THE BAPTISTS AND THE GREAT AWAKENING IN NEW ENGLAND

Prayer
Scripture: Psalm 126:4-6
Hymn: 361 "Come, Thou Almighty King"

There were Baptists among the early settlers in almost all the colonies in America but throughout the 17th century Baptist churches were few, poor, very weak, and widely scattered. The growth of the Baptists continued very slow during the first half of the 18th century. In the last half of the 18th century and particularly in the last third of the century the growth of the Baptists was phenomenal. By the end of the 18th century the Baptists had become one of the largest religious groups in America.

When the Great Awakening came the Baptists were one of the most despised and persecuted religious groups in the colonies. By and large the Baptists tended to stand aloof from the revivals of the Great Awakening. As the revivals were dying down in the stronger and better established churches they were just beginning among the Baptists. In the end the Baptists would reap one of the greatest harvests from the revival movement. Down to the time of the American Revolution the Baptists continued to be despised and feared by the established churches—the Congregationalists in New England and the Anglicans in the middle and southern colonies—and by the Presbyterians who had enjoyed great growth in the Great Awakening. In the minds of many the very name "Baptist" suggested "Anabaptist" and was associated with the wild extravagances of the Anabaptists of Europe—especially those of Muenster with their anarchy, communism, and polygamy.

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The Baptists of New England took little part in the great revivals for three main reasons. One was that the Baptists of New England tended to be Arminian and the revivals flourished among the Calvinists. A second reason was the very harsh treatment that the Baptists had suffered at the hands of the Congregationalists in whose churches the revivals flourished. A third reason was the infant baptism of the revivalists. The Baptists were quite vocal in their criticisms of and condemnation of infant baptism. Baptist opposition to infant baptism brought down on their heads great anger and bitter hatred.

The Baptists formed the Rhode Island Yearly Meeting sometime before 1707. At its beginning the Yearly Meeting included the Six Principle (Arminian) churches of Providence, Newport, and North Kingston. Thirty-two messengers attended the Yearly Meeting in Newport on June 21, 1729. Among the messengers were eight ministers, three deacons, and twenty-one laymen, from thirteen churches: eight in Rhode Island, two in Massachusetts, two in Connecticut, and one in New York City. The Yearly Meeting continued to grow until it included nearly all of the Baptist churches in New England except the three Calvinistic churches of Newport, Boston, and Swansea.

Earnest and devout Congregationalists tended to blame the growing secularism and deadness in their churches before the Great Awakening on the spreading Arminianism. About 1705 Increase Mather warned, "If the begun apostasy should proceed as fast the next thirty years as it has done these last, surely it will
come to pass in New England (except the Gospel itself depart with the order of it) that the most conscientious people therein will think themselves concerned to gather churches out of churches." The revivalists of the Great Awakening accused preachers of Arminian sympathies with being "unconverted."

At the beginning of the Great Awakening in 1740 there were twenty-three Baptist churches in New England: eleven in Rhode Island, eight in Massachusetts, and four in Connecticut. In addition there were scattered Baptists throughout the colonies and unnumbered little groups of Baptists who had not organized into churches.

The Baptists profited from the fierce theological controversies that the Great Awakening spawned. The Old Lights among the Congregationalists who opposed the revivals tended to drift in an Arminian direction. Some who were disgusted with the controversies raging among the Congregationalists withdrew, some to the Anglicans, and a few to the General or Arminian Baptists. The New Light Congregationalists who were attacked on one side by the Old Lights, were also under attack from the "Strict" Congregationalists who opposed any relaxing of standards as the Great Awakening waned. Baptists had kept up their attack on infant baptism. The revival emphasis on a conversion experience opened the way for a close examination of the place of infant baptism. The "Strict" Congregationalists tended to become "Separatist" Congregationalists. Their desire to maintain rigorous standards led many to withdraw from the old congregations to form the new "Separatist" churches. Eastern Connecticut was the stronghold of the Separatists. Some ninety-eight Separatist churches were formed. Thirty-two were only temporary. The Congregationalists fiercely persecuted the Separatist churches. They were forced to pay taxes on their meeting houses and to pay taxes to support the ministry of the old churches. Congregationalists were more tolerant of Baptists and Quakers than of the Separatists. This led to a tendency for the Separatist Congregational Churches to turn Baptist. At least nineteen Separatist Congregational Churches became Baptist. Some one hundred-thirty Baptist Churches were formed by disaffected Congregationalists.

