of men,..**"

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 151

"Therefore true service consists in serving, honoring and worshipping, fearing and loving God according to his word, abstaining from sin, no longer doing evil, to keep God's word before our eyes, to comfort the widow and the orphan, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world" (James 1 v 27; Deut. 4: 2, 6:2; 12:32; Sir. 4:1; 33:10; 1 Sam. 15:13). **On the other hand, all**

sacrifice and work that is according to one's own opinion is false service and idolatry and known as such because God did not command it, but that it is, for the purpose of devotion and with good intention or for other reasons, instituted by man as a substitute for the service and command of God and so observed, as did the Pharisees, to whom Jesus said: . "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honor they father and mother; and, he that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, whosoever shall say to his father or his mother. It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; and honor not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition" (Matt. 15:3-6). What an adroit effort the Pharisees here made in pretending that they were doing God a service, although it was nothing but hypocrisy! Therefore also Christ said to them: "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, his people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:7-9; Isa. 29:13).

Thus it is with all the ceremonies, commandments and traditions of the modern Pharisees. Yea, all that human judgment and purpose institutes, according to the Pharisaic way, that is inimical to the worship and the commandment of God, though set up with a beautifully dissembled exterior, as though the real purpose were to worship God therewith, is nevertheless wrong and hypocrisy in the sight of God and he is not worshiped thereby. Therefore all Christians must avoid and shun such things, and for the following reasons"

1. The commandments of men are instituted and observed as though it were the desire to please God therewith, wash away sin and fulfill righteousness, which is a derogation or disparagement of the grace of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is an unquestioned fact and a fundamental truth, that we are not saved by our own traditions or the ceremonies of men, but

by the grace of Jesus Christ and by faith in his name (Acts 4:10; 15:11; Eph. 1: 7; 2:4). Now it is evident, and well known by all who fear God, that the world seeks to gain justification and salvation through the commandments, institutions (statutes) and traditions of men, even as the Galatians sought to obtain justification by circumcision and the law, for which Paul so sternly rebuked them and wrote to them that they were foolish and bewitched, that Christ had become of no effect unto them, and that they had fallen from grace (Gal. 5: 4) because they sought to be justified by the law. How much more, then, has the world lost Christ and fallen from grace when it seeks justification by the commandments and traditions of men. And if Paul rejected circumcision and the ceremonial law-though both were commanded and given by God-for the reason that they were fulfilled in Christ, and the Galatians sought justification and salvation by them, how much more are to be rejected the commandments, ceremonies and doctrines of men, by which the world means to be saved (Matt. 15:3; 23:3, 4).

2. The ceremonies and statutes of men do not serve or tend to the benefit or edification of fellowmen, while all Christian activity must tend to and serve this purpose. Hence the former give offence especially to the weak (Matt. 18: 6; Rom. 14: 14: 1 Thess. 5: 32), and therefore whoever observes the commandments and ceremonies of men, thereby grieves and displeases the Church of God, gives the appearance of evil example for others, which is a great sin, for it is written that evil examples lead astray and destroy the good, one in another, and that evil desires pervert simple minds (Wis. of Sol. 4:12). He who by his evil example leads another astray and destroys the good in him sins greatly against God and his fellowman, as Christ shows in the following words: "Woe unto him through whom offences come. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea, than that he should. offend one of the least of those that believe on me" (Matt. 18: 6, 7; Mark 9: 41; Luke 17:1, 2).

Those who think so little of offending the Church of God, without thinking of how grievously they sin and how severely God will punish such sin, should well consider this and take it to heart. Paul would abstain from eating flesh as long as he lives', if by eating he would offend his brother (1 Cor. 8:13), and gives the reason (Rom. 14: 15) as follows: **Whoever sins against his brother and wounds his conscience sins against Christ. If, then, Paul would give up his Christian liberty of eating all kinds of food rather than offend one brother, what of those who take liberties which God has not given them, and with this false liberty offend the Church of the Lord (John 8: 33)?**

3. The observance of the commandments and ceremonies of men establishes false worship, and gives the world cause to boast against Christians; ...

4. By the commandments and ceremonies of men gospel truth is obscured and the liberty of Jesus Christ is diminished in this that God's word is disregarded or abandoned, and consciences are burdened with many useless and unnecessary things (Col. 2:16) which through Jesus Christ are made free by faith (Luke 1:69), so that they are no longer bound to the commandments of men, to the things of the world, but to Christ alone. to serve him in all obedience, holiness and righteousness. For Jesus Christ is ruler of the conscience, therefore it must be free from all that is not the service of Jesus Christ."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 151-154

"But it is impossible to obey at the same time the commandments of God and of men (Matt. 15:1-9), for God and the world are opposed to each other. Christ and Belial do not agree (2 Cor. 6:15). Hence he who would serve God must forsake the world. He who would follow Christ must despise Satan (Luke 16:13). For this reason Paul says that he would not be a servant of Christ if he yet pleased men (Jas. 4:4; 1 John 2:15), for the friendship of this world is enmity with God, and he who would be a friend of the world is the enemy of God (Gal. 1:10). What the

apostle James says, **Jesus also says in the gospel, namely: "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15). And this is the reason why we are not disposed to follow the world in obeying the traditions of men that are opposed to Christ, or, in other words, false service (sacrilege) and idolatry, and all ceremonies and services of the Romish church (Matt. 15:1-3; 1 Cor. 10:14), but we desire in simplicity to follow the plain teaching and example of Jesus Christ and to conform to the pattern riven us by the original apostolic church (1 Pet. 2: 21), as far as the' Lord will give us grace (Eph. 2: 20)."**

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 18

"Thereby we will not separate ourselves from the true Church of God, with which we are one; but we will separate ourselves from all sects and from all false worship, from all traditions of men, all ceremonies that are contrary to God's word, and from all appearance of evil, so that we will not be pretending to please the world."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 171

12. What are the Keys of binding and loosing?

The Church's own authority, or the Word of God, which the Church must govern and judge by?

"It is our duty to pass the sentence and judgment of Christ without blame, according to the Scriptures, and to make use of his keys in a proper manner. Chosen brethren in the Lord, forasmuch, then, as I have seen in my day much ignorance and misapprehension displayed by many in regard to this point, some of whom, in my humble opinion, were too rigorous, while others were too lenient and remiss, in consequence of which some of our members have been affected, alas! with no little sorrow. And as I have now faithfully explained the true apostolic excommunication, in pure, unadulterated love without partiality, therefore, **I am further impelled by the same love to offer a few remarks upon the keys and their appurtenant use, inasmuch as they pertain to the excommunication; so that no one, misled by ignorance, may with anti-christ presumptuously place himself in Christ's seat, nor follow and execute his own judgment, design and resolution, but those of Christ, his Lord, and the doctrine, ordinance and commandment of the holy apostles, without any regard to the flesh, party or self-wisdom, lest he should reject him whom God saves by his grace, and retain him, whom he in his righteousness rejects; for, to him alone pertains the right of binding and loosing,** as we shall hear more fully in the sequel. Therefore, consider our quotations.

It is to be observed, in the first place, that there are two heavenly keys, namely, the key of binding, and the key of loosing; even as the Lord said to Peter, "I will give unto thee the key of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven," Matt. 16:19. At another time, and after his resurrection from the dead, he spoke in a similar manner to his disciples, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;

whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained,” John 20:22, 23.

In the second place, we must observe that the key of binding is nothing else than the word and righteousness of God, the directing, demanding, constraining, terrifying and condemning law of the Lord, by and through which all are locked up under the curse, sin, death, and the wrath of God, who do not by faith receive Christ, the only and eternal means of grace, hear his voice and follow and obey his will.

Again, On the other hand, the key of loosing is the abundantly cheering and delightful word of grace, the pardoning, consoling and unbinding gospel of peace, by and through which all those are delivered from the curse, sin, death and the wrath of God, who, with regenerated, new, converted, voluntary, rejoicing and believing hearts, receive Christ in power and with a firm confidence in his innocent blood and death, fear, love, hear, follow and obey him.

In the third place, it is to be observed that this binding key of Christ is given to his ministers and people for this purpose, namely, that by and through it they shall, in the power of the Spirit, represent unto all earthly, carnal, obdurate and impenitent persons, their great sins, unrighteousness, blindness and wickedness, together with God’s righteous wrath, judgment, punishment, hell and everlasting death, and thus render them contrite, dismayed, humble, broken, penitent, dejected and sorrowful of heart before God, and little in their own eyes. Wherefore, it is compared in its power and virtues to the rod of the oppressor, a hard hammer, the north wind, a sorrowful singing, and sharp detergent wine, Isa. 9:4; Jer. 23:29; Cant. 4:16.

Again, On the contrary, the key of loosing is given to the end that with it the ministers and people of God may direct such contrite, troubled, dejected, sorrowful and broken hearts, as beforementioned, which are enabled, by the first key, to feel and see the deep, mortal wounds, their great defects and the profound fascination in which they were held, to the spiritual, brazen serpent; to the throne of grace; to the open fountain of

David; to the merciful, compassionate High Priest, our only and eternal Offering of reconciliation, Christ Jesus; and thus heal their dangerous, malignant and deadly abscesses, stripes and the venomous wound of the infernal serpent. It is, therefore, likened in strength and virtue to the cheering olive-branch of Noah's dove; the balm of Gilead; the voice of truth; the south wind; the joyful pipe, and sweet, soothing oil, Gen. 8:11; Jer. 8:22; Cant. 4:16; Luke 10:34.

In the fourth place, it must be observed that these keys are given to us from heaven, by him who created heaven, earth and the sea with the fullness thereof, the eternal power, word and wisdom of the Almighty Father; the King of all glory, our only and eternal Redeemer, Intercessor, Bridegroom, Prophet and Teacher, Christ Jesus. We may, therefore, with the greatest propriety, be careful in regard to the ban, with fear and trembling, and not be influenced by flesh and blood, hatred or love, favor or disfavor, enmity or friendship, strife, dissension or partiality; but should execute it in the fear of the Lord, as the earnest, heavenly command, word, and will of our Savior, in an upright, clear conscience without respect of persons. For without doubt they are precious keys since they are given us from heaven, as a present from such an illustrious friend. Ah! suffer yourselves to be told.

In the fifth place, it is to be observed that these keys are given to, and bestowed upon none but those who are anointed of the Holy Ghost, even as Christ says, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," &c. From this it is evident that they must be a believing, true, penitent, sober, chaste, humble, upright, friendly, obedient, devout, peaceful, and spiritual people; observe, a people dead unto sin, a regenerated people, who sit with the apostles in the seat of righteousness, and pronounce with them the righteous judgment of the Lord, against all stiff-necked, ungodly sinners, and teach, admonish, chastise, punish, and, in real power, judge or bind with the word and Spirit of the Lord, the unbelieving, impenitent, earthly-minded, drunken, adulterous, lecherous, unchaste, proud, haughty, unrighteous, perverse,

disobedient, quarrelsome, carnal sinners. For it is evident that a carnal man cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God; but they that are spiritual, examine and judge all things aright, yet they themselves are judged of no man. Yes, my brethren, it is utterly impossible for one carnal-minded man, or for one quarrelsome person to teach, instruct or chasten another correctly through the Spirit of Christ, or in the power of his word justly to separate him from his church according to the will of God. For their fruits plainly testify that they are both impenitent, destitute of the Spirit, nature, and disposition of Christ, and subject to death and the curse.

