

Why we are Baptist

Baptist Distinctives



May 22, 2022

Our church has chosen the denominational name Baptist to represent who we are as a church. Baptists were nicknamed (as all denominations) because of their distinct belief system found in the Bible. Baptist beliefs are seen in the acronym B.A.P.T.I.S.T.S. Today, we finish with the final distinct belief 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

SEPARATION of Church and State

1. A distinct belief about the relationship between church and government

- God established/ordained the local church with _____ – Matt. 16:18, 18:15-17; 1 Tim. 3:15.
- God established/ordained the civil government with authority – Pr. 8:15-16; Rom. 9:17, 13:1-7.
- The church and state are _____ and separate organizations – Matt. 22:15-22; Dan. 3:16-18.
- **In the 1600's**, many governments were married to denominations (*church/state relationships*) forcing denominational beliefs/doctrines through the "state church" onto the people.
- **In 1612**, John Smyth (the first official "Baptist" pastor in the world) wrote, *"the magistrate is not by virtue of his office to meddle with religion or matters of conscience."*
- Baptist pastor **John Leland** met with **James Madison** in **1788** which influenced the 1st Amendment to the Constitution. The **Danbury Baptists** exchanged letters with **Thomas Jefferson** in **1802** affirming an appropriate separation between church and state. However, everything changed with this interpretation in the **1960's**. America changed from being a _____ to a total democracy.
- The original belief about separation of church and state was that **the church** does not have the authority to prescribe/dictate a government's actions (*though they may have _____ on political matters*), and **the government** does not have the authority to prescribe/dictate the actions of the church (*though they may have opinions*). Both are mutually exclusive – 1 Pet. 2:13-16.

2. What other beliefs are out there?

- The following countries still have **national denominations**: **Catholic** (Bolivia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, parts of Switzerland, Vatican City), **Lutheran** (Denmark, Iceland, Norway, and Finland), **Anglican** (England), **Orthodox** (Greece), and **Presbyterian** (Scotland).
- **Islam** is the **national religion** of Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, and Iran.

3. What do I do with this distinct belief about the separation of church and state?

- Understand the original design/_____ for separation of church and state – Pr. 22:28; 23:10.
- Don't be _____ to be bold in your respect for God, His son, and His truth in public places – 1 Pet. 5:8; Pr. 22:13, 26:13, 28:10; 2 Tim. 1:7.