

General Topics :: My Challenge to the claims of Peter Hammond !

My Challenge to the claims of Peter Hammond ! - posted by proudpapa, on: 2012/7/28 18:01

This statement by Peter Hammond has been pasted a couple of times on various threads on SI and I want to challenge the accuracy of some of what is said, I was glad That While researching this Letter I found some follow up letters in which he (Hammond) wrote explaining some are misunderstanding the motives for what he wrote here and He goes into deeper understanding of the points he was and was not trying to make.

But for now lets look at this letter since it is the one being pasted on SI

Peter Hammond writes

//WERE THE ANABAPTISTS PERSECUTED FOR THEIR FAITH?

Reformation & Revival
Written by Administrator
Friday, 25 May 2012 08:40

It is fairly common to hear the claims that the Reformers persecuted the Anabaptists just because they "were not willing to baptise babies." One correspondent wrote that rather than celebrate the Reformation "would it not be preferable to study the ScripturesÂ..."

Of course, our highest priority is to "study the Scriptures daily to see if these things be true". In fact that is the heritage of the Reformation. The Reformation gave us back the Bible freely available, translated into our own languages, and the Reformers championed "Scripture alone is our final authority". The Reformation succeeded in bringing about greater freedoms than had ever been experienced before in human history.

Those who accuse the Reformers of persecuting the Anabaptists are being unfair and selective in not reporting the whole context. The Anabaptists were not so much opposed and convicted for not being willing to baptise babies, but because the Anabaptists in the 1520's and 1530's were radical, violent revolutionaries.

While the Anabaptists claimed to be the only true Christians, they denied many of the key elements of the Faith. They rejected Biblical Law, Christian ministry, worship and sacraments, and the Anabaptists proclaimed socialism, egalitarianism and revolution. They claimed "it is impossible to be Christian and wealthy at the same time"; "all authorities, secular and clerical, must be deprived of their offices once and for all or be killed by the swordÂ..."

Igor Shafarevich in his book The Socialist Phenomenon, documents the teachings and activities of two important Anabaptist leaders, Thomas Muntzer and John of Leyden. Muntzer, an itinerant preacher and organiser of rebellions, established his revolutionary base in Muhlhausen from where he issued proclamations damning landowners, magistrates, and the Reformers. "I would like to smell your frying carcass" he wrote to Martin Luther.

In 1525, Muntzer was successful in rousing up many of the peasants of central Germany in the bloody, so called Peasants Revolt, which it should be noted attracted several nobles to his side. "Let your swords be ever-warm with blood!" Muntzer exhorted his faithful followers. Muntzer's army of Anabaptists struck terror throughout the countryside, robbing, burning and destroying the property of the faithful, killing many thousands.

Frederick Engels praised Muntzer's "robust vandalism" and explained "by the Kingdom of God Muntzer meant a society without class differences, private property and the state authorityÂ.... All the existing authoritiesÂ...were to be overthrown, all work and property shared in common and complete equality introduced."

Engels praised Muntzer's doctrines in this way: "Under the cloak of Christianity he preached a kind of pantheism, which curiously resembled modern speculative contemplation and at times even approached atheism. He repudiated the Bible both as the only and as the infallible revelation. The real and living revelation, he said, was reason, a revelation which existed and always exists amongst all people at all times. To hold up the Bible against reason, he maintained, was to kill the

e spirit with the letter, "faith is nothing but reason come alive in man, and pagans could therefore also have faith...just as there is no heaven in the beyond, there is no hell and no damnation. Similarly, there is no devil...Christ was a man, as we are, a prophet and a teacher..."