Therefore, fear God, and know how or what you judge. For if one should sentence a ban-deserving person, such as a fornicator, drunkard, or any other carnal transgressor, to excommunication, while he himself was wrathful, avaricious, proud, haughty, uplifted, ambitious, unchaste, lying, quarrelsome, impure, envious or false hearted, **and would secretly continue in his wickedness, then, according to Paul, he would sentence his own soul, for he says, “Thou art inexcusable, O man whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself,” Rom. 2:1.**

I therefore, counsel and admonish all the pious generally, who sit in judgment upon a sinner that is to be excommunicated, that they previously examine well their own conscience, heart and mind, and see whether they have the Spirit of Christ, whether they sit in the apostles seat, and also whether they do it out of pure fear of God, in obedience to his word, and out of sincere love to the brethren or out of flesh and blood through hypocrisy, to the will of men. For if they have not the Spirit of Christ, do not sit in the seat of the apostles and carry the keys of heaven, their judgment can not be of God, and will tear down more than build up. It is even in reality nothing but a sore judgment against their own souls. But if they have the Spirit of Christ, sit in the apostles seat and make use of the keys of heaven, their judgment will doubtless be righteous, will agree as the judgment of Christ, and they will not by any means make

themselves guilty in passing judgment against the transgressor. Those who are born of Christ, may judge what I advance.

In the sixth place, it is to be observed that these keys must not be made use of, except in the name of Him who committed them to us, and by his power, that is with his Spirit and word, for He alone is the King and Prince of his church, the Shepherd, Teacher and Master of our souls, before whose sceptre we must all bow, and whose voice we must hear, if we would wish to be saved, as has been heard.

Since then he is both the Ruler and the Giver of this, and both the binding and loosing are in his hand, and must therefore be done in his name, with his Spirit and word alone, as related; therefore we may well take heed lest through our profaneness, inclination or foolish purpose, we loose those whom he himself has bound in heaven, or bind those whom he himself has loosed in heaven even as the sin of perdition and the man of sin, together with all his deceiving and impure prophets, O God, have done for many centuries. O, children take heed.

As far as concerns the key of binding of this evangelic ban, it is clear that when an open fornicator or adulterer is convinced by two or three witnesses, or an abuser of himself, or an idolater, or a drunkard, or envied, or a perverse, self-willed disputer, or an impenitent, froward, lazy, fastidious and idle glutton, or a blasphemer, thief, robber or murderer, is brought before the church, they have the judging word of the Scriptures, by which they may separate and exclude him, and announce to him by the Spirit of Christ, that he is no longer a member of the body of Christ, has no more promise, but that he shall endure everlasting death, and fail of the kingdom of grace. In short that his final part and lot, unless he sincerely repents, shall be the burning lake of fire, hell and the devil. For his works show plainly that he is of the wicked one.

Behold, such are those over whom the first key has power. For the righteous judgment of God, and his firm, binding word, take hold of them, since they again forsake Christ; despise his holy word and covenant; live according to the flesh; stir up strife

and dissention; break the bond of love; separate the pious; disquiet those of a gentle, peaceable disposition; introduce and establish offences and slanders, as the evident fact has frequently taught and as is known to many others, alas! as well as to myself. Ah me! what a severe stroke he receives who is bound by the people of God, with this dreadful key; and punished by his righteous Spirit, with this dreadful curse. O Father, grant them thy grace.

The same thing applies to the key of loosing in this use of the ban. For if a poor, proscribed sinner humble himself again before his God, heart broken and penitent, groans and weeps bitterly, experiences heartfelt sorrow for his sins and an earnest longing for the truth, hates perverse paths of the ungodly and walks again in the path of the pious. In short, if he conducts himself so in his whole life, that we cannot perceive any thing in him but that the Spirit of the Lord has again anointed him, and received him into his grace, and would have him included in the number of the Lord's people; they have then the cheering word of promise, by which they may again bring him to the altar of the Lord, sprinkle him with the spiritual hyssop of God, announce to him the grace of Christ, and receive him again as a beloved brother in Christ Jesus and greet him with the salutation of his holy peace. For, says the prophet, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God, and not that he should return from his ways, and live?" Ezek. 18:23.

Forasmuch as it is manifest and established that Jesus Christ alone has the key of David, who unlocks heaven for the true penitent, unties the knot of unrighteousness and forgives and remits their sins; and again, as it is he who closes heaven against the impenitent, carnal sinners, binds them under his judgment and retains their sins, and we are nothing more than heralds, ministers and messengers in his name, and can make it neither longer nor shorter, narrower nor wider than taught us by his Spirit, and commanded us in his word, as heard, therefore it is evident, that they greatly err, who, in the pride of their ignorance, suffer themselves to think that they have power to

retain or remit the sins of any man, or who with perverse, inconsiderate minds dare separate or excommunicate anyone out of carnal motives, hatred or bitterness, and not purely and solely through the Spirit and word of Christ; or on the other hand, retain him through natural affection, friendship or partiality, contrary to the word of God and comfort him with uncertainties in his sins, winking at them; for with such, after the example of the false prophets, they strengthen the hands of the ungodly, since they retain them, and appear to adjudge their life, though without true repentance they shall not live. Ah! brethren beware.

I would, therefore, brethren and sisters, in the love of Christ, have you all faithfully admonished in God, that no one attempt, in this weighty, important and spiritual matter, to act higher or lower, severer or milder than the word and Spirit require, whether it be with the binding of the first key in righteousness unto eternal death, or with the loosing of the second key in grace unto eternal life; lest, by passing an unscriptural judgment, he offend against God and his neighbor, and so be constrained to undergo the punishment of his pride, along with the angel of the bottomless pit. Observe this!

Ah! most beloved brethren, to what an amazing extent, in my opinion, is that man taught of God, who is able in this thing so to keep the true, royal highway, that he can properly employ the intrusted keys in devout, heavenly wisdom, and correctly pass and impose his Lord's judgment with a sure, sealed conscience in true, apostolic measure, to the edification of all the pious. Let all who are born of God, who are impartial and pure in heart, reflect, with the unction of their spirit, upon the grounds of my writing and admonition."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 260–264)

"Again, It shall be practiced by the church; that is, every one shall not separate at his own pleasure; but it should be done by

the congregation of God, after proper admonition in love, diligence and faithfulness, **with the power of Christ, that is, with the binding or closing key of the Holy Spirit. For if it be practiced without the word and Spirit, without love and brotherly affability, whether it is through bitterness, anger, or a false report, not conformable to the word,** for reasons not deserving of the ban,—then it is not a work of God, no medicine to the soul, nor fruit of pure love; but a contention of satan, a corruption and pestilence to the soul, and a manifest fruit of the flesh: In short, a curse, abomination and stench before God. Let every person well weigh these words of Paul, and he will, by the grace of God, find how rigidly this separation is commanded in the Scriptures, and how orderly it should be practiced in the church, **with the power of the word and Spirit of Christ.**”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 131–132).

“Now, what those sins are which must be punished with the ban are shown us by the evangelists and apostles in express words (Matt. 18:13-17; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:10; 1 Thess. 5:14; 1 Tim 3:1-7; Tit. 3:10; 2 John 10), and we have also in our confession regarding the evangelical ban carefully explained it. And what the church of the Lord thus passes judgment upon by the word of God, the same is judged before God, **for Christ gave his church the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 16:19) that they might punish, exclude and put away the wicked and receive the penitent and believing.** What the church thus binds upon earth shall be bound in heaven, and, on the other hand, what she looses on earth shall be loosed in heaven. **This must not be understood as meaning that men have power to forgive sins or to retain them (John 20: 23), as some imagine, and therefore deal with the confessional and absolution as with merchandise.** No minister of Christ is to do this, neither is the church of the Lord to admit any Simonites (Acts 8: 9, 13, 18), **for no prophet or apostle on earth has presumed to forgive sin, to hear confession**

and to grant absolution to the people, although Christ said to his disciples: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. Pg. 391-392

"Thus evangelical excommunication is principally a work of charity, because by it the church of Jesus Christ is preserved (216) and maintained in healthy doctrine, in good order, in divine unity, in Christian peace, and in obedience of faith. And also by it transgressors are corrected, 1 Cor. 5:4[-5], if in any way they wish to be.

That is why no Christian church can consist without evangelical excommunication. For the Lord Jesus Christ did not give the keys of the kingdom of heaven to his church in vain, the power of binding and loosing, of pardoning sins and retaining them, Matt. 18:18; and with this his Spirit and his Word by which it must discern and remove the malignant ones. **If thus the church does not judge otherwise than the Word and the Spirit of God testify and teach, it therein acts justly and its judgment is the judgment of God. But if the church does not judge and punish sins in conformity of the Word of the Lord and of his Spirit, it falls under the judgment of God, in that it is disobedient to the Word and makes itself a participant in the sin of the other. Thus by a little leaven, the whole dough is soured, 1 Cor. 5:[6].**

In this cause the church of Christ must judge and punish all sins and transgressions (which are committed within the church and are worthy of punishment, Gal. 5:19[ff.] with a judgment **conforming to the Scripture. This will be, or must be, done with such spirit, such divine nature, and such patience that Jesus Christ himself is our example, which the Holy Scripture testifies to us.**"

(This quote is from other writings by Dietrich Philips only found in the reference below.)
Philips, D. (1992). *The Writings of Dirk Philips, 1504–1568*. (C. J. Dyck, W. E. Keeney, & A. J. Beachy, Eds.) (Vol. 6, pp. 601–602). Scottdale, PA; Waterloo, ON: Herald Press.

What are the candlesticks in Revelation pointing us to?

"Furthermore it must be remembered that in the holy of holies was a golden candlestick with its seven branches and with its seven lights or candles, which were continually burning before the Lord and were never put out. **This candlestick clearly prefigures Christ Jesus.** The pure gold of the candlestick represents (according to our understanding) the Most Holy, **both the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ. The seven branches of the candlestick represent the seven spirits resting upon Jesus,** of which the prophet Isaiah says

"There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit, of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him quick of understanding in the fear of the Lord" (Isa. 11: 1-3).

These seven spirits rest upon Jesus, and are represented by the seven branches of the candlestick. The seven burning lights of the candlestick represent the seven powers of the seven spirits of Christ, as well as the glory or brightness of his divine word, which is an everlasting and true light, as the prophet says (Psa. 19: 7; 119: 105; Isa. 60: 19, 20, etc.). And the fact that this candlestick is an anti-type of Christ, although it stood in the first sanctuary or holy place, indicates to us that in the law there are embodied shadows, promises and prophecies of Christ."

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 264

What should Church leaders do when the scriptures prove them to be mistaken in their teachings?

