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## EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN BAPTISTS: MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES IN KAZAKHSTAN

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## المسيحيون الإنجيليون المعمدان في كازاخستان: الأنشطة التبشيرية في كازاخستان

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## ЕВАНГЕЛЬСКИЕ ХРИСТИАНЕ-БАПТИСТЫ: МИССИОНЕРСКАЯ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ В КАЗАХСТАНЕ

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**Аңдатпа:** Мақалада протестант бағытындағы евангелші христиан-баптистері, олардың пайда болуының тарихы мен саяси теология тұрғыда қалыптасқан алғышарттары зерттеледі. Жұмыстың негізгі бағыты – евангелші христиан-баптистері. Сонымен қатар бағыттың тарихы мен теологиясына мән бере отырып, Қазақстандағы миссионерлік жоспарын зерттеудің алғышарттарын бағалау. Сондай-ақ баптизмнің негізін салушы Джон Смиттің діни көзқарасының қалыптасуына себеп болған реформаторлар, анабаптистер, пуритандар, меннониттер сияқты топтың философиялық, діни, әлеуметтік көзқарасына талдау жасалады. Оның діни ұстанымына, сананың және шіркеудің саяси биліктен тәуелсіздік алу идеяларына, сондай-ақ Джон Смиттің діндар адамдардың этикасы мен тұлғалық қасиетіне байланысты ұстанымдарына тоқталамыз. Миссионерлік әрекеттері сакралды жазбалар мен тарихи деректер арқылы талданады. Реформациядан кейін Қайта өрлеу дәуіріндегі Еуропадағы протестанттық діни мектептің қалыптасуы, теологиялық ерекшеліктері мен гуманизм нормалары қарастырылады. Баптизмнің Англияда тараған бағытының ерекшелігі мен сол елде жазылған «Сенім декларациясы» сараланады. АҚШ-тағы табысты да нәтижелі миссионерлік әрі гуманистік әрекеттеріне талдау жасалып, «Филадельфия ассоциациясы» заңдары талқыланады. АҚШ-тағы баптистер санының қарыштап өсу себептері анықталады. Қазақстандағы евангелші христиан-баптистерінің миссионерлік қызметіне дейінгі бірігуі, деноминациялары, бағыттарға бөлінуі қарастырылады. Миссионерлік жалпылама діни мәтіндермен салыстырылып зерттеледі.

**Түйін сөздер:** христиандар, протестанттар, евангелшілер, баптистер, миссионерлер.

**المُلخَص:** يتناول المقال الاتجاه البروتستانتي الذي يتعلّق بالمسيحيين الإنجيليين المعداديين، والشروط السياسية والأهوتية التي ساهمت في نشوء هذا الاتجاه؛ حيث إنّ الهدف الرئيس من البحث هو «المسيحيون الإنجيليون المعداديون». وقد تمّ التركيز على تاريخ هذا الاتجاه ولاهوتيته، وكذلك تقييم الشروط المبدئية لدراسة خطط التبشير في كازاخستان. كما تمّ تحليل آراء الفلاسفة والروحانيين مثل المصلحين، والأنابابتين، والبيوريتانيين، والمينونيتين الذين ساهموا في تشكيل النظرة الدينية لجون سميث، مؤسس المعدادية. كما تمّ تناول موقفه الديني، وأفكار استقلالية الوعي والكنيسة عن السلطة السياسية كذلك، كما تمّ مناقشة مواقف جون سميث المتعلقة بأخلاقيات المؤمنين وخصائص شخصياتهم. كما تمّ تحليل أعماله التبشيرية من خلال النصوص المقدسة والوثائق التاريخية. كما تمّ دراسة نشوء المدارس الدينية البروتستانتيّة في أوروبا بعد حركة الإصلاح، وخصائصها اللاهوتية، ومعاييرها الإنسانية. كما تمّ تحليل خصوصيات انتشار المعدادية في إنجلترا، وكذلك دراسة «إعلان الإيمان» الذي كُتب في هذا البلد. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تمّ تحليل الأنشطة التبشيرية والإنسانية الناجحة في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية، ومناقشة قوانين «جمعية فيلادلفيا». كما تمّ دراسة الأسباب التي أدت إلى النمو السريع للمعداديين في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية. كما تمّ بحث اندماج المعداديين الإنجيليين في كازاخستان قبل أعمالهم التبشيرية وأديانهم وانقساماتهم إلى اتجاهات مختلفة. كما تمّت مقارنة الأنشطة التبشيرية بالنصوص الدينية العامة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** المسيحيون، الإنجيل، البروتستانت، المعداديون، التبشير.