The Particular or Calvinistic Baptist churches tended to be more sympathetic to the revivals than the General or Arminian Baptists. Some Baptists who came to favor the revivals withdrew from the General (Arminian) Baptists to form new Calvinistic congregations. One of these new Calvinistic Baptist churches was the Warren Avenue Baptist Church of Boston organized in 1743.

The Great Awakening revitalized the Particular (Calvinistic) Baptists and gave them a great boost. The Separatist Congregationalists who turned Baptist brought their Calvinism with them and did much to further Calvinism among the Baptists. The great Baptist gains in New England in the latter half of the 18th century were largely among the churches that accepted Calvinism. By 1764 the Rhode Island Yearly Meeting had seventeen churches but there was a growing tendency for Arminian Baptists to turn Calvinistic.

One of the leading Separatist Congregationalists who became a Baptist was Isaac Backus (1724-1806). He was one of the most prominent among the Baptist preachers in Massachusetts. He travelled some 15,000 miles on missionary journeys through New England planting Baptist churches. Backus came from one of the finest of Congregational families of Connecticut. He was converted in his home town of Norwich in a revival in 1741. He united with the Congregational church in 1742 and remained in it two years. His grandfather, Joseph Backus, had
been a staunch foe of the tendency to a state-church Presbyterianism among the Congregationalists in Connecticut. The fierce persecution of the New Lights led Isaac Backus along with twenty-nine men and a large number of women to withdraw to form a Separatist Congregational Church in 1744. Among the number was a deacon and a number of the wealthiest and most influential people of the town. They soon outnumbered the original church. The Separatists had to pay taxes to support the minister of the old church. Within a single year some forty people, including a number of women, were imprisoned for refusing to pay the tax to support the minister. Isaac Backus decided to give himself to the gospel ministry. Between 1646 and 1651 some thirty-one ministers were ordained as pastors of Separatist churches; five were Baptists before they were ordained; eight became Baptists soon afterward. Isaac Backus was one of these.

Separatist churches were springing up both in Connecticut and in Massachusetts. In 1746 a Separatist Church was formed at Mansfield, Connecticut. It contained both pedobaptists and antipedobaptists. For a time the Separatists tried to keep both together but there was a growing conviction that infant baptism was not only non-Scriptural but even a perversion of Scripture and that it was a serious compromise of principle to fellowship those involved in the error of infant baptism.

One of the early large gains to the Baptists from the Congregationalists occurred at Sturbridge, Massachusetts, in June, 1749. Elder Moulton baptized thirteen members of the Separatist church, including one of the deacons. A little later the pastor, John Blunt, all the remaining officers, and over sixty of the members were baptized. One of the early historians of the movement wrote, "Infant sprinkling, which we called baptism, went away like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor." After baptizing nearly a hundred, Blunt decided to return to infant baptism. The church declared that he had broken the covenant and dismissed him. The church tried to secure the exemption from taxation to support the congregational minister that was allowed to Baptist churches. For two years they were taxed and those who refused to pay were imprisoned and their goods confiscated. Finally the Superior Court ruled in their favor.

Irritated at the growth of the Baptists the Massachusetts legislature in 1752 emended the law to make it more difficult for Baptists to secure exemption. Each certificate had to be signed by the minister and two principal members of the Baptist church and by three other Baptist churches, declaring that they believed the Baptist church involved was a true Baptist church and that they themselves were true Anabaptist churches. "Anabaptist" was used because it was considered one of the gravest of insults. Securing a certificate was not easy because of the fewness of Baptist churches.

At Taunton, Massachusetts, Esther White was imprisoned from February, 1752 to March 1753 for refusing to pay the clerical tax. She turned Baptist when she was released.

A Separatist church in Framingham was organized in 1747 and later turned Baptist.