"I trust, by the most merciful grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the oldest, most pious, most upright, truest and most able doctors of the church of Jesus Christ, who were long before all other doctors, are received and believed by me and my beloved brethren, in every word and doctrine. These are, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, David, Christ Jesus, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James and Jude. If any body can show me a word in all my writing that I have taught or written contrary to the doctrine of these doctors, then I am willing to be abashed, instructed and taught better; but I trust that it can never be truthfully done. If I should write and teach against these pious, unblamable doctors, then my writing and teaching would be against the teachings and admonitions of the christian body, community or holy church."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 193)

"If he is a true preacher, and a member of the true church of Christ, why does he, then, desire us to go before the public, while he well knows that I could not do so without the loss of blood and life? I freely offer myself, if he can show one plain passage in the Scriptures, that the apostles and prophets have publicly taught at such places where they knew that the people had resolved upon their death, as, alas, they have every where resolved upon our death, and, by the grace of God, we will do the same. I know to a certainty that he can find no such examples nor Scriptures in the Bible."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 96)

"Here I would call on all the high and mighty lords, princes and rulers, all under the canopy of heaven, also on all the popes, cardinals, bishops, the wise and learned, who from the beginning perverted and darkened the Scriptures, to show us one single word in the whole Bible, I say in the Bible (for we do not regard human fables and lies), that an unbelieving, refractory, carnal man, without true repentance and regeneration, ever *was* or ever *will* be saved, simply because he boasts of faith and the death of Christ, or heard the masses and service of the priests, as the whole world does; **if so, they shall have gained the point. But this never has been from the beginning, and never will be to the end of time;"**

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 171)

"... therefore I would briefly state: That if he can at any time prove to us by the unadulterated, divine Scriptures and truth, that John the Baptist practiced infant baptism any where; or that it was commanded of Christ and taught and practiced by the apostles; or, that it was, through the ordinance of the Lord, gradually practiced upon children, as he writes it was; or, that bringing to him is called ed baptism and baptism bringing to him, in the Scriptures; or, that Christ and the apostles have baptized the children that were brought to them; or, that Christ baptized them with a spirit that was powerful in works (the Spirit of God is never idle); or, that small children have faith, or that they are penitent, that they bury their sins and are circumcised through faith and thereby arise with Christ in newness of life; or, that circumcision is called baptism, and baptism circumcision; or, that they have the answer of a good conscience; or, that baptism, anywhere in the Scriptures, is called a sign of the covenant of grace, a sealing of the promise, and an incorporation into the church, or that unconscious children speak with tongues as the believing members of the house of Cornelius did, of whom Peter says, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be

baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Acts 10:47, or, that the true, primitive church practiced it by the apostolic doctrine, usage or command; or, that God is powerful through works which he has not ordained, then we will lay aside our pen, repent and confess before the whole world that our cause is mere deceit, and nothing but falsehood, in this respect."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 56)

Menno's Testimony of his own misinterpretation of the Word and his need to realign to the scriptures.

"Eighteen or nineteen years ago, when I wrote the first book, I was not well enough enlightened to understand all things thoroughly; and I freely and frankly admit, that until that time I included all sin in three admonitions. This I acknowledge verbally and in writing and do not deny it. But, as all well minded servants of God, who seek the crucified Christ and not their own honor or flesh, are ever ready to investigate the sure foundation of truth still further, thus I, the least of all servants (on account of many abominations which were, from time to time discovered in the church, and also on account of the miserable disputation and discord which crept in without my fault) came to a serious reflection concerning this matter and, at last, plainly saw that we men may not retain those whom God himself, by his Spirit and word excludes, or else the church of Christ must be divided. This is as clear as day.

Therefore it would be advisable for you to season your words a little better. For you do not thereby slander and despise me, but the Holy Spirit, which, according to the word of promise, has led me, his poor, weak servant and instrument into his truth and discovered unto me the true foundation in this matter.

Yea, dear men, if I, on that account, am to be called by you, a trifler because I was not perfectly enlightened from the beginning, nor claim to be perfectly enlightened at this hour, O Lord! what a trifler you would call the beloved Peter and others, if they were alive to-day, and if you loved him no more than you love me, as he, although taught by the Lord's mouth and enlightened by the Holy Spirit, was yet so unintelligent that he dared not preach the gospel to the heathen until he was admonished and told to do so by a heavenly vision or revelation from God, and thus first took the liberty to teach them."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 286)

"5. *That we are to put away from the church the openly offensive, carnal sinners, and excommunicated of God, and, thus direct them to true repentance with the Scriptures.* Before I proceed to explain this article, I would earnestly admonish the reader, that about eighteen years ago, I published an admonition, in which I made no distinction of sin; but through my inexperience, directed them without discrimination, to three different admonitions. I say inexperience; for to the best of my knowledge, I neither heard nor knew at that time, any thing of fornication, adultery, and such like, among the brethren; it appeared to me impossible, that those who entered with us upon the paths of righteousness, should have any desire or will to such gross abominations, and therefore, I did not earnestly reflect upon the matter. See, before God it is the truth which I write.

I likewise wrote a book in 1549, in reply to those who would only extend excommunication to the spiritual church, and who charged us on all sides with slanderous words, that we practiced a rigid, cruel, unmerciful and Pharisaic excommunication.

Finally, I wrote a few words against Gellius Faber; and to this day I have made no particular distinction thereof, in my writings, nor could I have made it. This I acknowledge openly, for my

information of it was too limited, so long as the matter was not disputed and did not again present itself to me for reconsideration. But now, having heard the ground of dispute, and having carefully weighed all the circumstances connected with it, in the balance of the holy, divine word, the six following reasons have given me such a powerful assurance in the matter, the Helper of all distressed souls be praised for his grace, that we are to exclude from the holy church of the Lord, all offensively carnal sinners, such as fornicators, adulterers, drunkards, &c.; and that all these ought to be put to open shame and reproof, with their ungodly works, without previously admonishing them, by virtue of the holy, divine word; that they may be led to repentance, I say by virtue of the word, for, in the first place, it is evident, as Paul teaches, that “neither fornicators nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God,” 1 Cor. 6:10, but that their portion will be eternal death in the lake of fire.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 250–251)

13. How does God speak to us today?

Through scripture alone, or both scripture and new revelation?

“God does not at the present time speak to us in an audible voice from heaven, nor by visions and dreams, as he did in old testament times, but he now speaks to us by his Son Jesus Christ. But Jesus speaks to us by his word, and the word of Christ is Spirit and it is life (Heb. 1:2; John 6: 63)”

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 198

“Brethren, I tell you the truth and lie not. I am no Enoch, no Elias, I have no visions, am no prophet, who can teach and prophesy differently from what it is written in the word of God and whosoever tries to teach something else will soon miss the right way and be deceived in his learning. **I trust that the merciful Father will keep me in his word so that I shall write or speak nothing but that which I can prove by Moses, the prophets, the evangelists or by other apostolic Scriptures and doctrines, explained in their true sense, Spirit and intent of Christ. Judge ye that are spiritually minded. Again, I have no visions nor angelic inspirations, neither do I desire such, lest I be thereby deceived. The word of Christ, alone, is sufficient for me. If I do not follow his testimony, then, verily, all that I do is useless. And even if I had such visions and inspirations, which is not the case, even then it would have to be conformable to the word and Spirit of Christ,** or else it would be mere fantasy, deceit and satanic temptation. For Paul says, “Let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith,” Rom. 12:6.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 248)

“Behold, beloved brethren, I speak frankly with a certain and sure conviction not by any revelation or heavenly inspiration, but by the express, definite word of the Lord, and from my inmost heart I am convinced that this doctrine is not our doctrine, but the doctrine of him who sent us, that is Christ Jesus. All those who are desirous of doing his will, will acknowledge that this doctrine is of God; and that we do not preach our own opinion, dreamings, and visions. But those who do not fear God; do not believe on Christ Jesus; who trample upon his word, and do not do his will; who love darkness rather than light; by those, all evangelical truth must be called damnable heresy and considered and treated as deadly treason. Notwithstanding all this, the word of God shall remain unbroken until the judgment day.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 246)

“As the whole burden of our salvation is included and comprised in Christ Jesus and his holy word, and in no one else, nor in any other doctrine—therefore I warn every godfearing soul, by the word of God, through nothing but brotherly love, **not to be shaken and misled, either by the exalted position of man, or by old age, learning, eloquence, finely gotten up ceremonies, dreams, propheties, visions, signs and jugglery.** For there can never be a wiser, truer, more diligent, more righteous, god-pleasing, unblamable, powerful, perfect, higher or holier Prophet than the ever blessed Christ Jesus.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 247)

“In short, here the Spirit, word, will, commands, prohibitions, ordinances, customs, and examples of Christ are taught. To which all Scriptures refer us, and not the opinions of

false prophets, high sounding words, enchanting appearances, boasting, dreams, and lying miracles, against which, the Spirit of God, and the Scriptures everywhere warn and counsel us.

Dear children, reform yourselves. **Everyone who teaches you otherwise, than is testified by the word of the Lord, even though he were one who could dry up the bottom of the sea, and hurl the stars down from heaven, let him be abandoned, and let his doctrine be regarded as deceiving and erroneous, for, to all eternity there may no other foundation be laid, than that which is laid, Christ Jesus.** He is the corner stone and foundation in Zion, on whom all the building fitly framed together (according to his will, Spirit and word), groweth into a holy temple unto the Lord.

O ye backsliding children, hear the word of God and make haste, for your way is in darkness, and your path leads to death. Embrace the truth and learn wisdom, for your comforters have destroyed you and rendered uneven the way in which you must go. **Munster and Amsterdam may well be to you an eternal warning and example. When a prophet, said Moses, speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing follows not, nor come to pass, that is not the thing which the Lord hath spoken.**

O dear Lord! How many innocent hearts have they ruined? How many poor souls have they deceived? What gross shame have they cast upon the word of the Lord? What great abominations have some of them committed under the appearance of good? How have they made the poor, blind magistrates, who are, alas, destitute of a correct understanding of the holy word, to be guilty of innocent blood?

I think it is time you should see and learn to know your lying faithless, and deceiving prophets. They are the foxes which destroy the vineyard of the Lord. These are the thieves and murderers of your souls; **false prophets who deny the Lord that bought them; who have directed you, poor erring sheep, by their own lying visions, dreams, and thoughts of their hearts, and have led you against all the Scriptures upon a false and loose foundation.**

How like unto those you have become, of whom Eusebius writes, that they walked according to the lusts of their hearts, as the prophets foretold; who denied Paul and the New Testament, and carried with them a book, which they boasted, fell from heaven as a present to them.

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 96)

“If you will not hear, but will ever turn your ears to lies, and believe the deceiving creature more than the infallible Creator; if you set your feet upon slippery places; if you neither fear nor regard Scripture admonitions, nor the power and punishments of God, but reject and set aside all as idle and useless, and suffer yourselves always to be comforted with falsehoods, visions, dreams, splendid delusions, false interpretations and continue, without the cross, on the broad way, then will the righteous Lord send to you mockers and deceivers, and by his righteous judgment suffer you to be led from one ungodly course to another, as may already be seen.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 98)

Take note in this next quote that Menno assumes that when “it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaketh in you” he understands it to mean that the Spirit will only give you remembrance of the words of Christ and the received gospel (scripture alone) and not your own words or some new revelation.

Mt 10:19–20 “But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.”

“The Lord does not suffer his doctrine to be adulterated; he punishes all false doctrine, as he spoke about Jerusalem, “Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water,” “and I will

turn my hand upon thee and purely purge away thy dross,” Isa. 1:22, 25; thus God hates all false doctrine; and therefore the apostles admonish us that we shall abide in God’s word alone, as John says, “Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father,” 1 Jn. 2:24. Paul says that we should beware of those who raise contentions and are offended at the doctrine which he preached, that they should be separated. Yea, so strongly does Paul urge his doctrine that he says, “If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed,” Gal. 1:8. Thus Paul teaches in all his epistles to beware of a strange gospel, and to abide in the doctrine which is not his, but of the Holy Ghost, according to the words of Christ, “For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 434–435)

Should the church spiritually sense or feel evil in the hearts of man or is the Church to only judge by visible evidence alone?

