

Michael Sattler dipped his pen into the inkwell and continued to write. "... the Devil seeks to destroy, Christ seeks to save ..."

Slowly he leaned back and glanced around the spacious room. Wolfgang Capito had become a true friend. It was kind of him—and dangerous, too—to allow Michael and Margaretha Sattler to reside in his home. Capito's deference and compassion were especially compelling in light of the fact that he was a dedicated leader of the newly-founded Reformed Church. Michael was one of "the radicals," a rebaptizer, commonly known as an Anabaptist. These radicals were despised by Catholics and Reformers alike.

Margaretha smiled at Michael as their eyes met. Her husband was struggling through a very difficult time, she knew. But she had confidence in his discernment and walk with God. She would follow this man anywhere, because she knew that he followed the mutual love of their married life—their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

"Are you sure you are ready to leave this place, Sweetheart?" Michael asked gently.

The young wife hesitated. She thought of the beautiful house and grounds, the friendly people, the pleasant accommodations. Her glance flashed around the well-furnished room ... the chairs ... the bed ... the wide window pouring fresh air and light into the house ...

"This is small compared to what you had at St. Peters," she replied laughing, pushing regretful thoughts aside. A moment later her face was sober again. Was it healthy for their spiritual life to live in this luxury? "I'm ready to leave when you are. If God is for us, who can be against us?"

Michael smiled to himself. How he loved his sweet young wife! She was bright, educated, and the perfect combination of a Proverbs 31 and Titus 2 woman. Often Michael thanked God for showing him the principles in His Word that had moved him to leave the monastery. His position had been rich, safe, and powerful, but was void of the joy that now filled his very being.

He remembered well the maelstrom of questions and convictions that had been his when he walked away from a position that was the envy of dozens of his peers. He hoped that he would be as glad of the decision that he was facing now as he was of that one. It had only been a few short years ago, and yet in some ways it seemed like ages ...

He turned back to the table and continued to write. "... the flesh is against the spirit ..."

In October of 1517, a monk named Martin Luther had taken a firm stand against the practice of buying indulgences from the church, supposedly purchasing forgiveness of sins. Luther could see no Biblical or godly connection in this practice. His



The Way of

The story of Michael Sattler's journey from Cath

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posting of 95 theses on the church door at Wittenburg is considered the spark that set the fire of the Protestant Reformation blazing across Europe, even though the Bohemian Brethren and others had broken with the Catholic Church more than a hundred and fifty years earlier.

Luther had no intention of starting a new church. He simply wanted to correct a few grievous errors. But the church hierarchy soundly rejected his concerns, and by 1522 the lines were clearly drawn. The Reformation was underway and church leaders everywhere were forced to decide where to take their stand.

In Zurich, Switzerland, Ulrich Zwingli founded the Reformed Church, similar to the Lutheran, but with a few doctrinal differences. Martin Bucer and Wolfgang Capito were among many church leaders who sided with Zwingli.

Michael Sattler was born in the early 1490's at Stauffen in the Breisgau, Germany. Even in his youth, Michael had a desire to serve God. He entered the priesthood and joined the monastery at St. Peters of the Black Forest when he was in his early twenties. He advanced rapidly in the ranks of monastic leadership and became a Benedictine Prior at St. Peters. To his dismay, Michael soon found that tendencies to abusing alcohol and other vices were common among the priests of the Catholic Church. He emerged as a leader of reform. He sought, by godly example, to bring his friends and sub-





jects to a renewal of life and practice. To Michael, this meant applying the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

In May of 1525 Michael Sattler came to the conclusion that his position was not Biblical. He was among the socially privileged, a “Cloister Lord,” but he found his life inconsistent with his convictions.

In later years he stated that his

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leaving the monastery was a “call of God.”

Although Michael was probably influenced by Luther or Zwingli, it is interesting to note that in all his writings he never gives either of them credit for his decision to turn his back on Catholicism. In any event, Michael left the monastery, married Margaretha, a former nun, and was forced to flee to Switzerland by the efforts of King Ferdinand I to exterminate all enemies of the Catholic Church.