**Abstract:** The article scrutinizes evangelical Christian Baptists of the Protestant, theological and political preconditions for their evolution. The focus of research work is “Evangelical Christian Baptists”. Assess the preconditions of the missionary plan in Kazakhstan with an emphasis on the history and theology of this denomination. In addition, an analysis was made of the philosophical, religious, social views of such groups as reformers, Anabaptists, Puritans, Mennonites, which led to the formation of the religious views of John Smith, the founder of Baptism. His religious stance, ideas of independence of consciousness and the church on political power were discussed. We will also cover the positions of John Smith related to the ethics and personality of religious people. The missionary activities are analyzed through sacral records and

historical data. The theological features and norms of humanism after the Reformation and the formation of the Protestant religious school in Renaissance Europe are considered. The originality of the baptism in England and the “Declaration of Faith” written in this country is analyzed. In addition, the successful and effective missionary and humanitarian activities of Baptists in the USA were analyzed and the laws of the “Philadelphia Association” were discussed. The reasons for the rapid growth in the number of Baptists in the USA are considered. After the Reformation, the formation of the Protestant religious school in Renaissance Europe, theological features and norms of humanism are considered. The specifics of the spread of baptism in England and the “declaration of faith” written in this country were analyzed. In addition, the analysis of successful and efficient missionary and humanistic activities of Baptism in the United States was made, and the laws of the Philadelphia Association were discussed. The reasons for the rapid growth in the number of Baptists in the United States are studied.

**Keywords:** Christians, protestants, evangelicals, Baptists, missionaries.

**Аннотация:** В статье рассматривались евангельские христиане-баптисты протестантского направления, теологические политически обусловленные предпосылки их возникновения. Основное направление исследовательской работы – евангельские христиане-баптисты. Оценка предпосылок исследования миссионерского плана в Казахстане с акцентом на историю и теологию этого направления. Кроме того, были проанализированы философские, религиозные и социальные взгляды таких групп, как реформаторы, анабаптисты, пуритане и меннониты, которые обусловили формирование религиозных взглядов Джона Смита, основателя баптизма. Также анализируется его религиозная позиция, идеи независимости разума и церкви от политической власти. Также мы остановимся на позициях Джона Смита, касающихся этики и личных качеств религиозных людей. Миссионерская деятельность анализируется через священные писания и исторические данные. Рассмотрены богословские особенности и нормы гуманизма после реформации, становления протестантской религиозной школы в Европе эпохи Возрождения. Проанализировано своеобразие направления крещения в Англии и написанной в этой стране «Декларации веры». Кроме того, была проанализирована успешная и эффективная миссионерская и гуманитарная деятельность баптистов в США и обсуждены законы «Филадельфийской ассоциации». Рассмотрены причины быстрого роста числа баптистов в США. Рассмотрены объединения, конфессии и разделения евангельских христиан-баптистов Казахстана до начала их миссионерской деятельности. Миссионерство изучается в сравнении с обще религиозными текстами.

**Ключевые слова:** христиане, протестанты, евангелисты, баптисты, миссионеры.

## Introduction

Evangelization derives from the Greek term «euangelion,» which translates to «Good News.» This concept signifies a calling of the world's peoples to embrace the divine path, urging them to undergo baptism according to certain Gospel commandments to attain joy and love in both earthly and spiritual realms. Historical instances have shown that the political appropriation of

Christianity's Good News at various times has been utilized to further the goals of spiritual and material colonization, thus introducing a third dimension to evangelization. Currently, evangelization efforts are active in 122 nations worldwide. While scholars have explored the history of new religious movements (NRMs), including their areas of influence and their sacred texts, the fluid nature of this phenomenon and its effects on

individual psychology and societal life haven't been thoroughly conceptualized. Can we address the complexities of this issue without making it more complicated? What insights do researchers provide regarding evangelical Christians, particularly Baptists? Furthermore, what do scholars aligned with this perspective reveal about the historical and religious foundations of the IDA? We believe it is crucial to clarify the topic's essence through comparative analysis.