In 1534, Anabaptist leader Jan Matthijs siezed the town of Munster. "Armed Anabaptists broke into houses and drove out everyone who was unwilling to accept second baptism. Winter was drawing to a close; it was a stormy day and wet snow was falling. An eyewitness account describes crowds of expelled citizens walking through the knee-deep snow. They had not been allowed even to take warm clothing with them. Women carrying children in their arms, old men leaning on staffs. At the city gate they were robbed once more." (The Socialist Phenomenon - Shafarevich)

Jan Matthijs and Johan Bokelson then instituted a reign of terror in Munster, ordering the socialisation of all property, and ordaining apostles of revolution to preach throughout Europe. The communist paradise of Munster attracted thousands of Anabaptists from throughout Germany and Holland. Matthijs was killed in one of the early battles with surrounding cities. Johan Bokelson took command and established a dictatorship in Munster. He then issued the order for holding everything in common, including wives.

As Frederick Engels observed: "It is a curious fact that in every large revolutionary movement the question of free-love comes to the foreground". No woman was allowed to be exempt - there was a law against being unmarried, which meant that every girl was forced to be passed around amongst the men. Every woman in Munster became fair game for the lusts of these Anabaptist men. Rapes, suicides, severe punishments and mass executions took place almost every day. On one notable occasion, Bokelson himself beheaded a virtuous woman who had refused his sexual advances. As he ceremoniously chopped her head off in the public square, a choir of his wives sang "Glory to God in the Highest"! (Productive Christians in an Age of Guilt Manipulators by David Chilton).

This reign of terror continued for a year and a half until the city was freed by Protestant forces who put Bokelson and his lieutenants to death for their crimes - crimes committed in the name of love, equality and spirituality.

I have left out most of the sordid and horrifying details of the 1525 Peasants Revolt and the 1534 Anabaptist "Kingdom of God" established in Munster. But these few examples should be sufficient to explain why Anabaptists were opposed. It was not that they were being persecuted for taking the Scriptures seriously, but because they were violent revolutionaries subverting the entire social order and guilty of the deaths of many thousands of innocent people.

Those who would claim that the Anabaptists have changed dramatically since that time, should recognise that it is for that very reason therefore unfair to portray the Reformers as supporting the persecution of poor innocent Anabaptists, as that is plainly not the case. Yes, the Anabaptists have changed since. So we should not continue to propagate the false accusation that Reformers were persecuting pacifist Anabaptists who were seeking to mind their own business. The Anabaptists that were opposed by the Reformers in the 1520's and 1530's were violent revolutionaries guilty of abominable atrocities and abuses.

For further reading, I would encourage you to read - When All Men Speak Well of You and Why Is There So Much Hostility Against the Bible and Christianity? and obtain these outstanding books: What If Jesus Had Never Been Born by Dr. James Kennedy and Jerry Newcombe, Under the Influence - How Christianity Transformed Civilisation by Alvin Schmidt, and The Great Christian Revolution by Otto Scott. We all owe a tremendous debt to the Reformation in so many different ways. The Reformation was the greatest movement for faith and freedom that the world has ever seen.

Dr. Peter Hammond//

OK Lets Break this down

Hammond wrote

///It is fairly common to hear the claims that the Reformers persecuted the Anabaptists just because they "were not willing to baptise babies."///

So I must ask is it untrue to say that many Anabaptists were persecuted by the reformers for not baptizing their Babies? Indeed they were but more so for rebaptizing themselves after believing the Gospel and not considering their past Catholic Baptism as legit. But that was not the only reason they were persecuted But that is the main reason some were persecuted.

The Pilgrim Church by Broadbent p.184 speaking of Zwingli's Zurich Council p.186 "...and any person baptizing or being baptized was ordered to be punished by drowning (1526)." Hence why Felix Manz Was Drowned!!

Hammond writes

///The Anabaptists were not so much opposed and convicted for not being willing to baptise babies, but because the Anabaptists in the 1520's and 1530's were radical, violent revolutionaries.///

What Hammond has done here has tried to lump all The Anabaptist (rebaptizers) of the 1520's and 1530's with the German Radical Muntzer. You can not do that, If you know anything about Anabaptist history you know how incorrect it would be to do this. The Swiss Brethren like Felix Manz and Konrad Grebel were completely different in Beliefs and actions from That of the German Radicals, Carlstadt and Munzer. It appears prove me wrong if I am incorrect, Hammonds Zeal for defending the Reformers has went beyond Historic accuracy.