In the summer of 1525, Michael and Margaretha arrived in Zurich, a canton of Switzerland. While there, he came under the influence of and joined a recently-formed group of believers called the “Swiss Brethren.” Forming the nucleus of this group was Conrad Grebel, a son of a prominent member of the City Council, Felix Mantz, the illegitimate son of a parish priest, and George Blaurock, another former priest. They were well educated. With Sattler, they were learned in the original Bible languages and were avid students of God’s Word. They rejected both the Sacramental or legalistic salvation of the Catholics, as well as the “sola fide” or “Faith Alone” teachings of the Reformers. They were convinced that salvation is obtained by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus that brings obedience to His words. Michael had found a kindred spirit.

On November 6th, 1525, Michael took part in a disputation with Zwingli. This was the third disputation Zwingli had with his former disciples and he was losing his patience. The outcome was hardly in question. Michael was banished from Zurich and forced to promise, under oath,¹ that he would not return.

¹ Here we see Michael still swearing oaths and even

Michael and Margaretha went to Horb and Rottenburg in Wurttemberg, where he preached to the faithful in forests and private homes. From there he traveled to Strasbourg in Alsace. In Strasbourg, they were warmly received into the home of Wolfgang Capito, a Protestant leader. Here he also became a close friend of Martin Bucer, another leading Reformer.

But now, after many respectful and peaceful discussions with these Reformers, he once again found his position to be untenable. On the one hand, he considered the possibility that these learned theologians could cause him to change his mind about his beliefs. To Michael this would be a betrayal of the Lord he loved with all his heart. On the other hand, if he persisted in following Jesus, he could fall into the hands of the Catholic authorities.

And he had to persist. Michael could not, in good conscience, compromise on issues he felt so strongly about. His vision, formed in Zurich with the Swiss Brethren, was that of a free church, made up of born-again believers and separated from the world. His view was totally at odds with those of Capito and Bucer, who saw the church as the population of a physical location, including *all* the inhabitants thereof. They rejected Michael’s position by constant recourse to 1 Timothy 1:5: “love is the end of the law.”²

Michael wanted his farewell letter to the Reformers to be clear and yet as unnecessarily offensive as possible. He laid his pen on the table, picked up the letter, and reread it:

Grace and peace from God our Father through Jesus Christ our Savior. Dear brothers in God! As I recently spoke with you in brotherly moderation and friendliness on several points, which I together with my brothers and sisters have understood out of the Scripture, namely out of the New Testament, and you for your part as the ones asked, answered in similar moderation and friendliness as follows: Paul writes in 1 Timothy 1 that love is the end of the commandment, wherefore it is necessary that all of the commands of God be guided by the same. I am not able so to conceive, in my understanding and conscience, that this may be done as you do it with every point; namely with baptism, the Lord’s Supper, force or the

(according to some sources) promising to be quiet about Anabaptist teachings. This seems to have been a short relapse in Michael’s life, from which he later recovered and repented from.

² It seems to have been a sort of imbalance towards ecumenicalism, where disobedience to Christ is hidden under the phrase of “just love everybody.”

sword, the oath, the ban, and all the commandments of God. What hinders me is the following:

1. Christ came to save all of those who would believe in Him alone.
2. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; he who believeth not will be damned.
3. Faith in Jesus Christ reconciles us with the Father and gives us access to Him.
4. Baptism incorporates all believers into the body of Christ, of which He is the head.
5. Christ is the head of His body, i.e., of the believers or the congregation.
6. As the head is minded, so must its members also be.
7. The foreknown and called believers shall be conformed to the image of Christ.
8. Christ is despised in the world; so are also those who are His; He has no kingdom in this world, but that which is of this world is against His kingdom.
9. Believers are chosen out of the world; therefore the world hates them.
10. The devil is prince over the whole world, in whom all the children of darkness rule.
11. Christ is the Prince of the Spirit, in whom all who walk in the light live.
12. The devil seeks to destroy. Christ seeks to save.
13. The flesh is against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh.
14. Those who are spiritual are Christ's; those who are carnal belong to death and to the wrath of God.
15. Christians are wholly yielded and have placed their trust in their Father in heaven without any outward or worldly arms.
16. The citizenship of Christians is in heaven and not on earth.
17. Christians are the members of the household of God and fellow citizens of the saints, and not of the world.
18. But they are true Christians who practice in deed the teachings of Christ.
19. Flesh and blood, pomp and temporal, earthly honor and the world cannot comprehend the kingdom of Christ.



The current interior of St. Peter's of the Black Forest. As a prior in the monastery, Michael could have had an easy life of material abundance.