Christian missionary efforts have led to numerous historical transformations worldwide. These endeavors have profoundly influenced the relationships and cultures among nations. This analysis examines how evangelical Christian-Baptist movements have collaborated during challenging times and how they have diverged in their interpretations of sacred scriptures. In the period following Kazakhstan's independence, Protestant groups have fragmented into various factions. However, it is evident that their current focus is increasingly on achieving unity. This unity is rooted in the prayer of Jesus Christ. Within the Scriptures, concepts of unity and love serve as indicators of one's fidelity to Jesus, setting believers apart from non-believers. Jesus prayed for himself, his disciples, and all followers (John 17:1-23). Thus, it can be inferred that the trend towards division into various factions is misguided and requires correction (Dwiraharjo, 2023: 20).

The emergence and actions of the Evangelical Baptist Church in the United States during the period of English rule are currently under analysis, either being synthesized or deconstructed. When Soviet authorities denied the Evangelical Baptist Church official registration as a religious organization and targeted its clergy with persecution, the group voiced its internal dissent regarding the lack of freedom of conscience and the

oppression of its followers. This was done through publications like "Vestnik istiny" and "Bulletin of the Council of Relatives of Prisoners of the Evangelical Baptist Church in the USSR", released by the "Christian" publishing house. It is essential to highlight the key elements of the Evangelical Baptists' missionary efforts in Kazakhstan and to examine them through a contemporary lens.

### **Justification for the choice of topic and goals and objectives**

Since gaining independence, the Republic of Kazakhstan has seen the rise of various religious organizations, leading to the formation of specific policies concerning religion. This development has resulted in the establishment of constitutional and legal frameworks, as well as regulations that connect to other areas of public life.

At present, Kazakhstan boasts a multifaceted society characterized by a variety of religious practices. Among these is Baptistism, which made its debut in Kazakhstan during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, represented by Evangelical Christians - Baptists. Today, these Evangelical Christians - Baptists have established the Council of Churches within the Republic of Kazakhstan.

As of now, there are 186 registered associations of Evangelical Christian Baptists in our nation, and this group also produces literature that connects its missionary efforts with historical contexts. The distinctive features of the Evangelical Christian Baptist faith and its practices, along with the development of its social structures, necessitate thorough academic examination and theoretical inquiry.

In order to enhance the efficacy of the scientific article, the following objectives are proposed:

- To explore the spiritual and cultural



foundations that led to the emergence, development, and dissemination of the Evangelical Christian Baptist Church;

- To examine the religious beliefs that played a role in the rise of the «baptism» movement;

- To investigate the activities of the Evangelical Christian Baptist Church in Kazakhstan, including its interactions and integration with various religions and cultures;

- To assess the impact of the Evangelical Christian Baptist Church on the religious and spiritual landscape of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as its standing within the confessional framework and its relationships with other faiths.

### Scientific research methodology

The study delves into the Evangelical Christian Baptists (ECB) through both historical and systematic approaches. Furthermore, it employs comparative analysis to evaluate existing literature related to this subject. A blend of descriptive, review, and systematic analytical methods was employed for the research. The study aimed to understand the foundational factors that led to the rise of the ECB, the revivalist efforts of John Smith in the Reformation, and various inquiries surrounding faith matters. This research was carried out by integrating interdisciplinary strategies, thus not confining the examination of the soteriological and ecclesiological aspects of this movement solely within the realm of religious studies.

In the process of composing this article, the works of various scholars were referenced, including L.M. Mitrokhin's «Baptism: History and Modernity» and «Baptism and Scientific Knowledge,» L.N. Tolstoy's «Christianity in the First Centuries: Thoughts on Faith,» and V. Stein's «Baptism and Modernity.» Additionally, the research of international authors such as C. Henry and A. Webber in «A Short History of

Baptists,» G. Robert and A. Torbet's «History of the Baptists,» J. H. Shakespeare's «Baptist and Congregational Pioneers,» and S. Dwiraharjo's piece on «Efforts to Unite Diversity in Indonesian Baptist Churches: An Ecumenical Perspective Based on John 17:20-21,» along with Munqiz ibn Muhmud Al-Saqqar's essay titled «God is One or Trinity» for the World Islamic League, contributed to the foundation of this study. The article synthesizes and critiques the perspectives of these scholars. Employing comparative-historical methods alongside grouping and analytical approaches, this work highlights the significance of baptism's historical and theological aspects, underscoring its relevance in both practical and theoretical contexts within religious studies.

### Main section

The Protestant Reformation, spearheaded by Martin Luther, effectively came to an end as a movement in the 1620s. During this period, two distinct currents surfaced within Protestantism.

First: magisterial reformers, who aligned themselves with the state's political stance and pledged allegiance through oaths. This group includes denominations like Anglican, Pentecostal, and Adventist churches.