A Norwich, Connecticut, the mother of Isaac Backus and several others were imprisoned for refusing to pay the clerical tax. Their Separatist congregation continued to grow and had soon doubled in size.
In 1747 a great revival took place in Titicut, near Middleborough in Massachusetts. The New Lights established a Separatist church in December 1747. When Isaac Backus passed that way they put pressure on him to become their pastor. Another revival followed with twenty conversions. Backus and his flock were taxed and harrassed but in ten months they had increased to eighty members. By August, 1749, the Titicut church was torn with controversy over baptism. Backus came to feel the Baptists were right. He wavered and turned back to infant baptism. While he was on a preaching tour in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, Elder Moulton came through and immersed nine. Backus again wavered on his return. When a fanatical group of New Lights in Easton and Norton, Massachusetts, adopted believers' baptism and proceeded to baptize each other, Backus decided to make a study, "What saith the Scripture?" As a result of this study on August 22, 1751, he was immersed along with six of his members by Elder Benjamin Pierce of Warwick. A council of the New Lights was called in October, 1751. They were determined to keep pedobaptists and antipedobaptists together. When Backus refused to baptize infants, the New Lights excommunicated him. Another council was called in November, 1752, that censured those who refused fellowship to both. A general meeting of New Lights that included twenty-seven congregations met at Exeter, May, 1753, still determined to maintain fellowship. Solomon Paine, a leading pedobaptist refused to attend. Stephen Babcock, a leading antipedobaptist, strongly censured Paine. Forty churches attended a meeting at Stonington in May, 1754. These Separatist churches were determined that infant baptism must be recognized. Backus and his congregation tried to go along with the policy of mutual toleration. Some of his members insisted baptism was a burial. An elder sprinkled some infants. The congregation was filled with debates. By 1756 Backus and a number of his brethren had decided that church communion must be limited to those baptized on a profession of faith. On January 16, 1756, assisted by representatives of the Boston and Rehoboth Baptist churches, a Baptist church was organized at Middleborough with Backus as pastor and he continued as its pastor for the next fifty years.

Isaac Backus travelled widely preaching and establishing Baptist churches. He became one of the Baptists' chief defenders of the separation of church and state, of liberty of conscience, and was an ardent foe of the clerical taxation. He was tireless in working for the abolition of unjust ecclesiastical law. He became one of New England's ablest champions of religious liberty. He spoke widely defending the cause of liberty and he published a host of able works such as his An Appeal to the Public for Religious Liberty, against the Oppressions of the Present Day (Boston, 1773). He became one of the early Baptist advocates of an educated ministry and a warm friend of Rhode Island College when it was founded.

A second Baptist church was organized in Middleborough in 1758 and a third in 1761. In the time of Backus' ministry the Baptists were growing rapidly. In his last years Backus collected material for a history of the Baptists in New England.

One of the ablest of the fellow ministers of Isaac Backus was James Manning (1738-17). Manning was born in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, on October 22, 1738. He was graduated from Princeton in 1762. The following year he was ordained by the Elizabethtown church as an itinerant minister. He was selected by the Philadelphia Association to lead in founding a Baptist Educational institution in Rhode Island. A group of Baptists who lived in Warren but who were members
of the Swansea church, made an offer of generous support and Warren was chosen to be the site of the proposed school. Manning arrived in Warren in the summer of 1764 and in October a church was organized. The church prospered under the ministry of Manning.

The idea of founding a college in Rhode Island came from Morgan Edwards of Philadelphia who in 1762 made the proposal to the Philadelphia Association. The Association in 1763 chose James Manning, a recent graduate of Princeton, to visit Newport to confer with the Baptists there on the advisability of starting a college and the possibility of securing a charter. In July, 1763, Manning met with the leading Baptists (the Hon. Samuel Ward, Colonel John Gardner, Colonel Job Bennet, Hon. Josias Lyndon and others) and they heartily endorsed the plans. Dr. Ezra Stiles, a learned Congregational minister, who later became president of Yale, was asked to draft a charter. Styles made the charter more favorable to the Presbyterians than to the Baptists. Before the charter passed the Assembly, the Hon. Daniel Jenckes, who had detected the unfavorable provisions concerning the Baptists made a vigorous protest. The Baptists accused Styles of deliberate fraud. The Philadelphia Association sent Samuel Jones and R. S. Jones to look into the matter. They, with Nicholas Eyres of Newport, drafted a new charter that passed the Assembly in 1764. The charter provided for thirty-six trustees of whom twenty-two were to be Baptists; five, Quakers; four, Congregationalists; and five, Episcopalians. Of twelve fellows, eight were to be Baptists, and the rest could be from any or all denominations. There were to be no religious tests for admission. All members of the college were to enjoy full, free, absolute, and uninterrupted liberty of conscience. Professors, tutors, officers of the college could be chosen from all denominations. Only the president was required to be a Baptist. Youths from all denominations were eligible for admission to the advantages and honors of the college. Sectarian differences were to have no part in the instruction in the college.

