

1 **Northern Anabaptism After Münster**

2 **The Aftermath of Münster**

- Violent forms of Anabaptism declined after the defeat of the Münsterites in 1535, but remnants remained until the late 1500s.
- Other Anabaptists in this region had opposed violence from the beginning, and became more prominent after the Münsterites' defeat.
- Some, led by David Joris, emphasized prophecies and visions, but declined after drawing opposition from leaders concerned that they was becoming unfaithful to the Bible.

3 **Others worked for a more biblical Anabaptism similar to that of the Swiss Brethren.**

- Important leaders in this movement included Obbe and Dirk Philips, baptized by future Münsterite leaders about 1533–1534.
 - Obbe was discouraged by the happenings at Münster and what seemed to him to be the legalistic reactions of Dirk and others; he withdrew from active participation in the Anabaptist movement around 1540.
 - Dirk continued as an important Anabaptist leader with a strong emphasis on church discipline and purity.

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- Menno Simons soon became the most important leader of the Anabaptists grouped around the Philips brothers.

5 **Menno's Life Before His Conversion to Anabaptism**

- Menno Simons was born in the Netherlands in 1496.
- He was ordained as a Catholic priest in 1524.
- Menno was troubled by the Catholic teaching on communion, began to study the Bible, and moved toward the reformers' views on communion.
- As he studied the Bible, Menno found that infant baptism was not supported by it either, and found himself more and more in agreement with the Anabaptists.

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- While sharing their criticisms of Catholicism and admiring their dedication to what they thought was right, Menno was deeply disturbed the violence and reliance on "revelations" of the Münsterites, and preached against them while still a priest.
- 1535, a band of Münsterites was defeated near Menno's home.
 - Among the Münsterites was a man named Peter Simons, who may have been Menno's brother.
 - Menno's emotions were deeply touched.
- Menno finally made a public conversion to Anabaptism in 1536 and was baptized by Obbe Philips.

7 Menno's Life As an Anabaptist Leader

- Menno was ordained by Obbe Philips as an Anabaptist minister about a year after his conversion.
- He spent the rest of his life as a man on the run, traveling throughout northern Europe to escape capture and build up Anabaptist churches.

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- In his writings and in debates, Menno did much to clarify standard Anabaptist positions in opposition to Catholics, other reformers, and Anabaptists such as David Joris.
- Much of Menno's later life was spent in great turmoil as controversies about church discipline arose among Anabaptists.
- Menno died a natural death in 1561.

9 Menno's Teachings

- Menno placed Christ at the center of his understanding of the Bible and the Christian life.
 - *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* 1 Cor. 3:11
- Menno emphasized obedience to the commands of the Bible.

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- He rejected the errors of the Münsterites.
 - The use of violence by Christians
 - The dependence on visions and prophecies
- He continued to accept, although reluctantly, Melchior Hoffman's view of Christ's humanity.