Second: groups of independent reformers, such as the Puritans, who advocated for the severance of connections with overarching authority and refrained from making oaths.

The number of Protestant groups that have emerged from these two primary positions exceeds one thousand. This proliferation is attributable to the interplay of irrational and rational beliefs within Christian theology, alongside familial, global, and even economic divisions based on diverse social influences and perspectives. L.M. Mitrokhin, a prominent Russian sociologist of

Baptism (1930-2005), discussed this topic in his publication “Baptism and Scientific Knowledge”: “Religious faith does not originate exclusively within the framework of the ‘man-religion’ dynamic. Instead, an individual’s worldview, including their religious views, is shaped by a variety of social factors, personal experiences, and numerous other influences” (Mitrokhin, 1969: 11). While we categorize Mitrokhin’s viewpoint as one of the narrower positive perspectives, it remains historically accurate that religious belief can also emerge from the relationship between humans and religion or theology. The fundamental theological catalyst for the emergence of Protestant or broader Christian movements is rooted in the dichotomy present in early Christianity: between the teachings of Jesus and the twelve apostles and the innovative evangelization strategies employed by the Apostle Paul. This subject represents a significant area that necessitates distinct academic inquiry. In this context, Antonov N. B. discusses in his piece “Judaism from A to Z” the schism within Christianity, noting that “the Judeo-Christians, encompassing the twelve apostles and Jesus’ adherents, were guided by the direct disciples of Jesus, namely apostles Peter and James. They were fundamentally opposed to Paul” (Antonov, 2007: 211). Additionally, notable Russian scholar L. N. Tolstoy, in his book “Christianity of the First Centuries, Thoughts on Faith,” asserts that “following the Apostolic Council’s resolution in Antioch, the Judeo-Christians permanently distanced themselves from the broader Christian community. The term ‘Christians’ was first applied to Paul’s followers in 52 AD,” indicating that the initial sect became irrelevant and that Paul’s interpretation triumphed as the predominant form of Christianity that reached non-Jewish audiences (Tolstoy, 1919: 5). For these views, L. N.

Tolstoy faced excommunication from the Russian Orthodox Church. While the Judeo-Christian faction diminished and remained among the Jewish population, Paul realized early missionary success among non-Jews, prompting further exploration of the underlying reasons. The baptism of Jesus within Christianity also raises contentious points. “If baptism serves as a means for sinners, then Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River sparked the rise of sects and caused disarray among his followers...” (Kowalski, 2021: 459).

As Europe fell under the influences of the Inquisition and the indulgences offered by the Catholic Church, it gradually moved away from its long-standing Western values and overarching humanism, yielding to the dominance of the papacy. However, during the Reformation, Europeans began to liberate themselves from papal control, and in the Renaissance, a revitalized populace embraced their cultural heritage, advocating for the autonomy of thought, spirituality, artistic expression, and scientific inquiry. They insisted on assessing all matters through the lenses of justice and humanistic principles. Consequently, the period leading up to the rise of baptism was characterized by a significant struggle, marking a pivotal chapter in human history where individuals sought profound liberty. In the initial phases of the Reformation, it was the individuals with deeply intricate minds and ethical dilemmas who played a pivotal role. As stated, “Erasmus’s insights, Luther’s theological beliefs, the fervor of Zwingli and Calvin, and the unwavering valor of Thomas Münzer were all rooted in courage” (Zwingli, 2016: 5). Consequently, baptism is recognized as having a deeply religious and charismatic aspect within Protestantism. This sacrament, having developed from earlier traditions and incorporating numerous features, will con-

tinue to be a significant subject across different times and cultures. The fundamental prerequisite for the establishment of baptism is the autonomy of both the church and the individual intellect, necessitating total devotion and submission to God.

Baptism, which emerged from the second faction previously mentioned, rests on the belief that the church should function autonomously from the governmental authority it was initially tied to. The reformist movement from which Baptism derived is rooted in the Anabaptists, who appeared in the 16th century. According to Munkyz (2009: 23), “Ulrich Zwingli, regarded as the third key figure after M. Luther and J. Calvin in the establishment of Protestantism, is credited with coining the term Anabaptists, meaning ‘rebaptized’.” A notable feature of Anabaptists is their commitment to genuine piety. Their actions are strictly based on biblical references. This group’s foundational belief is that the church should not yield to the authority of the state or align itself with a politicized church; moreover, rather than baptizing infants, they believe baptism should occur when an individual reaches an age of understanding. Due to these convictions, Anabaptists faced persecution throughout various European nations. While Anabaptists and Baptists share similar names and traits, they are distinct movements. A unifying idea for both groups is the belief that Jesus was baptized as an adult, as the Gospels affirm. The movements that significantly influenced the formation of the Baptists include the Puritans and Mennonites, both of which opposed the Anglican Church. Therefore, Baptists can be viewed as a continuation of the legacy established by these earlier movements.