History of the Christian Church volume VIII Modern Christianity The Swiss Reformation by Philip Schaff Eerdmans publishing company reprint 1988 copyright 1910 p.74

"The German Radicals, Carlstadt and Munzer, were for a short time in Switzerland and on the Rhine, but did not rebaptize and had no influence upon the Swiss Radicals, who opposed rebellion to the civil authority."

Hammond writes

///While the Anabaptists claimed to be the only true Christians, they denied many of the key elements of the Faith. They rejected Biblical Law, Christian ministry, worship and sacraments, and the Anabaptists proclaimed socialism, egalitarianism and revolution. They claimed "it is impossible to be Christian and wealthy at the same time"; "all authorities, secular and clerical, must be deprived of their offices once and for all or be killed by the sword..."///

He again is lumping all Anabaptist with the The German Radicals, I would encourage all to read the The Seven Articles of Schleitheim Confession 1527 to see how misleading Hammonds Comments are.

Hammond then goes on to give the impression that all the Anabaptist of the 1520's and 30's believed and acted Like the violent German Radicals But that is Just not Historically accurate.

Hammond then writes

///I have left out most of the sordid and horrifying details of the 1525 Peasants Revolt and the 1534 Anabaptist "Kingdom of God" established in Munster. But these few examples should be sufficient to explain why Anabaptists were opposed. It was not that they were being persecuted for taking the Scriptures seriously, but because they were violent revolutionaries subverting the entire social order and guilty of the deaths of many thousands of innocent people.///

Men Like Michael Sattler, Felix Manz, Conrad Grebel were absolutely not radical violent revolutionaries. I challenge any and all, to find one example in the most Bias of History books that would Dare say one word of these men being radical violent revolutionaries!!

Hammond in his zeal then goes on to write

///Those who would claim that the Anabaptists have changed dramatically since that time, should recognise that it is for that very reason therefore unfair to portray the Reformers as supporting the persecution of poor innocent Anabaptists, as that is plainly not the case. Yes, the Anabaptists have changed since. So we should not continue to propagate the false accusation that Reformers were persecuting pacifist Anabaptists who were seeking to mind their own business. The Anabaptists that were opposed by the Reformers in the 1520's and 1530's were violent revolutionaries guilty of abominable atrocities and abuses///

Again I challenge any and all to find one example in the most Bias of History books that would Dare say one word of Michael Sattler, Felix Manz, Conrad Grebel and the like as being radical violent revolutionaries!!

not an armchair historian - posted by proudpapa, on: 2012/7/29 13:57

This is a follow up Letter by Hammond, when I have more time I hope to comment on this letter.

HOW CAN YOU CHARACTERISE ANABAPTISTS AS VIOLENT REVOLUTIONARIES?

Answers to Critical Questions

Written by Administrator

Wednesday, 23 May 2012 11:07

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Thank you for your critical feedback on our article: Were the Anabaptists Persecuted for their Faith?

I think you misunderstand the whole point of the article. It is those who are claiming that the Anabaptists were persecuted for their faith that are categorising an entire movement – The Protestant Reformation - as violent, intolerant persecutors. The point made in this article is that the “Anabaptists” of the 16 th century were not the pleasant, nonviolent pacifists of today.

The princes and city councils who dealt with violent revolutionaries and those guilty of sedition in their time, were not dealing with mere issues of religious freedom, but resisting violent revolution. Yet today there are entire websites dedicated to slandering the Reformers, who gave us the Bible in our own languages, Religious Freedom, Freedom of Conscience, The Rule of Law, Separation of Powers, and so many other tremendous freedoms – yet they are being blamed for persecuting poor, innocent, pacifist Anabaptists!

The whole point of this article is that, that is just not true. Those who were called Anabaptists in the early 16 th century were violent revolutionaries. In fact, Frederick Engels claimed them as the first true communists!