“In the fifth place, we teach, seek and desire such a Supper as Christ Jesus himself has instituted and administered, Matt. 26:19; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; first, to a church which is outwardly without spot and blemish, that is, without any considerable transgression and wickedness; for the church can only judge as to the visible; but what is inwardly wicked and not outwardly apparent to the church, as the betraying of Judas, of that God is to judge, for he alone tries the hearts and reins, and not the church.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 243–244)

14. What about the True Church Lineage?

Continued Faith throughout the centuries or Restored Church in the 16th century?

“That the church of the Lord became corrupt after the time of the apostles I readily confess to you, for the holy scripture testifies of this in many places (2 Tim. 3; 2 Pet. 2; 1 John 2; 4; Acts 20; Psa. 18; Deut. 4; 12, etc.). But that because of this, false worship should be perpetuated and practiced is wrong and a root of idolatry.”

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. Pg. 481

“HONORED reader, the reason why we write is this: Because we and our ancestors, for many centuries, have sought the light in obscurity, the truth in falsehood, life in death, and the way among the deceivers; and have wandered about like a flock of sheep without a shepherd; and, alas, there was none who pointed us to the way of life and led us into the pasture of the Lord. The accursed doctrine of anti-christ had so drawn the shameful smoke of deceit from the bottomless pit; had so obscured the glorious dazzling of the divine word, nay, the just judgment of God was come upon this reckless world, on account of its sinfulness, so that, alas, there was neither true doctrine nor true knowledge of God and Christ, nor faith, baptism, Supper, ban in accordance with God’s word, nor love, nor righteousness found among men, and of which very little is found as yet; for all over the world we find false teachers, hypocritical deceivers, and enemies of the cross, who diligently serve their own bellies, who by their tickling, erring doctrine proclaim peace to those who know of no peace, and thus

strengthen the hands of the wicked so that none converts himself from his wickedness,..."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 259)

"...that you may promote that true righteousness required of God, such as faith, love, repentance, regeneration, piety and peace with all other fruits of the Holy Ghost; gladden the hearts of all the sorrowful of heart, and the young and tender souls in Christ Jesus, and strengthen, console and encourage them in all their trials, need, temptations, tribulation and fear; so that the most holy city and temple, which lay desolated for so many centuries, may again be rebuilt, and all its usages, ordinances and services restored to primitive order. Yea, that the saving light of the true gospel of Christ may be spread among all nations, kindred and tongues, in its full splendor; and that the accursed, lying and anti-christian darkness may be dispelled."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 243)

"Beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, since the all-merciful God and Father, through his boundless grace and goodness, has again, in these last times of unbelief, abominations and idolatry, in this terrible, wanton, ruthless, perverted and bloodthirsty world, revealed before the eyes of the consciences of some, his blessed, only, and eternal Son, Jesus Christ, who was unknown for so many centuries; since he has again opened the book of the divine declarations and eternal truth, which had been closed for many centuries; since some of those who lay dead, not for four days only, as Lazarus did, according to the flesh, but for twenty or thirty years, yea, who all their lives slumbered in the spiritual death of sin and all

ungodliness, have awakened from the foul grave of unbelief and unrighteousness, and have been called to a new, unblameable life; and since through the preaching of his word.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 181)

“I beseech you in the same manner not to leave these our writings idle and hidden, but to send them east, west, north and south, into the hands of all men, and to let many read them, **that the bright sun of righteousness which, alas, has been obscured for so many centuries by the smoke of the bottomless pit of the anti-christian, false doctrine, may shine forth with the power of truth,** and that our glorious and holy Savior, the first and only begotten, true Son of the Almighty, living God, the ever blessed Jesus Christ, may be rightly confessed by many, in his glory.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 400–401)

“...you have erred and mocked God too long, and worshipped antichrist instead of Christ too long; walked too long in the perverse and broad way of death. Awaken! it is yet to-day; behold, the true book of the law; **the saving, pure gospel of Christ which was hid for so many centuries by the abominations of anti-christ, is found.**”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 133)

“Since it is well known to all the pious, **that we and our forefathers, for many centuries, were under the heavy burden, and in the service of Egypt, deceived by the false prophets, never heard the book of the law, the holy city and temple lay waste, and were under the tyranny and dominion of Babylon,** as

heard above. The merciful Father had compassion on the pressing misery and tribulation of his people, and raised up to us the true Moses, Zerubbabel, Christ Jesus, through his word and Spirit; now then, it becomes you, O you highly renowned lords and princes, since you and we boast of the same Christ, gospel, redemption and kingdom, that you no longer obstruct by your mandates and powers, the journeying of the people of God to the eternal promised land; but you should favor them more, and prosper their journey by your gracious permission; that you may hear and read with the venerable and pious Josiah, with a broken, meek heart, in the true fear of God, **the lost book of the law of Christ, which has been lost for a long time.** Rend your hearts and not your garments; for you are not only led off from the true path, but you are so much bewitched by the man of sin, that you persecute the innocent, pious hearts, who in no wise injure you or any one upon earth.

That you would, with king Cyrus, release the poor captive children from the land of Chaldea, who cry and weep at the rivers of Babylon, that they may again possess the spiritual land of Canaan, and build up the spiritual Jerusalem, the altar and the temple in their ancient city, and establish the spiritual priesthood, and practice the spiritual offering and divine service according to the instructions of the word of God, that they may no longer hear and observe the Babylonian laws, namely, the teachings of men and their commandments; but the law of Israel, God's word and righteousness. Some of you, though alas few! are so far taught, through the grace and word of God, that I trust, you know, that neither usages nor councils, neither learning nor sword, nor mandate, can bend or break the word of the Most High, the word of truth, the word of the heavenly witness, the gospel of the kingdom, for other foundation cannot be laid to all eternity, than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 3:11."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 76–77)

"Inasmuch as the worldly church is no such amiable, obedient bride, but has left her lawful husband, Christ, and follows after strange adulteries, as may be plainly seen, and all this through blindness, ignorance and the deceit of their teachings—therefore I seek to accomplish nothing by my writing and teaching, according to the talent God was pleased to give me, but to reclaim this adulterous bride, the erring church, from her adulterous actions and again to return her to her first husband, Christ Jesus,"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 241)

Was water baptism restored?

"Because, beloved brethren, the divine ordinance of baptism in the water has thus been destroyed for many centuries, and as a strange baptism has been practiced, contrary to the true doctrine of the holy, christian church, namely, contrary to the word of God, from which evil custom so much false doctrine, disbelief and fruitless, carnal life have resulted—therefore I have again clearly pointed out from the holy gospel, how we should practice the true, scriptural, christian baptism;"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 194)

"Observing that now the bright light of the holy gospel of Christ shines again in refulgent splendor in these vexatious times of all anti-christian abominations; God's own and first begotten Son, Christ Jesus, is gloriously revealed, his good will and pleasure and holy word concerning faith, regeneration, repentance, baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the whole saving doctrine, life and ordinance, have again come to light through much seeking, prayer, reading, teaching and writing; that now all

things (God be praised for his grace) proceed according to the true, apostolic rule in the church, whereby the kingdom of Christ rises in honor, and the kingdom of anti-christ is sinking”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, p. 242)

“Inasmuch as the brightness of the sun has not shone for so many years; as heaven and earth have been as copper and iron; as the brooks and springs have not run, nor the dew dropped from heaven; as the beautiful trees and verdant fields have been dry and barren (I mean spiritually); but, inasmuch as, in these latter days, the gracious, great Lord, by the rich treasures of his love, has again opened the windows of heaven, and let drop the dew of his divine word, so that the earth once more produces its green branches and plants of righteousness, as before, which bear fruit unto the Lord and glorify his adorable name; and inasmuch as the holy word and sacraments of the Lord again lift up their heads from the ashes, by means of which the blasphemous deceit and abominations of the learned are made manifest—therefore all the infernal gates are opened in opposition; foam and rave, and that with such subtle deceit, blasphemous falsehood and tyranny that if the strong God did not interpose with his gracious power, no man could be saved. But they will never wrest from him his chosen ones.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 259–260)

How would this restored Church be rebuilt?

“Now, whatever the Christians did in those times that was proper is not forbidden or denied the Christians at this time, but the Christians must now conform and adjust themselves to the practices of the primitive church. Why? Because other foundation can no. man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ

(1 Cor. 3:11). Therefore as the ruined temple at Jerusalem was rebuilt upon the old foundation, and all worship was re-established and practiced therein according to the law, so also must the house of God, that is, the Christian church, which has fallen into decay, be now rebuilt upon the original foundation of the apostles and prophets (of which Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone, 1 Tim. 3:14; Heb. 3: 6; Eph. 2: 20), and all things therein must be dealt with and done according to the order established by Christ and his apostles."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 198-199

How can a newly restored Church reinstate leaders?

"This we have now said in brief on the subject of sending forth of teachers. There are, however, many gainsayers here now. In the first place some say that no one may teach and restore again the decadent worship of God unless he is called of God by a living voice from heaven, just as Elijah (they say) did not punish the priests of Baal or restore again in Israel the worship of God which had fallen into decay, until he had received a command of the Lord and was sent to Ahab (I. Kings 18:1), and like as Joshua did not resume the practice of circumcision (which had been discontinued for a time in the wilderness) before the time that the Lord commanded him to do so (Josh. 5:1-8).

ANSWER

God does not at the present time speak to us in an audible voice from heaven, nor by visions and dreams, as he did in old testament times, but he now speaks to us by his Son Jesus Christ. But Jesus speaks to us by his word, and the word of Christ is Spirit and it is life (Heb. 1:2; John 6: 63). Now, when Christ puts his living word into the heart of some person and thereby calls him, he is without any doubt called of the Lord by his word. But how we may know that a certain person is called of God by the

living word and by the Spirit of Christ, we have explained above, viz, if he rightly speaks the word of God (John 3: 34), brings forth fruit, and seeks the glory of Christ and the salvation of souls with all diligence (Isa. 55:11-13; John 7:16).”

We have furthermore also spoken above of the fact that the apostles and elders, together with the church by the power of Jesus Christ (Acts 6: 1-4), called and ordained teachers and deacons (Acts 13:1, 2). **Now, whatever the Christians did in those times that was proper is not forbidden or denied the Christians at this time, but the Christians must now conform and adjust themselves to the practices of the primitive church.** Why? Because other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11). **Therefore as the ruined temple at Jerusalem was rebuilt upon the old foundation, and all worship was re-established and practiced therein according to the law, so also must the house of God, that is, the Christian church, which has fallen into decay, be now rebuilt upon the original foundation of the apostles and prophets (of which Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone, 1 Tim. 3:14; Heb. 3: 6; Eph. 2: 20), and all things therein must be dealt with and done according to the order established by Christ and his apostles.”**

Dietrich Philips Hand Book pg. 197-99

How does the restoration of the Church pattern Old Testament events?