The Baptist movement arose in the 17th century, initiated by John Smith (1554-1612), an Anglican clergyman and preacher.

Smith, a separatist who earned a master’s degree from Cambridge University in 1593, became a pivotal figure in this development. Following the Reformation, though the authority of the papacy waned in England, the monarchy asserted control over both secular and ecclesiastical matters, effectively politicizing the Anglican Church. This church, established as the royal church, represented a middle ground within Protestantism. At this juncture, the Puritans, who later evolved into the Baptists, emerged to promote justice and wholly eliminate «papism» from the church (Mitrokhin, 1969: 5). K. Henry, a professor at Cornell University, in his publication “A Brief History of Baptism,” asserts that “the Reformation had a profound effect on the populace of England, leading to the emergence of Baptism in the early 17th century as a reaction from the Puritans against Catholic authority” (Henry, 1967: 43). In this context, many scholars express the view that the ultimate goal was to eradicate any lingering vestiges of papism. The roots of Baptism can be traced back to the Puritans, who adhered to a distinctive Christian perspective.

In one of his addresses, John Smith expressed his disapproval of the Baptists’ stance by stating, “The heirs of the Apostles tread the path of righteousness. The Catholic and Anglican churches severed that line of succession long ago. Those priests and congregations aligned with secular authorities are labeled as heretics. Hence, we must revive the genuine faith and reorganize the church,” he asserted, aligning himself with Paul’s interpretation rather than traditional Judeo-Christian theology, which he found unappealing in the context of Catholic governance. He argued that adults who have veered away from the truth and fallen into heresy should undergo conscious baptism, as infant baptism contradicts the Gospel. He

further contended that Christians are sinners for their unfaithfulness to God and their capitulation to papal authority. Consequently, he advocated for a call to righteousness for the wayward congregation. “Besides persecuting these extreme heretics in the eyes of the English crown, they enforced two conditions: to either repent or leave the nation” (Mitrokhin, 1997: 153). John Smith criticized the connection between religious institutions and political authority, yet he embraced the doctrine of the Trinity. His idea of the autonomy of religious thought and the church served as a challenge to the insincerities found in religious teachings, as he endeavored to elucidate the principles of justice and holiness in faith. It is noteworthy that the intention behind Smith’s notion of «Apostolic Succession» should capture the interest of scholars. The revival of apostolic tradition stands as a core belief for Baptists. Albert Wardin, the former president of the Southern Baptists of the United States, shared his distinctive perspective in the article titled “How Original Was the Baptist Movement in the Russian Empire?” He pointed out, “Baptists are not a cult with some special revelation.” This movement aims to align itself closely with the beliefs and practices of the Apostolic Church while spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone, regardless of their nation (Vardin, 2009:160). This concept raises compelling and scholarly questions that warrant exploration from a theological standpoint. For instance, various topics such as the commonalities and distinctions between the Apostolic Church and Baptist traditions, as well as aspects of faith and outreach efforts, present rich avenues for investigation.

In 1606, John Smith and his companions distanced themselves from the predominant church, seeking refuge in Holland where they could practice their faith freely.

During this period, Smith encountered the beliefs of the Armenian and Mennonite congregations. He wholeheartedly embraced and articulated the concept that individuals should receive baptism in adulthood. Furthermore, influenced by the humanist movements that followed the Reformation, he envisioned the possibility of uniting his fellow evangelical Christians into a single congregation, with Jesus as its leader. As Shakespeare noted in 1907, “John Smith’s belief was that Christianity was for all mankind, and that whoever would be saved would be saved,” which stood in contrast to the traditional Judeo-Christian perspective that considered Jesus solely as a savior for the Jewish people, (Shakespeare, 1907:147), opposing the Judeo-Christian belief that Jesus was only for the Jews.