20. In sum: There is nothing in common between Christ and Belial.

Such considerations, and still much more of the same kind, which do not now come to mind, hinder me, my dear brothers, from understanding your general assertion on every subject—which you advocate with the words of Paul—cited above. Therefore, my beloved in God, I know of no comfort in all despair except to address a humble prayer to God the Father for you and for me, that He might be willing to teach us in all truth by His Spirit. Herewith I com-

mend you to the Lord, for as I understand it, I can no longer remain here without doing a dishonor to God; therefore I must for the sake of my conscience leave the field to the opposition. I beg you herein, that you understand this as an act of Christian humility on my part. The Lord will ultimately dispose.

Be mercifully considerate, I pray you, of those who are in prison and do not permit a merciful judgment to be superseded by a blind, spiteful, and cruel one. Those who are in error (if that they were) are not to be coerced, but after a second admonition avoided. Christians admonish benevolently, out of sympathy and compassion for the sinful, and do not legalistically coerce persons [by torture] this way or that. May the Lord God have mercy on us all and give us His Spirit to lead us in the way, Christ Jesus, through whom we can again come into our kingdom, fatherland, and

citizenship. The Lord be with all you dear brothers in God. Amen.

Michael Sattler, your brother in God the heavenly Father.

Michael bowed his head and prayed that his benefactors would receive this in the love with which it was written. Margaretha picked it up and read it slowly. She smiled lovingly, nodded her approval, and handed it back to him. Michael folded it carefully and wrote on the back:

Michael Sattler to his beloved brothers in God, Capito and Bucer, and others who love and confess Christ from the heart.

Silently they donned their coats in preparation to leave Strasbourg and search of a new home. Michael twirled his hat in his hand as Margaretha tied her bonnet. They stepped out into a turbulent and hostile world. The winter air in Strasbourg was cold. But they had each other, and most of all they felt a peace that passeth all understanding. A peace known only to those who know God and keep His commandments.

In the beginning of 1527, the Anabaptist movement was in serious danger of disintegrating. Conrad Grebel had died of the plague in the summer of 1526. The execution of Felix Mantz on January 5, 1527, marked the fact that Protestant persecution had reached the level of capital punishment. Confusion and the loss of these leaders and their guiding influence [which had never been particularly strong] were evident in the splintering of the new movement.

Upon his failure to convince the most lenient and open Reformers, Bucer and Capito, Sattler went once again to the receptive and yet far more dangerous countryside in and around Horb and Rottenburg. These villages were located approximately seventy miles east of Strasbourg, in the still ardently Catholic area of Wurttemberg.

Sattler was well aware of the need to somehow consolidate this flagging movement. The term “Anabaptists” was being loosely applied to libertarians, mystics, and even militant social rebels.³ Time may well be running out to implement the doctrines as agreed upon in Zurich by the Swiss Brethren.

On February 24, 1527, Sattler presided over a conference of Swiss Brethren held at Schleithem in Canton Schaffhausen. He presented to this conference a docu-

³ This was a correct application of the term, since many diverse people were being rebaptized. The Anabaptist movement was unorganized at that time, and everyone getting rebaptized was lumped into one group. Only later did the Swiss Brethren, Dutch Mennonites, and Hutterites emerge as basically stable groups. The libertines, mystics, and militant social revolutionaries failed to crystallize into anything enduring. Thus, today, the term “Anabaptist” generally refers to the non-resistant groups that came from the rebaptism movement. But in the early days, many diverse kinds of people were practicing rebaptism.



Martin Bucer (l.) and Wolfgang Capito (r.) were Protestant Reformers in Strasbourg. After being forced out of Zurich, Michael Sattler spent time with these men, but soon realized that they were not going to take the reforms all the way.

ment that clearly distinguished the differences between Anabaptism and the State churches, as well as differences with other rebaptizers who disobeyed Scripture. This document, called the Schleithem Confession, was approved and adopted without a dissenting voice. It was copied and widely distributed in the underground Anabaptist communities.

The Schleithem Confession consisted of a cover letter and seven articles. The titles of these articles and basic ideas are:

1. Notice concerning baptism. Only those who believe and are converted may be baptized.

2. We have been united as follows concerning the ban. Church discipline is applied by withholding fellowship. [As opposed to torture or death.]

3. Concerning the breaking of bread. Communion is only for those united in faith and in one body of Christ.

4. We have been united concerning the separation ... from the evil and wickedness which the devil has planted in this world ... Separation from the world includes rejecting the idolatry of the Pope, loose living, and participation in earthly governments.