“O LORD of hosts, now, that I have confessed my sins before thee, prayed for my transgressions, praised thy mercy, and desired thy grace, I must, with David, beseech thee, in behalf of my brethren; **for I observe Israel scattered abroad and going astray, like sheep without a shepherd, and the pleasant vineyard of the Lord is laid waste, and trodden down of all men; the chosen seed of Abraham, the house of Jacob, has again become a proper slave or bondservant in the grievous service of Pharaoh**

in Egypt; the royal line of Judah is carried away into Babylon, together with the holy vessels, which are so lamentably abused by Belshazzar, and his concubines. Jerusalem, the personification of peace, which was likened to a dove, is changed into a barbarous gormandizer of innocent blood, and a rapacious lioness; she that was princess among the nations, the city of the great king is become destitute of kings, citizens and walls, waste and solitary; the temple of the Lord, the house of prayer, in which the true worship ought to be performed, has become a notorious nest of robbers, a den of lions, bears, wolves, basilisks, dragons and serpents, a house of all idolaters; nay, the unchaste bed of the adulteress Jezebel. The bride of Christ, the glorious Church, who was clothed in variegated raiment, and decked with divine ornaments, in honor of the king, is changed completely into a disgraceful harlot. The ark of the Lord, the glory of Israel, is seized by the Philistines, and taken into the temple of Dagon. Why make a long lamentation? Judea is changed to Babylon, Canaan to Egypt, and Palestine to Sodom, and the King of glory, Christ Jesus, blessed forever, is daily esteemed as a simpleton, and despised as a fool; his holy apostles, the beloved witnesses of thy truth, must as liars, give way with their doctrine to all men; his knit or wrought garment, which the Scriptures were unwilling should be rent or divided, is torn into four or five pieces; anti-christ exercises authority and dominion in all countries by the preaching of lies; and with violence, is thy word proscribed and rejected; if I travel east, west, north or south, I find in all places, nothing but vain obstinacy, perversion, blindness, avarice, pride, wantonness, rioting, drunkenness, pomp and splendor, strife, envying and ungodliness. I find (I repeat), violence, false doctrine and an impure, deceptive employment of thy sacraments, throughout the world; I find the influence of tyrants triumphing in the courts of all princes; that the learned speak like the beast, are ambitious, avaricious, gluttonous, earthly

and carnally minded, and teach according to the lusts and desires of men; there are scarcely any who seek for truth, and if there are, they must bear thy cross; therefore are my cheeks wet with tears day and night; my soul findeth no comfort; neither bread nor drink is sweet to my taste. Like the prophet Micah, I may well go naked; make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls; for the wound of Israel is incurable. In sorrow, I may well lament with Esdras, and say, "Our sanctuary is laid waste, our altar broken down, our temple destroyed; our psaltery is laid on the ground, our song is put to silence, our rejoicing is at an end; the light of our candlestick is put out, the ark of our covenant is spoiled, our holy things are defiled, and the name that is called upon us is almost profaned; our children are put to shame, our priests are burnt, our Levites are gone into captivity, our virgins are defiled, and our wives ravished; our righteous men carried away, our little ones destroyed, our young men are brought in bondage, and our strong men are become weak; and which is the greatest of all, the seal of Sion hath now lost her honor; for she is delivered into the hands of them that hate us," 2 Esd. 10:21–23.

Redeem Israel, O God, out of his troubles! look with the eye of thy mercy, upon our great misery and distress, release us from the iron furnance of Egypt, bring us out of the land of the Chaldees, let the holy city be builded again upon her own heap, having walls and gates; repair and rebuild thy fallen temple, the stones of which are trampled upon in every street. Gather together thy wandering sheep, receive thy returning bride, who has behaved so perversely with strange lovers. O God of Israel, create in us a pure heart, that longeth for thy blessed word and will. Send forth faithful laborers into thy harvest, who cut and gather the grain in due season; perfect the builders who lay for us a good foundation, that in the last days thy house may be established, and appear above all the hills, that many people may go thither and say, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of

the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths,” Isa. 2:3; that we may walk before Thee, in peace and liberty of conscience, all the days of our lives, under a good government and blameless teachers, with a christian baptism, true Supper, godly life, and a just separation; that thou mayest in power be eternally honored and praised in us, as in thy beloved children, through thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, to whom with thee, O Father, and thy Holy Spirit, be praise and everlasting dominion, Amen.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 227–228)

“Then, as there was a falling away from the king of Solomon through Jeroboam and he forsook the true worship of God and chose a false worship for himself, setting up two calves, one at Bethel and one at Dan, and ordained and installed priests and Levites from the lowest classes (1 King 12: 31), filled their hands, made an altar, offered sacrifices thereon and thus led Israel astray and caused them to sin until they were carried away captive by the king of Assyria (2 Kings 17: 6, 7); **so also in like measure there was, spiritually, a falling away from the kingdom of Christ by a departure from the doctrine and a decline of the faith through Antichrist, who forsook the true worship in the temple of Jerusalem and set up for himself false worship** (2 Thes. 2: 3); for all that Christ taught and commanded he imitated, in hypocritical manner and in appearance with his priests, altars sacrifices, worship and with a great show and with abominable desecration of the sacraments of Jesus Christ; and this he has adorned with perverted scripture passages just as if it were true worship, and as if the almighty God of heaven were being served therein. But when it is instituted, it is nothing but abominable idolatry and sacrilege; for all of it is manifestly contrary to the gospel of Christ just as that which Jereboam did according to his own nations was contrary to the law of Moses. Therefore, also those who fear God cannot go to his calves nor worship them, but with all Godfearing

Israelites they must shun the humanly devised, false worship of the spiritual Jeroboam, that is, the Antichrist (Tob. 1: 6; 2 Cor. 6:14, 15) and journey to the heavenly Jerusalem, up to the church of the Lord, there to worship and honor the Most High in his temple according to his command.

Beside the golden calves of Jeroboam and his false worship in the apostate Israel of the flesh. various idolatries with Baal and other gods of the heathen were set up. Although some of the prophets and kings rebuked these practices so that they were partly overthrown, nevertheless both calves remained until the captivity of Israel (2 Kings 17: 12-23). So also under the reign of Antichrist in time many abominable idolatries and heresies have been introduced, and again opposed and discontinued by some, but the two golden calves of Jeroboam, the shameful misuse of holy baptism, and the desecration of the Holy Supper of Jesus Christ have remained, for even salvation is made to appear as depending upon them, and righteousness is sought therein (Rom. 3: 22, 23), thereby grossly despising grace and the precious blood of Jesus Christ (Gal. 2:16; Eph. 1: 7; Col 1: 14) .

As there was a falling away in Israel through Jeroboam, so there was also a falling away in Judah. That is, in the first falling away many pious Christians continued in God and in his word; for this apostasy was evident in the time of the apostles; many antichrists and apostates being at work (2 Thes. 2: 3; 1 Tim. 4: 1-3; 1 John 2: 18), but many continued to hold fast to the house and temple at Jerusalem, that is, to the kingdom of Christ and his true worship. But in time apostasy also entered there, so that all their descendants were led astray, until at last they also were carried into captivity in Babylon among Antichrist. Nevertheless, just as in the time of the apostasy in Israel and Judah there remained same faithful prophets, Godfearing priests, Israelites and Jews who had nothing to do with the false worship, so there are without doubt some remaining in the spiritual apostacy who have not followed Antichrist, as may be clearly understood from the book of Revelations (Rev. 14: 1; 15:2; 17:8; 19:9; 20:4; 21:7).

Thus has the glorious kingdom of the spiritual Solomon, the beautiful church of Jesus Christ, as it existed in the time of the apostles and afterward upon the earth, been so grievously devastated and blighted, and the Holy City given over into the power of the heathen, the Antichrist, to be represented by him, just as it came to pass literally in the case of Israel and Judah, namely, after the temple was built, after the long sovereignty of the kings, after many sins, apostasies and abominations which in time crept in, God gave his people into the hands of the kings of Babylon, and **the Holy City and the temple were ruined and devastated. This devastation of the Holy City and the temple was accomplished by Antichrist, by the whore of Babylon, who has perverted all divine institutions,** who is adorned with purple and silk and scarlet and gold, who holds the golden cup in 'her hand full of abominations, who is drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus Christ, and who .has made all the inhabitants of the earth drunk with the wine of her fornication and her sorcery (Rev. 17: 2-6); whose merchants have waxed rich through the power of her delicacies, her merchandise- and her methods; the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her (Rev. 18: 3), and are still doing it; in short, she is the mother of all abominations upon the earth, and all who love their souls and desire to be saved must forsake this whore and depart out of Babylon, as the scripture says: "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Jer. 50: 8; 51: 6; 2 Cor. 6:17; Rev. 18: 4). "For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (Rev. 18:5).

Now, it is necessary to note here that Israel was twice in captivity, twice delivered, and twice entered into a glorious kingdom, also that the temple was twice built in the same shape and on the same foundation. Of the first bondage or captivity in Egypt and their deliverance, of the kingdom of David and of Solomon, of the glory, and of the building of the first temple, mention has already been made. But now we have come to the

second deliverance out of Babylon, **now we have come to the building of the second temple and the City of Jerusalem, for now God delivers his people every day in a wonderful way out of the spiritual captivity of Babylon**, now he delivers his chosen ones from all the abominations of the Babylonian whore with faithful admonitions from the Holy Scriptures, and by his messengers, to come out of Babylon, and touch not the unclean things (Rev. 18: 4; Jer. 50:8; 2 Cor. 6:17), **and return with rejoicing to Jerusalem and to build again the ruined temple and the destroyed city, that is, the church of Christ**, as may (God be praised) be very plainly seen.

It must also here be remembered that the Jew's and children of Israel who had taken unto themselves heathen wives in Babylon, had done contrary to the law of God (Ezra 10:44) and had to put them away again, and depart from them and such as were born to them (Ezra 10:2, 3, 11), that they might be cleansed from the abominations of the heathen. This signifies and teaches two things. In the first place, that all Christians must withdraw themselves from all Babylonian idolatry and fellowship, and cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and Spirit (2 Cor. 6:17; 7:1; Rev. 18: 4) that they may be a holy people unto the Lord, and properly qualified to serve him. This cannot be the case, unless there be first a separation from all the abominations of the Gentiles and Babylon (Lev. 18: 30; 19: 4, etc.-; 1 Peter 2: 9). In the second place, that marriage between the people of God and heathen women, entered upon contrary to the law, did not stand before God (Lev. 19). Hence it was broken by Ezra, because it was unclean in the eyes of the Lord (Ezra 10:11, 12), and was therefore so sorely punished by God upon. the children of God in the antediluvian world, and thereafter so sternly forbidden by Moses (Gen. 7:23; Deut. 7:2). In view of the fact that such unclean matrimonial alliances and mixed marriages between the children of God and the unbelievers could not stand under the imperfect dispensation of the law, how could it stand before God and his congregation under the perfect dispensation of the Christian age

of the gospel. Let everyone meditate upon and consider this matter.

The temple of our Lord and the city of the living God is now being rebuilt, and as it was literally in the second building of the figurative temple of Jerusalem, so it is now spiritually; for the temple then was built on the same lines and foundation as the first; then the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin wanted to build with Zerubbabel. But Zerubbabel and the chief of the fathers in Israel answered them: "Ye have nothing to do with us to build a house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as kind Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us" (Ezra 4:3). The heathen mocked Nehemiah and his brethren and scoffed the idea of building the city (Neh. 2:10; 4:1-3) and were ready to oppose them with violence and break down the walls of the city. But Nehemiah and all the other Jews rose up against them and worked on the walls of the city, half of them standing guard and the other half +working on the building having their swords at their sides prepared for strife (Neh. 4: 14-18).