A faction of Baptists, led by Thomas Helvis and John Merton, returned to England and established a congregation known as the «General Baptists.» This movement held beliefs that emphasized Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross as the means by which he bore the sins of humanity. Salvation, they argued, requires an individual to willingly accept Jesus as divine; only then can they attain salvation. It is believed that individuals have the power to determine their own destiny, enabling them to either secure or forfeit their salvation. In 1612, Helvis and Merton’s followers went back to London, where they introduced their tenets, referred to as the «Declaration of Faith.» According to this declaration, Christians who worship outside the church are seen as individuals seeking repentance, trusting that Christ can transform their lives and yield positive outcomes. The declaration further posits that the true spiritual church exists invisibly, comprised solely of the spirits of virtuous and perfect individuals. G. Robert Torbet notes in «History of Baptism» that during the period from



1612 to 1626, the growth of Baptists in England was limited, with only five churches and around 150 followers reported (Robert, Torbet, 1993: 40). In his book «Religion in Secular Society: A Sociological Analysis,» American scholar R. Wilson highlighted the urgency of the situation, noting that «the number of Baptists in England in 1965 barely reached 267 thousand» (Wilson, 1966: 235). Many express their weariness with the hypocrisy and materialism exhibited within the church. In retaliation, they present a manifesto that aligns with justice and truth. Their aim is to free individuals from the misconception that religion and the church serve as avenues for personal gain, as well as the limited view that pleasing God and serving the church should result in tangible benefits to one's life. L.M. Mitrokhin, in his publication «Baptism and Scientific Knowledge,» mentions that «the Baptists' declaration asserts their commitment to two specific principles»:

1) A person should be baptized and accepted into the church when they reach a mature age, not in infancy;

2) Baptists called for their independence and autonomy from the politicized ecclesiastical authority, which emerged when the Anglican Church supplanted the papacy and endeavored to dominate both secular and religious power. They sought freedom of conscience and self-governance from the ruling authorities (Mitrokhin, 1969: 5). In England, Baptists faced persecution until 1689; however, the enactment of the «Act of Toleration» in that year allowed them to practice their faith openly. Overall, the growth of the Baptist movement in England was gradual. By 1965, the number of registered Baptists had reached 267 thousand (R. Wilson. 1966. 35).

The second faction of Baptistism took shape in North America around 1633. By

1639, Roger Williams established the first congregation. Initially, membership growth was gradual, but in 1707, the Philadelphia Association was formed, which spurred rapid missionary work both domestically and internationally. For instance, the number of adult Baptists rose from 35,000 in 1784 to 700,000 by 1850, reaching 4 million by 1900. «In 1944, the number of African American Baptists also rose, amounting to 6 million 433 thousand,» notes Lohuston (1956: 4). Furthermore, «official global statistics in 1962 indicated that the total number of Baptists was 24.3 million, with 21 million residing in America,» according to Mitrokhin (1969: 6). By 2010, the percentage of Baptists in the U.S. population was 51.5%, approximately equating to 159.85 million individuals. As of 2023, the United States had a population of approximately 331,449,281 individuals. Among them, around 170 million people, or 55%, identified as Baptists. According to Blatlock (2005: 50), there are 38 distinct Baptist denominations across the country. It is important to note that Baptists typically do not include minors in their demographic counts. This religious movement has roots in a faction known as the «Particularists,» who adhere to Calvinist teachings. The Particularists believe that salvation is reserved for those whom God has chosen. Consequently, the atonement offered by Jesus is not intended for everyone but specifically for the elect—those who have faith in Him. The Holy Spirit is believed to guide and set apart these individuals. Particularists tend to be meticulous in their religious observances. Baptism is a common practice in America, with several U.S. presidents historically being affiliated with this movement.

Contemporary scholars assert that there was a period free of conflict during the tenure of the four Baptist presidents, attributing

their lack of involvement in warfare to their religious beliefs. W. Stein concisely encapsulates this notion in his book “Baptism and Modernity,” stating, “Among the ‘brethren in Christ’ are notable figures such as millionaire Rockefeller and Harry Truman, the ‘father of the atomic bomb,’ among others” (Stein, 1969: 4). However, we contend that Truman’s decision to authorize the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 stemmed not from religious convictions, but from a strategic objective to quell Japan’s imperial ambitions and expedite the conclusion of the war. It was widely held that failure to cease hostilities would result in further loss of life. In contrast, Southern Baptists were instrumental in perpetuating slavery and systemic racial inequality. This subject warrants further investigation to comprehend the evolution of Protestant attitudes in America, their perspectives on slavery, and the intertwining religious and political contexts of that era.

