

Why we are Baptist

Baptist Distinctives



April 3, 2022

Our church has chosen the denominational name Baptist to represent who we are as a church. Believers from early times were nicknamed **anabaptist** (*later "Baptist"*) because of their distinct belief system they adhered to from the Bible. The acronym BAPTISTS easily displays the eight distinctive beliefs of Baptists.

- B** – Bible is the Final Authority in All Matters
- A** – Autonomy (self-governing, local control) of Local Churches
- P** – Priesthood of Believers
- T** – Two Church Ordinances (observances)
- I** – Individual Soul Liberty
- S** – Security of a Believer's Salvation
- T** – Two Offices in the Church
- S** – Separation of Church and State

PRIESTHOOD of believers

1. A distinct belief about New Testament Believers

- In the **OT**, there was a **family line** in Israel (*Aaron's lineage...Levites*) that **God chose** as priests to represent Him and maintain the _____ of Israel (*access to the sacrifices for sin, access to God Himself for national forgiveness, etc.*) – Ex. 29:43-45; Lev. 8:1-13; 1 Chron. 23:13; Luke 17:11-14.
- In the **GOSPELS**, Jesus became **the final** High Priest that _____ and for all made **the acceptable** sacrifice for all sin – Heb. 7:25-27; **9:6-7**, 11-12, 24-28; 10:1-4, 9-12; 1 Tim. 2:5.
- In the **NT**, those who put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ, the final and enduring High Priest, are now **in His royal family line** and are the new _____ priests of God, being responsible for the holy things of God for themselves and others – 1 Pet. 2:5-9; Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 6:19-20.

2. What other beliefs are out there?

- Organized religion does not like the place of prominence God gives to His son Jesus Christ or to _____, ordinary believers (*turned priests*) – Matt. 13:54-56; John 11:48, 12:19; Acts 4:10-21.
- Jesus Christ _____ religious leaders who exalt themselves above the common people for their own glory and power – Rev. 2:6, 15; Mark 12:37; 1 Pet. 5:1-4.

3. What do I do with this distinct belief about the Bible?

- If you are in Christ, see yourself as the ambassador (*priest*) God has made you to be. Others will come to you as they did the OT priests because you have something holy that they need. Be holy, as He is holy – 2 Cor. 5:20-21; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2 Tim. 2:19-21.
- Never stop being a *living sacrifice* for God and others and seek to "*offer **the sacrifice** of _____ to God continually*" through the circumstances of life – Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:15.

TWO Church Ordinances (BAPTISM and COMMUNION)

1. A distinct purpose and method of BAPTISM

- Baptism is a _____ act of obedience to **Christ's command** that demonstrates what took place **personally** inside of you when you believed and received the gospel. Baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, emphasizing Christ's resurrection power in your life. Baptism also speaks to the restoration of the Christian into the _____ of God established at man's original creation (*Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* – Gen. 1:26-27) – Matt. 28:18-20; John 3:1-10; Rom. 6:1-11.
- Baptism is only by complete immersion in water in the Bible (*baptize = dip, plunge, immerse, bathe, overwhelm*) and should follow closely after a believer's genuine salvation reflecting on the _____ what has genuinely taken place on the **inside** – Acts 8:12-13, 37-38; 18:8.

2. What other beliefs are out there about BAPTISM?

- **Sprinkling** was first documented as a baptism around **250 AD** when a man named *Novatian* was sick in bed and about to die (*unbaptized*). An exception was made for him, and he was sprinkled on his bed instead of being immersed. From there, sprinkling was "permitted" in cases of sickness and necessity, and by the 1500's, the RCC had adopted sprinkling as the exclusive mode of baptism.
- **Infant baptism** emerged exclusively through the RCC in the **mid-200's** as an _____ of salvation for an infant. In 410 AD, Augustine wrote "*the Catholic church has ever held that unbaptized infants will miss, not only the kingdom of Heaven, but also eternal life.*" Many protestant churches today baptize infants for similar reasons.
- **Baptism for one's salvation** is taught by *Churches of Christ* and *Christian Church* denominations who mistakenly take the passages describing John the Baptist's baptism for Israel and apply them to the church making baptism THE salvation act. They baptize most Sundays – Acts 18:25, 19:1-5.

3. A distinct purpose and method for COMMUNION

- Communion is designed by God as a _____ for us to remember Christ's suffering for sin on the cross. Christians are touched again with how Christ was broken and bloodied for us. Baptist churches use unfermented wine (*picture of no bitterness*) and unleavened bread (*picture of no sin*) for communion – Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 10:16, 11:23-29.
- How often is communion? **As oft as ye drink it...as often as ye eat this bread** – 1 Cor. 11:25-26a. When will communion end? **Ye do shew the Lord's death till he come** – 1 Cor. 11:25-26b. Communion is a time of **self-examination** and **is to be taken** soberly/seriously – 1 Cor. 11:28.

4. What other beliefs are out there about COMMUNION?

- The *RCC (priests)* and some protestant denominations believe those who officiate communion have the power and authority to _____ the bread/wine (*fermented*) into Christ's literal body/blood (*called "transubstantiation"*) bringing Christ's literal physical presence to the event **each week** – John 6:50-59 (but see v. 60-66).

5. What do I do with these distinct beliefs about the church ordinances of BAPTISM/COMMUNION?

- Take both baptism and communion seriously and participate in both ordinances rightly.
- If you have not been baptized or baptized unbiblically (*in any way wrongly represented*), be baptized the **right way** displaying the **right picture** publicly – Matt. 3:14-17; Acts 19:1-5.