

# Why we are Baptist

## Baptist Distinctives



May 15, 2022

Our church has chosen the denominational name Baptist to represent who we are as a church. The Baptist denomination is the largest denomination in the United States behind Catholic. Almost 50% of Baptists worldwide live in the United States. Baptists have a very distinct belief system taken from the Bible alone:

- 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

## TWO OFFICES in the Church

### 1. A distinct belief about the leadership of the local church

- The governmental structure of a local church includes **pastors, deacons**, and the local body of believers (**saints**). Every level in this structure is subject to the authority of the \_\_\_\_\_ – Php. 1:1.
- The **two ordained offices** in a church are pastor and deacon. Both pastor and deacon are offices to which someone is appointed – 1 Tim. 4:14-16; Tit. 1:5; Acts 6:1-4.
- Pastors and deacons are recognized first and foremost by their Godly \_\_\_\_\_ – Acts 6:1-4; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:6-9.
- The title pastor is also referred to as *elder/bishop* in the Bible. Pastor is the title used by Baptists because it is clear – Acts 20:17, 28; Tit. 1:5, 7; Eph. 4:11-13; Jer. 3:15, 10:21, 23:1-2; 1 Pet. 5:1-4.

### 2. What other beliefs are out there?

- Some churches create an additional office for *elders*. Some make *committees/trustees* powerful by giving voting powers above the authority of pastors and deacons. Some give all the power to the saints. The key to **ANY authority structure** God has established is balance and the \_\_\_\_\_ God designed for it to keep – 1 Cor. 11:1-3; Eph. 5:21.
- The RCC bases their authority structure from unusual passages and on their pagan roots before the Empire converted to Christianity in 312AD – Matt. 16:15-19; 23:8-9; John 6:53-55; 1 Tim. 2:5.

### 3. What do I do with this distinct belief about the Offices of the church?

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ in supporting and approving good men for these offices – 1 Tim. 5:17-19.
- Be Godly in the leadership and character roles that God has \_\_\_\_\_ to you in life. Treat these roles with great respect and lead as God would have you to lead – Gen. 1:27; John 19:11.