Once it gained traction within the Russian Empire, a branch of Evangelical Christianity closely related to Baptist traditions emerged in St. Petersburg, with its influence still evident in Kazakh regions today. The study of Baptism holds significance in our country for several reasons: John Smith’s theological perspectives offer intriguing and innovative concepts for both religious studies and the broader faith community. Smith emphasized the importance of restoring both the essence of truth and Christian morals to religious discourse. I believe his assertions highlight key ideas such as humanism and philanthropy. Therefore, we find it valuable to further explore John Smith’s thoughts on philosophy, politics, and religion in greater depth.

Baptists have several differences from Catholics, for example:

- The church is founded on the Bible, and the Pope is not a saint in any sense. The Pope doesn’t accept that he is sinless;

- A baptized person has the right to understand the Bible in his own way, without the intervention of the Pope. He has the right to communicate with God in his language;

- Rejection of the seven apocryphal writings;

- It rejects the Pope’s authority, sin forgiveness, and Catholic sacraments such as iconography, Mary’s deification, purgatory, and the secret church. It also opposes Catholic indulgences and anyone who desire to submit the human mind to anything else than the Gospel;

- Good works are the result of faith, but salvation comes via faith, not good acts;

- All Protestant churches are independent;

- It is prohibited to pray in an incomprehensible language. The worshiper must pray in their own language;

- Monasticism is not allowed: a priest must be married;

- The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. Jesus has two natures and two wills (This creed agrees with the Catholic faith).

An essential principle of baptism is its missionary aspect, which involves the task of baptizing all people. This notion is derived from the Gospel of Matthew, specifically where it states: “Baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” along with the directive to “Teach them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28: 19-20). Additionally, the Gospel of Mark emphasizes: “Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature” (Mark 16: 15-16). Missionary endeavors are vigorously pursued by both Protestant and Catholic churches. In this context, the messages of the Gospel provide differing views regarding Jesus as a prophet sent to Israel, continuing the legacy of prophets like Moses and Jacob. Fur-

thermore, the Quran and the Gospel convey negative portrayals of Christianity within the scope of world religions, suggesting that it is inappropriate to link missionary efforts directly to Jesus. Essentially, Christ's mission was to redeem the children of Israel, while Christianity, as later articulated by the Apostle Paul, evolved into the concept of the Trinity and extended to other nations. Paul's unique theological development can be traced back to his journey to Damascus and his distinctive interpretation of the Gospel (Paul, 2018:417).

In one of his addresses, he remarked, "Jesus never claimed any of the things that Paul articulated, including declaring himself as God." Supporting this is Arthur Vandalay's assertion in "The Open Universe," where he notes, "Paul established what has come to be known as Christianity." This faith evolved into a global religion, and an early form of missionary activity commenced. The concept of baptism remains somewhat controversial in scholarly discussions. This is largely because Jesus' apostles focused their efforts solely on the Jewish populace, adhering to Jesus' words in the Gospel of Matthew: "But Jesus said: I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (15/25). They perceived Jesus' mission and sacrifice as being solely for the Israelites, and the first Jewish converts did not engage in outreach to other communities. Similarly, the Quran, in verse 49 of Surah Ali-Imran, states, "Allah sent him (Jesus) as a messenger to the Children of Israel," indicating a path for liberation that invites further theological exploration (Mamyrbayev, 2021: 25).

In 1965, the Second Vatican Council promulgated a decree concerning evangelization, focusing on the missionary activities of various churches. Historically, during the Middle Ages, the term evangelization was closely tied to spiritual matters. Nowadays,

it is primarily associated with the missionary endeavors of Christians, collectively known as the «people of God,» who make up the Catholic Church (Borbasova, 2009: 29).

The Evangelical Christian Baptist Church has been established in Kazakhstan since the migration of German Mennonites from the Samaria region of Russia through Saratov towards the end of the 19th century, continuing to the present. As of now, there are 186 recognized Evangelical Christian Baptist congregations actively functioning throughout Kazakhstan.