This same condition now exists spiritually, for the temple of the Lord, the church of God, is now being built upon the first foundation (Eph. 2: 20-22; 1 Cor. 3: 9, 10; 4:12; 1 Peter 2:4-5, 1 Cor. 12:28), **upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. The living stones which are now lying scattered, here and there are again gathered and built together into the habitation of God. There are now true ministers of the holy word, true preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ; all divine ordinances and apostolic doctrines are restored and observed with a thorough restoration and renewing** by sincere repentance, faith in God, true knowledge of Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, **Christian baptism, the right use of the Lord's Supper, a godly life of brotherly love and fidelity among all the saints, evangelical separation or the ban and all ordinances of God by the power of the Spirit** (1 Peter 2:1; Matt. 3: 4; Heb. 6: 3; John 17:17; 1 John 2:1; Matt. 26: 26, 27; 28:10; Mark 14: 23; 16:15; Matt. 18:18). **Now there is singing**

unto the Lord with great joy in the Spirit (Col. 3:1.6), **now there are offered unto the Lord living, holy, and acceptable sacrifices** which is a reasonable and right service (Rom. 12:1; Eph. 4:12, 13, 16) which is rendered to the God of heaven. **Now are brought to the Lord fervent prayers** as a sweet smelling. savor, and the lifting up of holy hands for the evening sacrifice (Psa. 134:2; 1 Tim. 2:8). **Thus the temple of the Lord, the habitation of the living God, now stands upon the first foundation and in the original form and glory.**

The adversaries of Judah and Benjamin who want to build at the house of the Lord with Zerubbabel are those who falsely profess the gospel and make a hypocritical pretense, just as if they also desired to serve God, but their heart is divided and they are not the true builders and workers in Israel, and therefore the sincere Christians have no desire to build with them, for no one is qualified for such work unless he be a Jew or Israelite of the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (1 Cor. 3: 9-11; 1 Peter 2: 6); that is, he must be a newborn man of God, born anew of the heavenly Father through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit..

The heathen also come now and scoff at and ridicule the elders at the thought of this rebuilding of the Holy City of Jerusalem. They consider them far too weak and small; they speak sarcastically and very blasphemously; for to the exalted ones of this world, to the educated and prevented ones, the idea that such a poor, cast-off people should presume to rebuild the devastated and ruined Jerusalem, the church of Christ, and to restore the walls, is a huge joke. They forget that Christ built his church through the instrumentality of simple and uneducated apostles, and brought it into such a glorious condition, neither do they realize that Christ says in the gospel: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight" (Matt. 11: 25, 26); and Paul says to the Corinthians that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God (1 Cor. 1: 20). God testified to that fact through Isaiah with these words: "I twill destroy the wisdom

of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. 1:19; 20; Isa. 29: 14), and at still another place: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" (Acts 13: 41; Isa. 29:14)

When these mockers of Israel see, then, that their ridicule is not noticed and that the work of the Lord, the building of the Holy City, proceeds in spite of it, they become quite angry (Neh. 4:1) they make a league among each other against the Lord and his church and try to prevent Jerusalem from being rebuilt; the tyrants by their stern mandates, with water, fire and sword; the learned ones with their philosophy, craftiness and ingenuity in perverting the scripture with writing and preaching and by arousing the government, demanding that the builders of the City of Jerusalem should be dispersed, throttled and killed, just so the Lord's work will be hindered. But against this the Lord's people arm themselves, not with carnal weapons, as unfortunately some, for want of understanding have erroneously done, but with the armor of God, with the weapons of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, with the helmet of salvation and the shield of faith, with which to quench the fiery darts of Satan (Eph. 6:14-16), with the powerful twoedged sword of God (Heb. 4:12; Luke 11:11), and **with Christian patience, with which to possess their souls, and thus overcame all their enemies (Heb. 12:1; Rom. 12:12), and build the walls of Jerusalem** with such equipment for war, with such bold and manly hearts, with the comforting assurance that the God of heaven is their helper in time of need, and that the hand of his Christ is with them, and that **the heathen. (who have no part in the house of the Lord nor in the city of Jerusalem), with all their power cannot prevent the building of both city and temple; for the Lord is with his people and will faithfully help his servants. Amen.**

The second figurative temple and rebuilt city of Jerusalem remained standing until the first coming of Christ. In the

meantime, the Jews suffered many trials and persecutions, and were terribly plagued and slaughtered by Antiochus and other tyrants because they would not forsake the law of God nor worship the idols of the heathen (1 Mac. 8, 7). Many also fell away and hypocritically served the ungodly tyrants and authorities. These often became the first and worst enemies, renegades, betrayers and persecutors of the godfearing Jews, as can be read all through the books of the Maccabees, and as can be found in many well written histories.

In the same way the second, spiritual temple and holy city of Jerusalem will remain standing until the second coming and appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; for unto the people of God under heaven is given an everlasting kingdom, and the kingdom of our Lord Christ has no end (Dan. 7:18, 22, 27; Luke 1: 33; Rev. 11:15). Nevertheless all who would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12). Christians are robbed, their houses are burned, they are ridiculed by the heathen, they are despised, they are looked upon as foolish, their life is considered fanaticism (Psa. 44: 22; Wis. of Sol. 5:3, 4), the bodies of the servants of God are given to the birds of the air for food and the flesh of the saints to the beasts of the earth; innocent blood is shed like water, and there is none to bury the dead. In short, Antiochus is exceeding mad and insane beyond measure toward the godly, who believe the gospel, and desire to live according to the gospel. But those who honor and lead in the worship of his Maosim (Merodach), the unknown idol, the false humanly devised worship, them he raises to positions of honor and bestows rich gifts upon them, as may be readily seen every day.

From all this it is evident that all things are restored and shall be repeated, spiritually, in Christ Jesus and in the time of his dominion until the time of his coming and appearing, as the apostle says (1 Peter 1:5; Acts 3:20). Therefore we need not expect any other restitution or repetition of all things in any other than in a spiritual sense in Christ Jesus who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all creation (Rev. 1: 8, 11, 17) and the perfection and completion of all the works of God,

here in the Spirit and hereafter in the perfect life (1 Cor. 13: 10), as that which is renewed and restored and changed and transformed into the eternal as a final reward and rulership of all believers and saints in that place where God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Ghost and with all the holy angels shall be forever and forever (John 14:1-3; 17:24; 1 Thes. 4:17). All that the prophets have prophesied and declared regarding the rebuilding of the house of David, of the kingdom of Christ and its glory (Acts 9:15), of the wrath of God against Babylon (Jer. 50:1-3), and of the rebuilding of the temple and of the city of Jerusalem, in short, the restitution of all things must be thus understood and be changed from the letter to the Spirit: Thereby the foundation of our most holy Christian faith is greatly strengthened and strongly confirmed, as we clearly see and understand that all which we believe and confess is in the first place presented by many beautiful figures, and thereafter revealed, explained, testified and confirmed by the eternal Truth itself, that is, through Jesus Christ (John 1:4; 14:6).

May the eternal, almighty God, who from the beginning wrought and made provision for all things, firstly in figure or symbol, and thereafter in the true substance by his eternal word, by his only begotten Son Jesus Christ, preserve us in his truth, by his unfathomable mercy."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 354-363

Would a restoration ever happen again? If not, how long would this restored Church last?

"The heathen also come now and scoff at and ridicule the elders at the thought of this rebuilding of the Holy City of Jerusalem. They consider them far too weak and small; they speak sarcastically and very blasphemously; for to the exalted ones of this world, to the educated and prevented ones, the idea

that such a poor, cast-off people should presume to rebuild the devastated and ruined Jerusalem, the church of Christ, and to restore the walls, is a huge joke. They forget that Christ built his church through the instrumentality of simple and uneducated apostles, and brought it into such a glorious condition, neither do they realize that Christ says in the gospel: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight" (Matt. 11: 25, 26); and Paul says to the Corinthians that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God (1 Cor. 1: 20). God testified to that fact through Isaiah with these words: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. 1:19; 20; Isa. 29: 14), and at still another place: ~ "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" (Acts 13: 41; 1sa.

When these mockers of Israel see, then, that their ridicule is not noticed and that the work of the Lord, the building of the Holy City, proceeds in spite of it, they become quite angry (Neh. 4:1) they make a league among each other against the Lord and his church and try to prevent Jerusalem from being rebuilt; the tyrants by their stern mandates, with water, fire and sword; the learned ones with their philosophy, craftiness and ingenuity in perverting the scripture with writing and preaching and by arousing the government, demanding that the builders of the City of Jerusalem should be dispersed, throttled and killed, just so the Lord's work will be hindered. But against this the Lord's people arm themselves, not with carnal weapons, as unfortunately some, for want of understanding have erroneously done, but with the armor of God, with the weapons of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, with the helmet of salvation and the shield of faith, with which to quench the fiery darts of Satan (Eph. 6:14-16), with the powerful two-edged sword-

of God (Heb. 4:12; Luke 11:11), and with Christian patience, with which to possess their souls, and thus overcame all their enemies (Heb. 12:1; Rom. 12:12), and build the walls of Jerusalem with such equipment for war, with such bold and manly hearts, with the comforting assurance that the God of heaven is their helper in time of need, and that the hand of his Christ is with them, and that the heathen. (who have no part in the house of the Lord nor in the city of Jerusalem), with all their power cannot prevent the building of both city and temple; for the Lord is with his people and will faithfully help his servants. Amen.

The second figurative temple and rebuilt city of Jerusalem remained standing until the first coming of Christ. In the meantime the Jews suffered many trials and persecutions, and were terribly plagued and slaughtered by Antiochus and other tyrants because they would not forsake the law of God nor worship the idols of the heathen (1 Mac. 8, 7). Many also fell away and hypocritically served the ungodly tyrants and authorities. These often became the first and worst enemies, reneGodes, betrayers and persecuters of the godfearing Jews, as can be read all throught the books of the Maccabees, and as can be found in many well written histories.

In the same way the second, spiritual temple and holy city of Jerusalem will remain standing until the second coming and appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; for unto the people of God under heaven is given an everlasting kingdom, and the kingdom of our Lord Christ has no end (Dan. 7:18, `?2, 27; Luke 1: 33; Rev. 11:15). Nevertheless all who would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12). Christians are robbed, their houses are burned, they are ridiculed by the heathen, they are despised, they are looked upon as foolish, their life is considered fanaticism (Psa. 44: 22; Wis. of Sol. 5:3, 4), the bodies of the servants of God are given to the birds of the air for food and the flesh of the saints to the beasts of the earth; innocent blood is shed like water, and there is none to bury the dead. In short, Antiochus is exceeding mad and insane beyond measure toward the godly, who believe the gospel, and desire to live according to

the gospel. But those who honor and lead in the worship of his Maosim (Merodach), the unknown idol, the false humanly devised worship, them he raises to positions of honor and bestows rich gifts upon them, as may be readily seen every day.

From' all this it is evident that all things are restored and shall be repeated, spiritually, in Christ Jesus and in the time of his dominion until the time of his coming and appearing, as the apostle says (1 Peter 1:5; Acts 3:20). Therefore we need not expect any other restitution of repetition of all things in any other than in a spiritual sense in Christ Jesus who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all creation (Rev. 1: 8, 11, 17) and the perfection and completion of all the works of God, here in the Spirit and hereafter in the perfect life (1 Cor. 13: 10), as that which is renewed and restored and changed and transformed into the eternal as a final reward and rulership of all believers and saints in that place where God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Ghost and with all the holy angels shall be forever and forever (John 14:1-3; 17:24; 1 Thes. 4:17). **All that the prophets have prophesied and declared regarding the rebuilding of the house of David, of the kingdom of Christ and its glory (Acts 9:15), of the wrath of God against Babylon (Jer. 50:1-3), and of the rebuilding of the temple and of the city of Jerusalem, in short, the restitution of all things must be thus understood and be changed from the letter to the Spirit: Thereby the foundation of our most holy Christian faith is greatly strengthened and strongly confirmed, as we clearly see and understand that all which we believe and confess is in the first place presented by many beautiful figures, and thereafter revealed, explained, testified and confirmed by the eternal Truth itself, that is, through Jesus Christ (John 1:4; 14:6).**

May the eternal, almighty God, who from the beginning wrought and made provision for all things, firstly in figure or symbol, and thereafter in the true substance by his eternal word, by his only begotten Son Jesus Christ, preserve us in his truth, by his unfathomable mercy. May he renew us in the inner man and preserve us in uprightness of life unto our end (Col. 1:14; Heb.