The first board of trustees consisted of governors, ex-governors, judges, military dignitaries (among the Baptists, Samuel Ward, governor, Supreme Court Justice, congressman; Chief-Justice Daniel Jenckes, Josias Lyndon who later became governor; Nicholas Brown, a wealthy Baptist; Colonel Job Bennet who served as treasurer; Dr. Joshua Babcock who in Revolution became a major-general; Dr. Thomas Eyres, the secretary), and the preachers, Samuel Stillman and John Gano (from the Philadelphia Association) and Morgan Edwards, who had suggested the college. The distinguished board made only very small contributions toward the college. No salary was provided for Manning who was to be the first and only teacher at the beginning. The college had no endowment, no buildings, no library. Morgan Edwards went to England to solicit help. Hezekiah Smith made an extensive tour of the South, especially South Carolina, to raise money. Gano also visited churches in the South appealing for help.

Manning opened a Latin School in 1764 hoping it would grow into a college. In 1765 he was appointed president, and began teaching the few students who appeared in Warren while he also served the church.

Manning took the lead in forming the Warren Association at Warren, R.I., in 1767. It was an association of Calvinistic Baptist churches. In this he had the hearty cooperation of Hezekiah Smith and others of New England, and the encouragement of the Philadelphia Association that sent John Gano, pastor of the Baptist Church in New York City as its representative. Representatives of ten churches met to consider the proposal to form an Association. Only four
churches decided to join in forming the Association: Warren, R.I., and the Haverhill, Bellingham, and Second Middleborough churches of Massachusetts. Even Isaac Backus held aloof until 1770. After that he took a very active part in the Association and became its agent to promote the cause of religious freedom in New England. Backus and his church hesitated until they were sure that the Association did not intend to assume jurisdiction over the churches but act only in an advisory capacity. Backus made sure the Association would not receive any complaints against any particular church that was not a member of the Association nor from any censured member of the churches. Gradually the Association won the confidence of the churches and a large proportion of the Baptist churches of New England identified with the Warren Association until other Associations were formed for the convenience of different localities. The chief purpose of Manning, Smith and the organizers of the Association was to secure cooperation in education, in evangelism, and in the struggle for religious liberty.

The first commencement of the school was held in Warren in 1769 with seven young men receiving their bachelor's degree.

A question arose about a permanent location for the college where buildings could be erected. Both Providence and Newport wanted the college. Newport was almost twice as large and twice as wealthy as Providence. There were more Baptists in Newport. Providence offered slightly more money than Newport (some 4,280 pounds). Manning used his influence to secure the choice of Providence. Several factors seem to have played a part. Manning was hoping for liberal gifts from the Brown family. Some of the leading Newport Baptists were suspected of heterodoxy. Manning seems to have had his eye on the Providence church. Though the church had suffered troubled times there was the prospect that Manning could help the church and preaching for it might be able to support himself. So in 1770 the college moved to Providence.

In Providence the college prospered. An endowment was created. Buildings were erected. The enrollment grew. Additional instructors were added. The war interrupted the program of instruction and the buildings were used for barracks and government purposes. After the war the college prospered as the Baptists as a denomination prospered and grew. In 1804 the name of Rhode Island College was changed to Brown University because of the generous gifts of the Brown family.

While serving as president of the college, Manning brought a new era to the First Baptist Church in Providence. The church had had a very troubled history and had fallen on sad days. The church had split in 1652 over the laying on of hands which was advocated by the Arminian majority. The Calvinistic minority had dwindled. Another bitter controversy had broken out in 1731-32 with Samuel Winsor leading an extreme majority who refused fellowship in prayer with any who had not received the laying on of hands and who denounced all who took anything for preaching as being like Simon Magus. Winsor was opposed by Governor Jenckes and James Brown but Winsor became the pastor of the majority when the church split again in 1732. Winsor served as pastor until his death in 1738; he was succeeded by his son who did little for the church. It degenerated into a very narrow sectarianism and held aloof from the Great Awakening.

