



There Has Always Been a COUNTER-CULTURE

In the year 1250 a Roman Catholic Inquisitor

wrote of the Waldenses (see the "Timeline of Communitarianism") that, "They are the greatest danger to the Church because they go back farthest" (since before the beginning of the Catholic Church), and "there is hardly any country in which this movement is not to be found."

"These heretics are to be recognized by their way of life and their manner of speech. Their lives are orderly and modest, without arrogance. Their dress is neither costly nor disorderly. They speak no untruth and avoid every oath or deception. They do not seek riches. They are chaste and lead pure lives. They are moderate in eating and drinking. ... They are industrious, teaching and learning much. They are recognized by their modest speech that completely avoids exaggeration. One never hears a useless word from them, no evil backbiting toward their fellow men."

The Inquisitor concluded that these qualities made the Waldenses all the more dangerous to the Catholic Church! Crusades were called against them in 1209-29 and in 1488, and intermittent persecution until 1848. During the Reformation they became Swiss Protestant and exist today in North Carolina and in Southern Europe.

From: Eberhard Arnold, *History of the Baptizers Movement* (The Plough Publishing House: Rifton, New York, 1970), edited from a presentation at the Rhon-Bruderhof, Hesse, Germany, 1935; quoted from Ludwig Keller, *Die Reformation und die Aelteren Reformparteien*, Leipzig, Germany, 1885.

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