1:5) that we may appear with joy before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ when he shall come with the angels of his power with flaming fire to execute wrath upon all them who knew not God and who have not been obedient to his gospel, and to be glorified in his saints and gloriously revealed (2 Thes. 1: 8-10), and admired in all them that believe (Phil. 3:11), in the resurrection and revelation of the heavenly glory with which they shall be clothed by the power of Christ, that with him they may enter and possess forever the eternal, incorruptible glory in the perfect life (Matt. 13:36)."

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 360-363

What about early church leaders that are often mentioned as part of the lineage such as the Church Fathers, the Donatists and the Waldenses?

"As to his reference to Tertullius, Cyprian, Origenes and Augustinus, I would reply: If these writers can support their assertions by the word and ordinance of God, then we will admit that they are right. If they cannot do so, then it is a doctrine of men, and condemned by the Scriptures, Gal. 1:8. In the second place I say, Rhenanus annotates on Tertullius that it was customary with the ancients to baptize adults with the baptism of regeneration."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 49)

"Since we are opposed to the Donatists, Circumcelliones, Munsterites, and to the errors, abuses and abominations of all uproarious sects, committed in our times"

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 109)

"But some out of wickedness [and] some out of lack of understanding persecute, blaspheme, and blame us because of this baptism; yes, **they compare us with the Donatists, Münsterites, and other revolutionary and erring spirits, and say that we are also of such a nature. This is unjust before God, the righteous Judge, and does us much wrong."**

Dietrich Philips Hand Book. pg. 354-363

(This is the only quote I found between Menno and Dietrich mentioning the Waldenses.)

"The others, like Luther and his adherents, openly say that the children themselves believe and must be baptized on their own faith; for he writes in one place: "No one is saved by another's faith or righteousness, but by his own, therefore the sacraments may not be received without faith unto salvation; therefore for those who think that infants do not believe, it were altogether better that no infants were baptized than to baptize without faith, since both the sacrament and God's holy name would be used in vain." **That is, he reprimands or accuses the Waldenses who baptize their infants while not believing that they themselves have faith and therefore take and hold the name of God in vain.** That is, these infants are not baptized upon the faith of the church or fathers, but upon their own faith, and that sin is forgiven through grace, and not by virtue of baptism. In other words, that baptism profits no one, and should be administered to no one unless he himself believes, and without faith no one should be baptized, since not the sacrament, but the faith of the sacrament justifies. That is, the infant itself must believe, or else the fathers must lie, when they say in the child's stead; "I believe." Hence it were better never to baptize a child than to make such mockery and hypocrisy of the word of God. Simple-minded children then are better qualified to believe than are rational adults!"

Dietrich Philip Hand Book pg. 35

What about the Melchiorites (Munsterites) who came to exist because of the spread of the Swiss Anabaptist movement that began in 1525 when Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz and George Blaurock baptized each other, is it true that the Dutch Anabaptists were baptismally linked to them as most Historians claim?

(In this quote Menno does not deny the baptismal link to the Munsterites but only argues that it is the Spirit that incorporates us into the body and church of Christ and not water baptism thus concluding that they are not one with them in Spirit.)

“But if they should say we are one church with the Munsterites, because they and we are baptized with one baptism, then we would reply that if outward baptism has the power to make all those who are thus baptized with one baptism, one church, and that it causes all those who are thus baptized to share in the unrighteousness, wickedness and corruption of every individual, then our adversaries may well consider what kind of a church or body theirs is, as it is evident and well known to everybody that perjurers, murderers, highway-men, thieves, &c., have received the same baptism which they have. If we, then are Munsterites because of our baptism, they must be perjurers, murderers, highway-men, thieves, &c., on account of their baptism. This is incontrovertible.

O, no. The Scripture does not teach that we are baptized into one body by any mere sign, as water, but that we are baptized into one body by one Spirit, 1 Cor. 12:13.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, pp. 301–302)

Would Menno and Dietrich treat the Munsterites as excommunicated brothers acknowledging that they were once a united Church?

“In the fourth place, it is evident that the community or church cannot continue in the saving doctrine, an unblamable and pious life without the proper use of the Excommunication or Ban; even as a city without a good police, or laws and regulations, or a field without any inclosure, and a house without walls and doors, so is also a church which has not the true apostolic *Exclusion* or *Ban*; for without it there would be an opening for all deceiving spirits, for all abominations, and for proud scorers, for all idolatrous and wantonly, perverted sinners; yea, for all lewd debauchees, sodomites, adulterers and knaves, as is the case with all the great sects of the world, which call themselves, though improperly, the church of Christ; according to my opinion it is the distinguished usage, honor and prosperity of a sincere community, if they with christian discretion teach the true apostolic *Separation*, and observe it carefully in love, according to the ordinance of the holy, divine Scriptures; it is more than evident, that if we had not with due zeal insisted upon it, we would be esteemed and called, by every one, the members of the sect of Munster and all other perverted sects. But, thank God, since, in consequence of the proper use of excommunication, it is well known, among several thousand honorable, sincere persons, in different principalities, cities, and countries, that we are guiltless of, and free from all ungodly abominations, and preverted sects, and that we also do make this known, unreservedly, to the whole world, not only by our doctrines and walk, but with our possessions and blood.”

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 1, pp. 241–242)

“I have never seen Munster nor have I ever been in their communion. And I trust that by the grace of the Lord, I shall

never eat nor drink with such if there should yet be any, as the Scripture teaches me not to do; unless they sincerely acknowledge their abomination and truly repent, and follow the truth and the gospel in a becoming manner.

Behold, kind reader, this is my understanding and opinion of the Munsterites, as is also the opinion of all those who are known and accepted of us as brethren and sisters, that is, those of us who, on account of the false doctrine, unclean pedo-baptism and supper of the preachers, are visited with superabundance of misery, tribulation and anxiety, and who assert and testify unto death their pure doctrine of baptism and Supper, with an humble confession and a pious, unblamable life.

But all those who reject the cross of Christ, as did the Munsterites; turn their backs upon the Word of the Lord; again revert to carnality, idolatry and its communion; walk in all pomp, pride and inebriety; in short, all those who are on the broad road, although they may be baptized, we do not know nor accept as brethren and fellows, inasmuch as they do not abide in the word of the Lord. Behold, kind reader, this is the truth and it will ever be found so. The learned may upbraid and garble to their satisfaction, yet they should know that although they are now honored and respected on earth, as the Psalmist testifies, we shall at last appear before a Judge who has no respect of person and who will not judge according to the complaint, nor favor and partiality, but according to the truth."

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 301)

Is a Church lineage needed?

"Answer. I would beseech the diligent reader earnestly to observe how the words of Gellius sound, which I have here cited at length. He admits that the church, deceived and enchanted by the devil, the lusts of the flesh, the pomp, sects and potentates of the world, has become drowsy, inattentive, ungrateful, and an

apostate of Christ, has enraged God, and fallen into all manner of wickedness and sins; **yet he claims that she remains the church of Christ, as if the church was inherited by one generation from another, and did not consist in faith, Spirit and power. I would not know what poorer excuse he could find. Therefore observe that which I write, and let it be unto you a certain rule, namely, where the Spirit, word, sacraments and life of Christ are found, that there the Nicene article comes in, "I believe in the holy christian church, the communion of saints,"**

The Complete Works of Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 91)

15. Are there any other sources that would give evidence to the Melchiorite connection to the Dutch Mennonites?

A Confession

By Obbe Philips

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE YEARS 1533–1536

Dietrich Philips' brother Obbe Philips, was the leader of the Obbenite which is the Church Menno Simons joined. Interestingly Obbe Philips ordained both Menno Simons and Dietrich Philips to the ministry.

"I through the importuning of the brethren commissioned to the office [apostleship] Dietrich Philips in Amsterdam, David Joris in Delft, and Menno Simons in Groningen."

Obbe Philips, *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*: (Vol. XXV, p. 223)

He, like Menno and Dietrich, taught that the first Church perished after the apostolic period and was being restored by the Anabaptist movement of his time.

"In the first place, we must with all understanding concede and confess that the first church of Christ and the apostles was destroyed and ruined in early times by Antichrist. Of this one

does not need to call forth many words or much testimony, since we ourselves are all in agreement and all who with us are called Evangelical know that the whole of the papacy is a Sodom, a Babylon, an Egypt, and an abomination of desolation, the work or service of Antichrist, and all its ordinances, ordinations, and teachings are false, according to prophecies of both Daniel (ch. 9:27) and Paul (2 Thess. 2:3) by the testimony of the Holy Spirit.”

Obbe Philips, *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*: (Vol. XXV, p. 207)

“Thus in time this holiness was deceptive and the fieriness became apparent in some who could no longer contain themselves in such simplicity; and they (Anabaptist Leaders) presented themselves as teachers and envoys of God, professing to have been compelled in their hearts by God to baptize, preach, and teach, and establish a new church, since the ancient church had perished.”

Obbe Philips, *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*: (Vol. XXV, pp. 207–208)

In Obbe Philips’ confession, He tells us that he was a part of Melchior Hofmann’s Church and the whole story of which lead up to the great deception of the Munsterite revolt. (I recommend reading his whole article.)

“...and they (Anabaptist Leaders) presented themselves as teachers and envoys of God, professing to have been compelled in their hearts by God to baptize, preach, and teach, and establish a new church, since the ancient church had perished.

Among these were Doctor Balthasar Hubmaier, Melchior Rinck, John Hut,⁶ John Denck, Louis Haetzer,⁸ and Thomas Müntzer. Look in the *Chronica*¹⁰ of Sebastian Franck and in the letters and in many of their teachings about all these men.

Among these Melchior Hofmann stood out. He came from upper Germany to Emden to baptize around three hundred persons publicly in the church in Emden, both burgher and peasant, lord and servant. This the old count permitted to take place as long as Melchior was there. And it was said that the count was himself brought to the same belief.

This Melchior was a very fiery and zealous man, a very smooth-tongued speaker who was celebrated for his great calling and commission, and wrote heatedly against Luther and Zwingli concerning baptism and other articles.”

Obbe Philips, *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*: (Vol. XXV, pp. 207–208).

Obbe clearly calls the Munterites his brethren.

“And when I still think of the resigned suffering which occurred among the brethren in Amsterdam, in the Old Cloister [in Bolsward], in Hazerswoude, in Appingedam, in the Sandt [in Groningen], and above all at Münster, my soul is troubled and terrified before it. I shall be silent about all the false commissions, prophecies, visions, dreams, revelations, and unspeakable spiritual pride which immediately from the first hour stole in among the brethren. For those baptized one day cried on the morrow about all the godless, that they must be rooted out. And actually, as soon as anyone was baptized, he was at once a pious Christian and slandered all people and admitted no one on earth to be good but himself and his fellow brethren.”