Furthermore the Reformers Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin were not civil magistrates and they were not the ones who prosecuted these individuals for sedition.

I'm not an armchair historian. I have been a missionary to the persecuted church for over 27 years. I have spent time in prison for my faith, and been tortured and beaten for refusing to divulge information that would endanger the persecuted. My sympathy is always with the persecuted. I am deeply sorry for all the Anabaptists who have suffered for their faith. The only point here is that it is bearing false witness against our neighbour, indeed bearing false witness against our fathers in the faith, to blame Reformers for what civil magistrates in their time did, against people who actually were violent revolutionaries.

Please feel free to contact me for any further information on these matters.

May the Lord continue to guide you into all Truth.

Yours for Faith and freedom

Dr. Peter Hammond

Director

http://www.frontline.org.za/index.php?option=com_multicategories&view=article&id=679:how-can-you-characterise-anabaptists-as-violent-revolutionaries&catid=56:answers-to-critical-questions-cat

Re: not an armchair historian, on: 2012/7/29 14:09

Papa have you interacted with Peter Hammond on his article. You might send him the link to Denny Kenniston's messages on the history of the Anabaptist. May give him some food for thought.

I read the article and find his assertions to be one sided. Hammond doesn't have a grasp of the scope of Anabaptist history.

Bearmaster.

Re: not an armchair historian - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2012/7/29 22:01

I do wonder at Hammond's agenda in misrepresenting Anabaptist history. Obviously, the Swiss and others could wonder what rock he had been hiding under. I am appalled at his ignorance...

I suggest one check out this link:
<http://www.jdweaver.com/essays/forgiven.htm>

This recounts the meeting of reconciliation called for by the modern day descendants of the persecutors of the Anabaptists in Switzerland.

"Sword and Trumpet" magazine printed a personal account by William McGrath who attended this meeting. William is a first generation Mennonite, being a military man prior to his coming to the LORD in the early 50s, I think. (He married one of the school teachers from our school when I was a young child.)

http://www.swordandtrumpet.org/issues/2004_10_Oct.pdf

This article appears on page 22.

Blessings.

Re: bearmaster - posted by proudpapa, on: 2012/7/29 22:11

RE: bearmaster //Papa have you interacted with Peter Hammond on his article. You might send him the link to Denny Kenniston's messages on the history of the Anabaptist. May give him some food for thought.//

Hi Bearmaster, I actually was feeling some what lead to contact him but have not as of yet, I need to get all of my facts in order and have been in study on the issue.

I had never heard of Hammond before this article started being posted, But my research of Him, Has shown Him to be an Amazing Person, Very Bold in bringing the Gospel to Islamic peoples. I Think His zeal for defence of the reformers just got a little out of hand. I wish he would have footnoted his sources for his information.

Re: Hammond does deserve respect - posted by proudpapa, on: 2012/7/29 22:15

Hammond does deserve respect

The Founder and Director of Frontline Fellowship, Dr. Peter Hammond , has personally carried out over 100 missions in the war zones and presented over 12,000 sermons, Bible studies and lectures in 33 countries. In the course of their missionary activities some Frontline missionaries have been ambushed, come under artillery bombardment and mortar fire, been stabbed, shot at, beaten by mobs, arrested and imprisoned. The Frontline mission base and high school in Sudan repeatedly came under aerial bombardment by the government of Sudan Air Force (10 times in 18 months). Over the years, 20 people involved in Frontline Fellowship outreaches have been imprisoned in Marxist or Muslim countries. Yet, by the grace of God, every one was freed in response to persistent prayer and pressure

http://www.frontline.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=65&Itemid=170

Re: , on: 2012/7/30 8:11

Wasn't Peter Hammond that racist quoted in another thread stating that people of different races shouldn't marry, "according to the Bible"?

Laugh.
Out.
Loud.