When the college moved to Providence in 1770 Manning from time to time was called on to preach and he joined in breaking bread with the members. He let
it be known that he did not consider the laying on of hands obligatory and that he favored congregational singing. The majority turned against Winsor and requested the services of Manning as pastor. Winsor and a minority withdrew and formed a separate congregation in 1771. Manning was invited to preach regularly and to administer the ordinances. With his powerful and plain preaching he moved the church from its Arminian position to a return to Calvinism. In 1774 Manning visited the Philadelphia Association where he heard the eloquent and zealous preaching of the unlearned Daniel Fristoe of Virginia. Fristoe kindled in Manning fresh zeal and courage. Before the end of 1775 he had baptized one hundred-ten converts into the Providence Church. In 1775 a meeting house costing 7,000 pounds was erected. Manning let it be known that one purpose of the church would be for the holding of commencement for the college. In 1774 he had organized a Charitable Society that was chartered by the General Assembly. Manning had moved the Providence church to front rank among Baptist churches. It had become a great training center for Baptist preachers. As the Baptists grew and took on new life they began to take a much greater interest in an educated ministry.

Manning served the church regularly until 1786 and occasionally after that. The church was served by his nephew, Stephen Gano, the younger brother of John Gano, from 1792 until his death in 1828. In a revival at the beginning of his ministry one hundred-sixty-five were added and the church continued to grow and prosper throughout his ministry.

One of the greatest of the New England Baptists was Hezekiah Smith, a fellow minister of Backus. For forty-one years he served as pastor of the Baptist Church in Haverhill, Massachusetts. Hezekiah Smith was born in Hampstead, Long Island in April, 1737. In 1756 he was baptized into the Baptist Church in Morristown, New Jersey by John Gano, one of the most distinguished of the Baptist ministers of the time. After completing the preparatory studies at the Hopewell Baptist Academy he entered Princeton where he was a fellow student of James Manning. He was graduated in 1762. He made a very successful evangelistic tour of the southern colonies. He became a member of the Baptist Church in Charleston, South Carolina and was ordained in September, 1763. When James Manning moved to New England to establish the College of Rhode Island, Smith decided to make New England the center of his evangelistic work. He visited Boston and several other communities, including Merrimac and Haverhill, making the acquaintance of Samuel Stillman who had come from South Carolina. There had been a bitter controversy in the West Parish of Haverhill between the pastor and the people. The pastor had been excluded from the meeting-house and dismissed. Most of the ministers of the area were opposed to the revivals. Smith at first did not declare himself a Baptist and was invited to preach in Haverhill while evangelizing in the community. When he was asked to become the pastor in Haverhill he declared himself a Baptist which aroused bitter opposition against him. He was able to persuade some of the wealthiest and most influential citizens to accept his views and they formed a Baptist Church in May, 1665. In less than three years the church had a hundred members. With great difficulty Smith secured certificates of exemption from the clerical taxes for his members. The churches of Warren, Boston and Middleborough signed that the new church was "Anabaptist."

During his forty-one years as pastor of Haverhill, Smith continued to evangelize throughout Massachusetts. Between 1740 and 1790 some eighty-six new Baptist churches were founded in Massachusetts with a large number of them the results of the labors of Hezekiah Smith. He also took great interest in
Rhode Island College, serving on its board and having a large share in shaping its policy. He spent eight months in the South on one occasion raising funds for the college. He was one of the leaders in the forming of the Warren Association in 1767. For seven years he served as a brigade chaplain in the war of independence. He was one of the leaders along with Backus, Manning and Stillman in the struggle for complete freedom of religion and the repeal of the law of clerical taxation.