Obbe Philips, *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*: (Vol. XXV, p. 224).

Though Obbe and Dietrich never felt good about the deception of the Melchiorites and denounced them as heretics and false teachers after the event at Munster, Obbe had much regret for being a part of a false Church that taught such erring ideas in which he went along with for a time. After Munster, his Church became a peaceful Church only built on scripture alone with the help of Dietrich Philips and Menno Simons. Sadly, shortly after Obbe left his Anabaptist church because he no longer could handle the mental anguish and guilt he had for participating in the great Melchiorite deception.

“I am still miserable of heart today that I advanced anyone to such an office **while I was so shamefully and miserably deceived** that I did not stop forthwith, but permitted myself to bring poor souls to this...”

Obbe Philips, *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*: (Vol. XXV, p. 223)

Menno called Obbe “a Demas” for leaving the brotherhood.

“But that Obbe has become a Demas...”

Menno Simons *The Complete Works of Menno Simon* (Vol. 2, p. 96)

“A confession by Obbe Philips”, which these quotes are taken from, was his confessional letter regretfully recalling the years of his involvement with the false Melchiorite Church.

“It is this which is utter grief to my heart and which I will lament before my God as long as I live, before all my companions, as often as I think of them.... I wanted to free my soul in a confession of this before God, acknowledging my guilt and deception....I thank the blessed, gracious, and merciful God with all his mercy, who opened my eyes, humbled my soul, transformed my heart, captured my spirit and my downcast mind and soul, and who gave me to know my sins.

Obbe Philips, *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*: (Vol. XXV, p. 224).

So If Obbe Philips is connected to the Melchiorites who's existence came from the spread of Anabaptism which began in 1525 by the Swiss Brethren which started a new Church by baptizing themselves, what about the historical claims, by some, which asserts that the Mennonites are just a continuation of the Waldensian Church?

“The theory of Waldensian origin of the Anabaptists was popular among Dutch and German Mennonites in the 17th-19th centuries, though never proposed by the 16th-century Anabaptists themselves. It was held by such writers as van Braght (Martyrs' Mirror of 1660), who seemingly took it over from the earlier martyr books (e.g., the 1631 Haarlem book),

Herman Schijn, and Galenus Abrahamsz, and from them was passed on to others. **Apparently the Mennonite writers ultimately derived their authority for the theory from Sebastian Franck (Chronica, p. 483) or from a supposed similarity of teachings. It was also a convenient apologetic weapon to counter those enemies who attributed Anabaptist origins to the Münsterites.** It was, however, approved by Carel van Gent (1615), and such writers as Brandt, Meshovius, and Gottfried Arnold. S. B. ten Cate (Geschiedkundig Onderzock) was among the last of the Mennonite historians to hold to the Waldensian origin of the Mennonites, although with grave hesitation. **Modern historians all reject the theory, such as Kühler and van der Zijpp in Holland, Crous, Hege, and Neff in Germany, and Horsch and Smith in America.** No actual case of a Waldensian becoming an Anabaptist has ever been adduced, and the early leaders in Switzerland, Holland, South Germany, and Austria can all be identified as either Catholic or Protestant in background. **No Waldensian congregation was demonstrably in existence in German Switzerland for ca. 100 years before the Anabaptist beginning in 1525. The same is true for Holland and South Germany.**

From article titled "Waldenses" at <http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Waldenses>

The Origins of the Dutch Anabaptist View of the Incarnation

The unique doctrine of the incarnation that Melchior Hoffman passed down to the Dutch Anabaptist Church is another evidence that shows they were connected. Historical Christianity including the original Anabaptists of the 1500's, such as the Swiss and German Anabaptists commonly taught that Jesus

was flesh of Mary. Melchior Hoffman, influenced by the German Theologian Caspar Schwenckfeld, taught that Jesus took nothing from the virgin Mary.

Melchior Hoffman,

“No flesh can become good through any work except through an innocent death, that is through a pure flesh without spot that was not from the cursed seed. For through the cursed seed nothing could be accomplished as it is written.

And I saw a strong angel preaching with a clear voice: who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals? And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the book nor look at it.

Here we see that no angel above in heaven in the height could accomplish the opening, nor anyone in hell or in the depth of the earth, nor any man on earth, but only the eternal Word and paschal Lamb.

We have now heard enough that the whole seed of Adam, be it of man, woman, or virgin, is cursed and delivered to eternal death. **Now if the body of Jesus Christ was also such flesh and of this seed, that is of Adam’s flesh and blood as is openly affirmed, it follows that the redemption has not yet happened. For the seed of Adam belongs to Satan and is the property of the devil. Satan cannot be paid in his own coin....**

Since Christ is of this seed after the flesh he cannot introduce grace since Adam’s seed was cursed and has died (Rom. 5; 1 Cor. 13). It is certain that death cannot produce life, nor the curse a blessing. Since this seed is caught in lies and is the lie itself it cannot erect the truth. This is shown by the prophet Ecclesiasticus 34 when he says: who can be cleansed by one who is unclean or get truth from a liar? **And if it should be established that Christ’s flesh was Mary’s natural flesh and blood, we would all have to**

wait for another redeemer, for in such a one we could get no righteousness.

And it is certain that all who put their trust in Adam's flesh will never by such faith be able to inherit eternal blessedness.

Rather the wrath of God remains on such. For those who seek their sanctification in Adam's seed as well as their blessing, cleansing, justification, redemption and coming to life, they cast away the true foundation stone, the eternal Word, and thrust the Lamb of God away. They make God, Christ, the Holy Spirit and all the witnesses of God into liars. **Through this accursed seed nothing can be made better. If salvation was to be established it would have to be a different seed through which the whole seed of Adam could again be liberated and set free, namely the seed of the heavenly Father Abraham (Gal. 3), which Mary received from the Holy Spirit. It is the eternal Word and the Son of the most High himself who was not of this world (Jn. 8), and did not come out of this world (Jn. 16). Rather he came into the world.** He is the one through whom everything was made in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible (Col. 1; Heb. 1; Eph. 2, 3; Jn. 1). He also had the power to give his life, surrender it, and take it again (Jn. 10). For if he had been the seed of the first Adam he would have had to die for himself as all other men, that is certain. Yes, he would have had to die for his own inherited guilt and be cursed as all other men."

Anabaptism in Outline: Selected Primary Sources (Vol. 3, pp. 27–28).

Quoted from; Zur Linden, O. F. (1885). Melchior Hoffman, ein Prophet der Wiedertäufer. Haarlem: De Erven F. Bohn.

**Most historians will agree that Menno Simons
inherited his view of the incarnation from Melchior
Hoffman.**

“Melchior Hoffman was an unusual person, a man of extraordinary gifts, of a consuming selfless zeal for the cause of the Lord Jesus, of a rare eloquence, combined with moral earnestness and a genuinely truthful character. This accounts for his mighty influence and great success with the masses. The amount of writing he could do in his unsettled life is amazing.

Aside from his unbridled fantasy, his arbitrary interpretation of Scripture, and his fanatical view of the end-times, his writings also contain a wealth of sound Christian ideas and sober thoughts (see Samuel Cramer's article in *BRN* V, 127 ff.). His favorite ideas, (1) the hope of the imminent return of Christ and (2) his view of the Incarnation, that Jesus took His flesh not from Mary but out of her, were not generally accepted by the Anabaptists, although Menno Simons did adopt his view of the Incarnation.

On the other hand, his determined insistence on freedom of religion, on evidence of the fruit of the Spirit, on sanctification of life, on believers' baptism, and on nonresistance, made essential contributions to the strengthening of Anabaptism. His teaching on the communion is still prevalent among the Mennonites of the Palatinate. The oath he at first rejected unconditionally, but later permitted it under certain circumstances, or even made use of it himself (zur Linden, 220). (If, however, Obbe Philips is the only authority for this statement, it is still open to question.) For the Münster affair Hoffman is no more responsible than Luther is for the Peasants' War. Granted that some of his teachings, such as the Incarnation and the imminent return of Christ, were carried into Münster by the "Wassenberg preachers" (Rembert, 299, 360 f.), nevertheless the fact remains that the social and

moral aberrations in Münster find no source nor echo in either the life or teaching of Melchior Hoffman. His lasting significance lies in the fact that he transplanted the Anabaptist movement from the South to the North. Cramer calls him the father of Dutch Anabaptism."

Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online

[https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Hoffman,_Melchior_\(ca._1495-1544%3F\)&oldid=146778](https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Hoffman,_Melchior_(ca._1495-1544%3F)&oldid=146778)

"Menno's own view of the incarnation, however, became a source of controversy among the Anabaptists. It was never accepted by the Swiss Brethren. His view was similar to that of Hofmann. The crux of the problem to him was the origin of Christ's physical nature. He held that it was a new creation of the Holy Spirit within the body of Mary. Menno's position differed from the historic view in denying that Christ received his human body from Mary. He replaced the orthodox view, "*per Spiritum Sanctum ex Maria virginenatus*," with "*per Spiritum Sanctum in Maria virgine conceptus, factus et natus*."

The thrust of his argument was that God was the author of life and not man. Christ, therefore, received his life, both human and divine, from God. Menno's adversaries never tired of accusing him of heresy on this point. He was forced to discuss the doctrine of the incarnation against his will and to give a disproportionate amount of time to defending his unique view. Contrary to much that has been written, however, Menno never denied the full humanity of Christ. Nor did he attempt to divide the human and the divine in Christ. He recognized that the incarnation involved a certain degree of mystery which defied rational analysis. He wanted to obviate the possibility that Christ inherited a sinful nature without deifying the virgin Mary.

William R. Estep, *The Anabaptist Story: An Introduction to Sixteenth-Century Anabaptism*, pg. 172.

“Influenced like all Dutch Anabaptists by Melchior Hoffman, Menno embraced Hoffman’s view, rejected by most Christians today, that Mary contributed nothing to Christ’s humanity and acted only as a vessel for the pregnancy ...”

Christian History Magazine: Calvin, Councils, and Confessions: How the Church Became the Churches no. 120 (2016): pg. 43.

Menno’s testimony of how difficult it was for him to accept the Dutch Anabaptist view of the incarnation.

“Beloved lords, friends and brethren, when this matter of the incarnation of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ was first mentioned by the brethren, on hearing it I was terrified at heart, lest I should err in the matter and be found, before God, in pernicious unbelief. On account of this article I was often so troubled at heart, after receiving baptism, that for many days I abstained from food and drink, by the over-anxiety of my soul, beseeching and praying God in extreme necessity that the kind Father by his mercy and grace would disclose unto me, poor sinner, who, although in extreme weakness, desired to do his blessed will and pleasure, the mystery of the incarnation of his blessed Son, to the extent necessary to the glorification of his holy name and to the consolation of my afflicted conscience.

Thus wandering about for days, weeks and months, I have frequently asked the opinion or belief of some of you in regard to this matter which bore so heavily upon my heart. Yet none could instruct me sufficiently to quiet my conscience. For gross misunderstanding of some Scriptures which they alleged as proof of their assertion, I found with them, not only according to my opinion, but according to the meaning of the Scriptures; so

that, at last, after much fasting, weeping, praying, tribulation and anxiety, I became, by the grace of God, quiet and refreshed at heart, firmly acknowledging and believing, assured by the infallibly sure testimony of the Scriptures, understood in the Spirit, that Christ Jesus forever blessed, is the Lord from heaven, 1 Cor. 15:47;

The Complete Works of
Menno Simon (Vol. 2, p. 330)

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