5. We have been united as follows concerning shepherds in the church of God. Pastors should be ordained from among the flock and must meet the qualifications set forth by the apostle Paul.

6. We have been united as follows concerning the sword. The weapons of true Christians are spiritual, not carnal.

7. We have been united as follows concerning the oath. Christians should not swear. Their answers should be truthful without taking an oath.

Much of the power of the Schleithem confession is in the cover letter. The reader of this story is encouraged to read this confession in its totality. It can be found in many of the books on Anabaptist history. It had a twofold purpose: to unify the faithful, and to separate them from the State churches and apostate “Anabaptist” churches alike. It was copied extensively. At one time Zwingli had four copies in his possession.

Michael, Margaretha, and at least fourteen others were arrested on their way back to Horb in early March 1527.

Soon after their apprehension, they were taken to the tower at Binsdorf. Michael was there until his trial at Rottenburg on May 15th.

The following is a transcript from his trial, as related in *Martyrs Mirror*:

After a long trial on the day of his departure from this world, the articles being many, Michael Sattler requested that they would be read to him again and that he should have another hearing. This the bailiff, as the governor of his lord, opposed and would not consent to it.

Michael Sattler then requested permission to speak. After a consultation, the judges returned as their answer, that if his opponents would allow it, they (the judges) would consent. Thereupon the town clerk of Ensisheim, as the attorney of said Governor spoke thus: "Prudent, honorable, and wise Sirs, He has boasted of the Holy Ghost. Now, if his boast is true, it seems to me, it is unnecessary to grant him this; for if he has the Holy Ghost, as he boasts, the same will tell him what has been done here." To this Michael Sattler replied: "Ye servants of God, I hope my request will not be denied; for said articles are as ye unknown to me." The town clerk responded: "Prudent, honorable, and wise Sirs, Though we are not bound to do this, yet in order to give satisfaction, we will grant him his request that it may not be thought that injustice is done him in his heresy, or that we desire to wrong him; hence let the articles be read to him."

Articles or charges against Michael Sattler

First, that he and his adherents have acted contrary to the mandate of the Emperor.

Secondly, he has taught, held, and believed that the body and blood of Christ are not present in the sacrament.

Thirdly, he has taught and believed that infant baptism does not conduce to salvation.

Fourthly, they have rejected the sacrament of extreme unction.

Fifthly, they have despised and condemned the mother of God and the saints.

Sixthly, he has declared that men are not to swear before the authorities.

Seventhly, he has commenced a new and unheard of custom in regard to the Lord's Supper, placing the bread and wine on a plate, and eating and drinking the same.

Eighthly, he has left the order, and married a wife.

Ninthly, he has said that if the Turks should invade the country, no resistance ought to be offered them; and if it were right to wage war, he would rather take the field against the Christians than against the Turks; and it is certainly a great matter, to set the greatest enemies of our holy faith against us.

I appeal
to the words of
Christ.



Michael's answers

Thereupon Michael Sattler requested permission to confer with his brethren and sisters, which was granted him. Having conferred with them for a little while, he began and undauntingly answered thus:

In regard to the articles relating to me and my brethren and sisters, hear this brief answer:

First, That we have acted contrary to the nperial mandate, we do not admit; for the same says that the Lutheran doctrine and delusion is not to be adhered to, but only the Gospel and Word of God. This we have kept; for I am not aware that we have acted contrary to the Gospel and the Word of God; I appeal to the words of Christ.

Secondly, That the real body of Christ the Lord is not present in the sacrament, we admit; for the Scripture says: Christ ascended into heaven and, sitteth on the right hand of His heavenly Father whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead; from which it follows, that if He is in heaven, and not in the bread, He may not be eaten bodily. Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9; Col. 3:1; Acts 10:42; II Tim. 4:1.

Thirdly, As to baptism we say: Infant baptism is of no avail to salvation; for it is written that we live by faith alone. Again: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Peter likewise says: The like figure whereunto 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), by the res-

urrection of Jesus Christ. Romans 1:17; Mark 16:16; I Pet. 3:21.

Fourthly, We have not rejected the oil; for it is a creature of God, and what God has made is good and not to be refused; but that the pope, the bishops, monks, and priests can make it better, we do not believe; for the pope never made anything good. That of which the epistle of James speaks is not the pope's oil. Gen. 1:11; I Tim. 4:4; James 5:14.