The First Baptist Church of Boston and its pastor, Jeremy Condy (1739-65) were strongly Arminian and opposed the revivals. Condy was a Harvard graduate. He preached free will and denied original sin and even questioned the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion. The church did not prosper until Samuel Stillman became pastor in 1765. Stillman was born in Philadelphia in 1737. He received a good classical education and was trained for the ministry by Oliver Hart, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Charleston, S.C. He was ordained by the Charleston church in 1759. He became one of the most eloquent ministers of the time. He moved to New England to evangelize and became the pastor of the Boston Church. For forty years he served this church and his reputation was such that it was said that any visitor to Boston had to hear him at least once. A great revival began in the Boston church in 1769 and within three years eighty members were added, more than doubling the membership. The church was scattered during the war. Stillman returned to be pastor in 1785 and brought a great revival that year. Another great revival came in 1790 with large numbers added.

The Second Baptist Church was organized in Boston in 1743 with James Bound, John Danney, Thomas Boucher and John Proctor as leaders. A young man named Ephraim Bound was chosen pastor. With most of the Baptist churches of the time opposed to the revivals they had a hard time arranging for his ordination since he and the church favored the revivals. Finally they persuaded Elder Valentine Wightman of Groton, Connecticut, who for years was a General (Six Principle) Baptist but who had become a hearty supporter of the revivals, to take the lead in ordaining the young pastor. A noted English Baptist minister, Dr. John Gill, sent the new church a communion service, baptismal robes, and a number of books. When Bound was stricken by paralysis in 1762 the church had a membership of one hundred-twenty.

Swansea and Rehoboth opposed the New Light movement and refused any fellowship with the Separate Baptists. In 1754 Baptist ministers from New Jersey tried to win them to a revival position. Finally in 1771 they changed to support of the revival and several hundred were added. In 1780 singing was introduced into the Second Swansea Church. The great revival of 1771 brought close fellowship between the Baptists and the New Light Congregationalists. Infant baptism became a subject hotly debated. Jacob Hick formed a New Light Church in Rehoboth that did not make immersion a term of communion. By the close of the century the church had moved to a Baptist position. Elhanan Winchester, a baptized evangelist, formed a Separate Congregational church in Rehoboth that practiced open communion. Winchester changed his position and refused communion to any who had received infant baptism. The church dismissed him and he later became a leader in the Universalist movement. Another open-communion church was formed on the north border of Rehoboth in 1777, but it did not prosper. Swansea and Rehoboth were greatly troubled by controversy and splits. They never enjoyed the leadership of able Baptist ministers.

The First Church of Newport and its pastor, Callender, opposed the revival until his death in 1748. The church continued to oppose the revivals until
his death in 1748. The church continued to oppose the revivals until Benjamin Foster, a Yale graduate, became pastor in 1774. While studying to defend infant baptism in a public debate with the Baptists, he lost confidence in his position. He studied theology with Samuel Stillman of Boston and was converted to the Baptists. After a brief stay in Newport (1785-88) he received a call to New York to the bitter disappointment of the Newport church. Newport for a time held aloof from the Warren Association. For a brief time the church joined the Association and then withdrew again out of extreme jealousy for local church independence. Newport was not fully sympathetic with the revivals. It was one of the first of the Baptist churches to introduce instrumental music which caused great commotion in the church in the early nineteenth century.

In Connecticut Baptists tended to appear in all Separatist Congregational churches. Most of the Separatist churches tried to maintain fellowship between pedobaptists and antipedobaptists. With the fierce persecution of the Separatists many of these churches turned Baptist, like the Separatist Church formed at Mansfield, Connecticut, in 1745. The antipedobaptists increased and found it impossible to conscientiously fellowship those who practised infant baptism. By 1800 some sixty Baptist churches had been formed in Connecticut.