Re: , on: 2012/7/30 11:00

Interestingly enough. There is a sermon or rather radio interview with Peter Hammond in the SI archives. The message is entitled Persecution and Revival Among Communist and Islamics. The radio interview concerned the church in Sudan and what God is doing among the Sudanese to the south. Evidently Frontline Fellowship is being used to strengthen the persecuted church in that region. This was encouraging

What raised some concerns in my spirit was his understanding of church history. Most notably his understanding of the crusades. Hammond seems to think that the crusades were fought by devout Christians who were defending the holy places of Jerusalem. That is Christians defending Jerusalem against the forces of the devil. That being Islam..Last two sentences are my interpretation.

But what I find disturbing is who the brother is calling Christians during the crusades. Were these not the Roman Catholics? Those who would persecute the Reformers and the Anabaptist? Unless I am missing something. I do not think the Protestants were on the crusaders.

I have no doubt this brother loves Jesus. But I feel he misses the spiritual nature of what the kingdom is about. But one should listen to the interview and glean their own thoughts.

Posted by Bearmaster.

Re: bearmaster - posted by proudpapa, on: 2012/7/30 12:03

Bearmaster, Those whom hold to reformation theology trace their roots through the Catholic Church. Here is something of what Hammond says about that.

As a Protestant missionary, I recognise that while we have serious differences and disagreements, there is also common ground, which both Protestants and Roman Catholics can agree on. We wholeheartedly endorse and believe The Apostles Creed , The Nicene Creed and The Athanasian Creed as foundational statements, which all Christians must accept if they are to be called Christians at all. Additionally, we look to the Church fathers including Augustine, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Athanasius and Polycarp. In fact, the Reformers respected, quoted from, referred to and accepted the Church fathers as their own.

In addition, many of the saints and heroes of the Roman Catholic church are ours also, including the great missionaries: Patrick, Boniface, Francis of Assisi, and many others as examples of dedicated Christians who are an inspiration to us all.

As Protestants we oppose Catholicism, but we are not anti-the-Catholic-people. In fact, it must be admitted that shamefully many so-called Protestants do not even hold to the basic minimum standards which all true Christians worldwide, through the centuries, have accepted, such as the doctrine of the Trinity, the Bible as the infallible Word of God, the doctrine of Eternal Judgment in hell, and much more.

Roman Catholics frequently are our allies in the pro-life, pro-family, pro-moral movements, standing up for pre-born babies against the violence of abortion, opposing homosexual attempts to pervert the very definition of marriage and the fight against pornography and prostitution and a host of other social and ethical issues.

I am far closer to Roman Catholics who hold to the Trinity and are pro-life than so-called Protestants who deny the Trinity and are pro-choice.

Scripture Alone is our Authority....

http://www.frontline.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=646:i-am-a-roman-catholic-why-cant-we-work-together-more-and-where-in-the-bible-is-scripture-alone-as-our-authority-taught&catid=56:answers-to-critical-questions-cat&Itemid=250

Re: , on: 2012/7/30 12:26

Papa it appears Hammond is perceiving Christianity as an organized movement. He would see the church as an organization, rather than an organism as conceived by the Holy Spirit. I can only conclude that he would give credence to Constantine who legalized Christianity.

This is what I find unusual with the brother's work with the persecuted. In restricted nations the church takes on an organic, fluid form by the nature of persecution. That is why there is life in the churches of Iran, China, and other restricted nations. Yet the brother takes a view of history that reflects a church state paradigm. An organized church if you will. All I can say is highly unusual.

What I see are two opposing dynamics at work here. Most curious.

Bearmaster.

Re: , on: 2012/7/30 12:38

I go back to my original observation that Hammond does not understand the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of Christ. But then I summarize he is of reformed persuasion. In reading of some of the early reformers the spiritual nature of the kingdom of Christ does not figure into their writings. As a matter of fact I wonder if the Holy Spirit played into their writings. Anyway I suspect Hammond has been shaped by the writings of early Catholic and Reformed theologians.

Just my insights.

Bearmaster.

