

WHAT ARE BAPTISTS?

Most who have called themselves "Baptists" (as well as some who didn't) down through history have held to certain distinctives which are listed below using the acronym "Baptists."

BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

- ◆ Biblical Authority is the belief that the Bible is our sole authority in faith and practice.
- ◆ II Tim. 3:16; Psa. 119:89

AUTONOMY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

- ◆ Autonomy of the Local Church is the belief that each local church is self-governing and independent of all outside control.
- ◆ Acts 6, 14:23; 15; I Cor. 5, 16:1-3

PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER

- ◆ Priesthood of the believer is the belief that each believer may go directly to God and needs no human priest to act in his part.
- ◆ I Tim. 2:5; I Pet. 2:5; Heb. 10:12

TWO ORDINANCES

- ◆ Two Ordinances is the belief that only baptism and the Lord's supper are ordinances of the church and that they do not bring salvation but are memorials.
- ◆ Rom. 6:3-5; Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:38ff; I Cor. 11:23-26

INDIVIDUAL SOUL LIBERTY

- ◆ Individual Soul Liberty is the implementation of the truth we must obey God rather than men in areas where there is no clear biblical law or principle or when others would command us to violate biblical absolutes.
- ◆ Acts 5:29; Rom. 14:5-8

SAVED CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

- ◆ Saved Church membership is the belief that only those who have been born again and have exhibited clear testimony of salvation may be joined to the local church.
- ◆ Acts 2:41; 5:12-14; Rom. 1:6,7

TWO OFFICERS

- ◆ Two Officers is the belief that each church has only two kinds of biblical officers which are pastors (also elder or bishop) and deacons.
- ◆ Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3; Tit. 1

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

- ◆ Separation of Church and State is the belief that the state is to handle temporal affairs while the church handles spiritual affairs in this world and that the two ought not to be mixed.
- ◆ Rom. 13:3,4; Eph. 4:11