Fifthly, We have not condemned the mother of God and the saints; for the mother of Christ is to be blessed among all women; for to her was accorded the favor of giving birth to the Savior of the whole world. But that she is a mediatrix and advocatess, of this the Scriptures know nothing; for she must with us await the judgment. Paul said to Timothy: Christ is our Mediator and Advocate with God. As regards the saints; we say that we who live and believe are the saints; which I prove by the epistles of Paul to the Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians; and in other places where he always writes: To the beloved saints. Hence we that believe are the saints; but those who have died in faith we regard as the blessed. Luke 1:28; Matthew 1:21; I Tim. 2:5; I Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:1; Rev. 14:13.

Sixthly, We hold that we are not to swear before the authorities:⁴ For the Lord says: Swear not; but let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay. Matt. 5:34; James 5:12.

Seventhly, When God called me to testify of His Word, and I had read Paul, and also considered the unchristian and perilous state in which I was; beholding the pomp, pride, usury, and great whoredom of the monks and priests, I went and took unto me a wife, according to the command of God; for Paul well prophesies concerning this to Timothy: In the latter time it shall come to pass that men shall forbid to marry, and command to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving. I Cor. 7:2; I Tim. 4:3.

Eighthly, If the Turks should come, we ought not to resist them; for it is written: Thou shalt not kill.

⁴ As can be seen here, Michael appears to have seen his earlier error in swearing to never return to Zurich.

We must not defend ourselves against the Turks and others of our persecutors, but are to beseech God with earnest prayer to repel and resist them. But that I said, that if warring were right, I would rather take the field against the so-called Christians, who persecute, apprehend and kill pious Christians, than against the Turks, was for this reason: The Turk is a true Turk, knows nothing of the Christian faith; and is a Turk after the flesh; but you, who would be Christians, and who make your boast of Christ, persecute the pious witnesses of Christ, and are Turks after the spirit.



**The hangman shall
dispute with you, I
assure you!**

In conclusion: Ye ministers of God, I admonish you to consider the end for which God has appointed you: to punish the evil, and to defend and protect the pious. Whereas, then, we have not acted contrary to God and the Gospel, you will find that neither I nor my brethren and sisters have offended in word or deed against any authority. Therefore, ye ministers of God, if ye have not heard or read the Word of God, send for the most learned, and for the sacred books of the Bible, of whatsoever language they may be, and let them confer with us in the Word of God; and if they prove to us with the Holy Scriptures, that we err and are in the wrong, we will gladly desist and recant and also willingly suffer the sentence and punishment for that of which we have been accused. But if no error is proven to us, I hope to God, that you will be converted, and receive instruction.” Acts 25:8; Rom. 13:4; Acts 25:11.

Upon this speech the judges laughed and put their heads together, and the town clerk of Ensisheim said:

“O you infamous, desperate villain and monk, shall we dispute with you? The hangman shall dispute with you, I assure you!”

Michael said: “God’s will be done.”

The town clerk said: “It were well if you had never been born.”

Michael replied: “God knows what is good.”

Town Clerk: “You arch-heretic, you have seduced the pious; if they would only now forsake their error, and accept grace.”

Michael: “Grace is with God alone.”

One of the prisoners also said: “We must not depart from the truth.”

Town Clerk: "You desperate villain and arch-heretic, I tell you if there were no hangman here, I would hang you myself, and think that I had done God service."

Michael: "God will judge aright."

Thereupon the town clerk said a few words to him in Latin; what they were, we do not know.

Michael Sattler answered him, "Judica."⁵

The town clerk then admonished the judges and said: "He will not cease from this talk today; therefore my lord Judge, proceed with the sentence; I will commit it to the law."

The judge asked Michael Sattler whether he also committed it to the law.

He replied: "Ye ministers of God, I am not sent to judge the Word of God; we are sent to bear witness of it, and, hence, cannot consent to any law, since we have no command from God concerning it; but if we cannot be discharged from the law, we are ready to suffer for the Word of God whatever sufferings are or may be imposed upon us all for the sake of the faith in Christ Jesus our Savior, as long as we have breath within us; unless we be dissuaded from it by the Scriptures."

The town clerk said: "The hangman shall convince you; he shall dispute with you, arch-heretic."

Michael: "I appeal to the Scriptures."

Then the judges arose, and went into another room, where they remained for an hour and a half, and determined on the sentence.