Re: , on: 2012/7/30 12:51

Quote:
-----As a Protestant missionary, I recognise that while we have serious differences and disagreements, there is also common ground, which both Protestants and Roman Catholics can agree on.

what common ground can Light have with the fruits of darkness? The roman institution is counterfeit, popery is a demonic sham, and my heart bleeds for those dear souls who love Jesus trapped in such a system of idolatry, superstition, priestcraft in the form of institutionalized homosexual pedophilia, mary worship, and that man of perdition, the "pope".

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2012/7/30 14:10

Papa, do you have no reaction to the info contained in the links I provided?

Based on the facts contained therein, could you give me a good honest reason why Hammond is so intent on dismissing the persecution heaped upon the Anabaptists by the reformers?

Given his stance, if persecution would come I would fear for my life if he would be in the community! I could not trust him ! Really.

ginnyrose

Does God honor racial purity above His love for all men? No., on: 2012/7/30 17:22

EverestoSama said:

"Wasn't Peter Hammond that racist quoted in another thread stating that people of different races shouldn't marry, "according to the Bible"?

Laugh.

Out.

Loud.....EOS

My response also EOS....So I posted this on that other thread. God Himself descended in front of two million people, at the door of the tent of meeting to discuss, with Miriam and Aaron, their displeasure with their brother Moses, of the most pure Hebrew/Abrahamic blood, marrying a common black Cushite woman; an inter-racial abomination to do so.

Interracial marriage and Spitting in the Face of God.

The greatest prophet of the Bible, chose to marry a Semite black woman, and suffered the wrath of many, including his dearest family. See how God responds:

Numbers 12:

Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it.

(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.

And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

GOD STOOD IN FRONT OF THEM ALL, AND SPOKE!

...And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed.

.... And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.

And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned.

Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb.

And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.

And the Lord said unto Moses:

" If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again."

And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again....

ALL OF THE ISRAEL NATION THEN HAD 7 DAYS TO CONSIDER THIS ISSUE....AND WERE THERE WHEN GOD STOOD AT THE DOOR OF THE TENT.....SAW THE SIN, THE CURSE, THE JUDGMENT, THE DISCIPLINE AND THE MERCY.....All over a racist attitude about interracial marriage.

I think this makes it very clear how God views the subject. "The Ethiopian is MY creation, as is the Hebrew or Caucasianand to reject them as inferior to your superior blood-line, is as spitting in my face; THE CREATOR OF ALL MEN!"

PS: Jesus died for all men, and, "For God so loved the World.....that He gave."

Re: ginnyrose - posted by proudpapa, on: 2012/7/31 1:48

Hi ginnyrose, you wrote // Papa, do you have no reaction to the info contained in the links I provided? Based on the facts contained therein, could you give me a good honest reason why Hammond is so intent on dismissing the persecution heaped upon the Anabaptists by the reformers?//

I think Hammond gives the reason in his followup letter that I posted He writes:

//the whole point of the article. It is those who are claiming that the Anabaptists were persecuted for their faith that are categorising an entire movement – The Protestant Reformation - as violent, intolerant persecutors.//

If the reformers are found to be lacking in their Love for others than one might conclude that there might be something lacking in their message.

If you are a strong believer in reformed theology you are trapped between a rock and a hard place.

As for me personally, it has been a trial on my faith to research the reformers, It leaves me scratching my head, how so much of what they taught seems right but at the same time I found so far in my research very little evidence of compassion for those whom slightly disagreed with them theologically.

I hope that when this Life is all over that we find out that some Jesuit or the Like got a hold of the History books and completely distorted them.

Having said all of that we need to have Grace toward the Reformers and toward Hammond, We may disagree with them on certain issues but the great awakening and those preachers of The great awakening ascribed to reformed theology and so did Spurgeon. I have found thus far no convincing evidence to question that fruit.

As far Hammond goes, from all the evidence I can find he has devoted and risked his Life in order to spread the Gospel. We may disagree with him on some issues as we all do with each other, But let's not wrongly stereotype Him. If much of what I have found of him is true he has an amazing Life testimony.