There were a few Baptists in New Hampshire at the beginning of the Great Awakening. A Baptist church was organized at Newton in 1755. After 1767 Hezekiah Smith of Haverhill, Massachusetts, labored extensively in New Hampshire with great results. He helped the Newton church obtain exemption from taxation. He preached in Hampstead, Chester, Suncook, Dunbarton, Deerfield and Newton in 1767. Later he preached at Brentwood, New Market, Lee, Madbury and went on to Phillipstown in Maine, where he preached in a barn close to the river. He baptized Simon and Sarah Coffin. In Brentwood he preached by the river with great emotion and baptized. At Deerfield he baptized the Congregational minister, Eliphalet Smith, his wife, and twelve members of the Congregational Church on June 14, 1770. Six days later he baptized Dr. Samuel Shephard and six others. Shephard was ordained a year later and became one of the most famous of the New Hampshire Baptists. On June 18, 1770 he preached in the Congregational meeting house at New Market and several members wanted to be baptized but the church forbade it. Two days later he baptized fourteen at Stratham. The next day he baptized thirty-eight. He preached again in Stratham and held a debate with Joseph Adams and R. Marshall. After the debate he organized a Baptist church there. He preached there again in September under an oak tree. On October 9 he preached out of doors at Exeter and baptized Joseph Sanborn, the Congregational preacher of Epping and five others. Some 2,000 people witnessed the baptism. At Brentwood a church was organized in 1772 and Dr. Shephard became its pastor. A church was organized at Northwood in 1773 and Edmund Pillsbury of Haverhill became pastor.

Caleb Blood of Marlow, Job Seamans of Massachusetts and Biel Ledoyt of Connecticut became zealous missionaries in New Hampshire. Nine churches were organized in 1780. Thomas Baldwin, who later became pastor of the Second Church in Boston, became a leader in New Hampshire. At the age of eighteen he founded a church at Canaan. The New Hampshire Association was formed in 1785 of five Maine and three New Hampshire churches. By 1795 there were forty-one churches in the state with a membership of 2,562. The New Hampshire Confession of Faith became something of a standard for Baptists throughout America.

Vermont was very slow to accept Baptists. In 1768 a group of Massachusetts Separatists formed a Baptist church at Shaftsbury. Baptist churches were
organized in the Gilford township in 1770 and 1772. A church was established in Pownal in 1773. At the close of the Revolutionary War Baptists began to flow into Vermont. The Shaftesbury Association was formed in 1781. By 1790 there were thirty-four churches with a membership of 1610. Four associations were formed in Vermont before the close of the 18th century: Woodstock in 1783, the Vermont Association in 1785, the Leyden Association in 1793, and the Richmond Association in 1795.

After Screven moved his Kittery Congregation to South Carolina in 1684 no new Baptist churches were organized in Maine until 1767 when Hezekiah Smith made an evangelistic tour in the colony. He baptized in Gorham, Block House, Sanford and a few other places and formed churches at Gorham and Berwick. The Sanford church was organized in 1773. At the close of the Revolution the Baptists made great inroads into Maine. Among the leaders were Nathaniel Lord, James Potter, Job Macomber, Isaac Case and Elisha Snow. Churches were formed in Berwick, Wells, Sanford, Coxhall and Shapleigh. The Bodoinham church was formed in 1784 by Potter and Macomber, with Macomber becoming pastor. Case formed the Thomaston church in 1785. The Bowdoinham Association was formed in 1785. By the close of the 18th century there were thirty-two churches with a membership of 1,568.

In September, 1770, Benjamin Randall, a godless young man who had heard Whitefield at Portsmouth, New Hampshire at the age of twenty-one, experienced a great conversion on hearing of the death of Whitefield. In 1775 he withdrew from the Congregational Church and was baptized into the fellowship of the Berwick, Maine Baptist Church. He began a fruitful career as an evangelist. In 1778 he located in New Durham, New Hampshire but travelled widely in evangelistic work. He turned Arminian. He organized a new church in New Durham in 1780. He planted Arminian churches in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont and won a number of ministers to his views, among them Pelatiah Tingley, Samuel Weeks, Daniel Hibbard, Tosier Lord and Edward Lock. By 1790 he had eighteen churches in his fellowship. They adopted open communion. For twenty years they called themselves "Baptist." The Regular Baptists gave them the nickname "Free-will Baptist." Randall died in 1808. The fellowship held quarterly meetings after 1783 and by 1810 had 130 churches, 110 ministers, and some 6,000 members.

The Baptists' fight for complete religious liberty fits well with the political struggle for liberty of the American Revolution. Baptists shared in the struggle so zealously that they won the praise of many of the Revolutionary leaders.

The Separatist Baptists of New England played a major role in Baptist growth in the Southern Colonies and also exercised great influence on the development of church discipline and the moral standards of Southern Baptists.