In the meantime, some in the room treated Michael Sattler most unmercifully, heaping reproach upon him. One of them said: "What have you in expectation for yourself and the others, that you have so seduced them?" With this, he also drew forth a sword which lay upon the table, saying: "See, with this shall they dispute with you." But Michael did not answer upon a single word concerning his person, but willingly endured it all. One of the prisoners said: "We must not cast pearls before swine." Matt. 27:14; 7:6.

Being also asked why he had not remained a lord in the convent, Michael answered: "According to the flesh I was a lord; but it is better so." He did not say more than what is recorded here, and this he spoke fearlessly.

The judges having returned to the room, the sentence was read. It was as follows: "In the case of the Governor of his Imperial Majesty versus Michael Sattler, judgment is passed, that Michael Sattler shall be delivered to the executioner, who shall lead him to the place of execution, and cut out his tongue; then throw him upon a wagon, and there tear his body twice with red hot tongs; and after he

has been brought outside the gate, he shall be pinched five times in the same manner."

After this had been done in the manner prescribed, he was burned to ashes as a heretic. His fellow brethren were executed with the sword, and the sisters drowned. His wife, also, after being subjected to many entreaties, admonitions, and threats, under which she remained very steadfast, was drowned a few days afterwards. Done the 21st day of May, A. D. 1527.

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Much more could be said of the execution of Michael Sattler. According to a

young soldier named Klaus von Graveneck, in spite of having his tongue cut out, Michael could still speak audibly. Klaus reports that "first at the square, and then at the place of execution, he prayed for his persecutors and also encouraged others to pray for them and finally spoke thus: 'Almighty Eternal God, You who are the way and the truth, since I have not been taught otherwise by anyone, so by Your help I will testify this day to the truth and seal it with my blood.'"

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Margaretha was a refined and comely lady. The authorities had no desire to carry out her sentence. The Count had received many letters pleading for mercy and compassion and was willing to release her if only she could be persuaded to abandon this foolishness. Even the Countess of Zollern undertook to save her life by urging her to recant.



Margaretha Sattler chose to be drowned in the peaceful Neckar River rather than compromise.

(Photo by Wikipedia User:Matt314)

5 Latin verb for "judge."

Interrupting her prayer, Margaretha lifted her head when she heard footsteps. The heavy wooden doors made an eerie screeching as they opened and closed. A stately, well dressed young woman entered her cell. Her escorts, two soldiers, stood at attention at the door. Margaretha rose and greeted her with a warm smile. The Countess was stunned by her composure. After a curt introduction she stated the purpose for her visit.

“I’ve come to help you.”

“Well, thank you for coming!”

Margaretha’s gratitude was encouraging. “I have come to inform you that your life can be spared,” the Countess continued. “The Count takes no pleasure in seeing you drowned. He asks only that you renounce this foolishness. You can leave this dreadful place today if you cooperate.” Her voice took on a pleading tone. “You would not be alone. Some of the others have recanted and are free.” She hesitated, and then continued in almost a whisper, “Are you aware that your husband is dead?”

Margaretha’s eyes moistened. “Oh, but he isn’t dead! He is very much alive and with the God he loved. I only wish I could have been with him in the fire. But just think! In a few days I’ll be joining him in the presence of our Lord. Thank you for trying to help, but I cannot renounce my Lord. I only wish I could help you to know Jesus. He can be your Savior, too!”

The Countess paused. She almost envied this woman. It seemed the compassion and desire to liberate was flowing the wrong way. She was more determined than ever to save this unusual creature. “Margaretha,” her voice was soft, “I want to help you. I can see that you will not recant. But, if ...” She hesitated. “Maybe I could persuade my husband to free you if only you will promise not to speak to others about your beliefs. Would you be willing to do that? If you are dead, you obviously won’t be able to speak to others anyway.”

Margaretha smiled. “You don’t understand. As long as I have breath in my body, I must tell people about my Jesus.”

Just a few days after the execution of Michael, she courageously allowed herself to be taken to the Neckar River to be drowned. ~

All the letters and articles in this story are factual as taken primarily from four books: *The Martyrs Mirror*, *The Sources of Swiss Anabaptism*, *The Legacy of Michael Sattler* and *The Life and Thought of Michael Sattler*. The actions of Michael and Margaretha are factual, but I took liberties in personalizing their conversations. —Dave Esh