### Results and discussion

John Smith articulated that the church needs to restore its apostolic legacy and evolve a religious framework that remains apolitical, while still upholding the foundational tenets of the Reformation. He believed that European Christians acknowledged the esteemed teachings of the Apostle Paul, who reached out to Gentiles, viewing this as essential for preserving spiritual integrity, safety, and stability. In his view, the decline of the Christian faith stemmed from a deviation during the Reformation, which, in his opinion, became overly accommodating. Consequently, he asserted that believers had strayed from their authentic spiritual roots. This disconnection led to a fragmented Christian community, plagued by «misunderstandings,» which subsequently had to bear significant consequences for the pursuit of tranquility. John Smith was in full agreement with the perspective that individuals ought to undergo baptism in adulthood. Moreover, propelled by the currents of post-Reformation humanism, there emerged a vision to bring together their evangelical Christian companions into a single church, with Jesus as its leader. "John Smith believed in Christianity as a faith meant for all humanity, asserting that anyone who

desires to be saved shall indeed find salvation” (Shakespeare, 1907: 147), which laid the groundwork for expanded missionary efforts. This article explores the dichotomous split within the apostolic church, examining its teachings and the extent of Jesus’ prophetic mission, alongside the apostle Paul’s interpretation of universal salvation.

Following the rise of the Baptists, the main divisions emerged within the English and American communities. A faction led by Thomas Helves and John Merton established the «General Baptist» church in England, adhering to the «Declaration of Faith.» This belief system asserts that through his crucifixion, Jesus bore the sins of humanity, and individuals must willingly acknowledge Jesus as God to attain salvation. This group emphasizes that God has bestowed the responsibility of one’s fate upon each person. The other branch of Baptists, known as the «Individual Baptists,» originated in North America in 1633 under the guidance of Roger Williams, aligning with the doctrines of the «Philadelphia Association.» Initially, growth was gradual, but by 1707, a significant push for missionary efforts began both in the United States and internationally. The variances and foundational principles of these two Baptist orientations are often examined and compared..

Consequently, we explored the underlying factors that led to the formation of the Baptist Church, which has its roots in ancient Christianity, its resurgence during the Reformation, and the diverse methods of missionary activities in both England and the United States. In this context, an evaluation was conducted regarding the Baptists who arrived in Kazakhstan via Russian lands.

### Conclusion

In summary, the principles and objectives—religious, political, and social—of

Evangelical Christians-Baptists within the Protestant movement originated in the 17th century amid the ongoing Reformation. This movement arose as a reaction to the conformity imposed by the Catholic papacy and the Anglican Church. It has been observed that the «faith of individuals» was shaped by various factors, including political, religious, social, economic, and theological perspectives, which ultimately resulted in the emergence and fragmentation of over 1,000 distinct Protestant groups. Furthermore, the advent of the Baptist movement as a notable religious community was significantly influenced by the contemporary religious and political climate, as well as by tensions between the monarchy and the populace during that era.

The primary factors contributing to the emergence of John Smith, the founder of Baptistism, as well as the challenges he aimed to address, were examined. Various strategies for establishing divine justice and promoting humanism were outlined, alongside efforts to rejuvenate the church and advocate for the restoration of the “Apostolic Legacy” that had been severed by the Catholic and Anglican Churches. The dynamics of the relationship between church and state were scrutinized, with particular attention paid to how the politicization of religion has led to the erosion of its core principles.

The comparative analysis was conducted on the «Declaration of Faith» created by the Baptist movement in England in 1612 and the «Philadelphia Association» established by the Baptist community in the United States in 1707. This examination highlighted both the shared principles found in these documents and their unique features. One area that merits further exploration within these texts is the inclination toward financial gain associated with an individual’s faith in God and religious beliefs. The



declaration illustrates how a person's pursuit of profit can lead to a diminishment of their moral integrity concerning religion, consequently steering them away from genuine, selfless connections and towards more mercenary interactions.

This analysis delves into the distinctive characteristics of Baptist religious beliefs in the United States and conveys them to the audience. It presents statistical insights indicating a remarkable growth in the number of followers, escalating from 35,000 in 1784 to 170 million by 2023. Additionally, it highlights the agreement of U.S. President Truman, a Baptist himself, regarding the decision to utilize atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The discussion also touches upon the religious stances related to racial discrimination and the institution of slavery.

The findings of the anti-synthesis approach were revealed, drawing comparisons

between the Baptist denomination and the Catholic Church. The exploration of the baptismal significance within the Christian community was conducted by examining the teachings found in the Holy Bible and the Quran, with relevant findings presented. The SWOT analysis highlighted the strengths, historical context, and foundational ideas related to the early Baptist movements, alongside John Smith's perspectives, which are both innovative and beneficial for national scholarship and faith communities. A noted concern is the influence of Baptist Church activities on the conventional religious perceptions in our nation. Additionally, a notable deficiency exists in domestic religious studies, representing a weakness in the field. We propose that a broader exploration of this topic will facilitate a clearer identification of both primary and secondary objectives of Evangelical Christian Baptists recognized in our country, grounded in scientific inquiry.

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