

# K

## KINSHIP *Our Baptist Heritage*

Study #11

Outside of the Word of God, one of the greatest areas of spiritual ignorance is that concerning the **history** of New Testament churches over the past 1,900 years.

### **Lesson Overview**

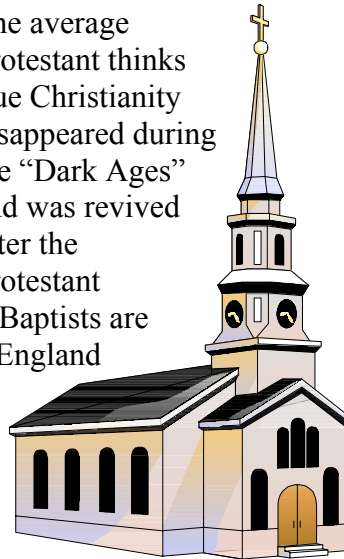
- I. What is Church Perpetuity?
- II. The Founding of the New Testament Church
- III. The Perpetuity of Baptist Churches
- IV. Why Are We a Baptist Church?
- V. The Trail of Blood
- VI. Books on Baptist History Supplement – Why I Am A Baptist, by Noel Smith Supplement – Lessons on Distinctives

The Roman Catholic is led to believe his is the *only* ‘Church’ that began with St. Peter and has continued intact down through the centuries. All non-Catholic denominations are called “departed brethren.”

The average Protestant thinks true Christianity disappeared during the “Dark Ages” and was revived after the Protestant

Reformation. They mistakenly believe Baptists are Protestants and had their beginnings in England in the early part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The Scriptures promise, and history confirms, the existence of true New Testament churches in every period of



### **Checklist**

- This Lesson
  - Trail of Blood
  - Spiritual Journal
  - Gospel Tracts
- For Next Session**
- Lesson L

### **Informal**

#### **Conversation –**

Ask about his week.  
Ask about answers to the prayer requests you have shared.

### **Discuss Last Week's Assignments –**

1. Ask him to share his Scriptural insights, prayers, and applications from his Spiritual Journal.
2. Share one of your Quiet Times.
3. Exchange highlights of your sermon notes.
4. Ask him about his effort of handing out a gospel tract.

**Read this page together.**

the last nineteen centuries.

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## **I. WHAT IS CHURCH PERPETUITY?**

Perpetuity means “being perpetual, existing forever.” By church perpetuity we mean that in every age there have been true New Testament churches and believers who have remained faithful to the Word of God.

### ***THE LORD PROMISED HIS CHURCHES PERPETUITY.***

**A. *Read: Matthew 28:18-20.***

This commission was given to His churches and is for the churches to fulfill.

1. In it, the Lord promised to be with them  
A \_\_\_\_\_, even unto the end of the world.
2. If God made such a promise, then we can expect churches to be around until the end of the age to receive the promise.

**B. *Read: Matthew 16:18.***

Upon the Rock (Himself) the Lord established His Church, and He said that the gates of hell would not P \_\_\_\_\_ against it.

**C. *Read: 1 Corinthians 11:26.***

The Lord’s Supper is an ordinance given to the Lord’s churches. The Lord’s Supper is to be perpetually observed by churches (“*ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.*”) This pre-supposes the existence of New Testament churches at all times to observe the ordinance.

**D. *Read: Ephesians 3:21.***

In a special way, God is glorified among His churches. This glory is to continue throughout A \_\_\_\_ A \_\_\_\_\_. If true churches disappeared as the apostasy that developed into the Roman Catholic Church took hold, this Scripture would be meaningless.

- E.** *Much of the New Testament is addressed to Christians in a CHURCH setting. If there have been periods of time when churches have not existed, much of the New Testament was or is useless.*

**Ask:**

From these verses would you conclude that the church that Jesus Christ started would:

- Cease to exist.
- Cease, but come back into existence.
- Never cease.

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## II. THE FOUNDING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

### A. *The Church's Establishment*

1. John the Baptist's ministry was the embryo of the church.
2. It did not actually begin with John the Baptist in terms of a completely organized and functioning body. John initiated the process that resulted in the formation of the church.
3. John announced the Gospel.  
*(John 1:29) "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."*
4. John introduced the ordinance of baptism.



**B. *The Choosing of the Twelve Disciples***

1. In the calling of the Twelve we see the principle of a group of believers being “called out” and “assembled” around Christ as the Head. Christ was their good shepherd – their pastor. *John 10:14 “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.”*
2. Through the ministry of Christ and His congregation, the group of followers grew numerically. Those who responded to the message and received Christ were baptized by the disciples. *John 4:1-4 “When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, {2} (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) {3} He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. {4} And he must needs go through Samaria.”*

**C. *A gradual development***

1. Beginning with John’s baptism there was a continual adding to Christ.
2. Christ is seen as the Builder (Matthew 16:13-18), and the foundation (1 Corinthians 3:10-11).
3. Church discipline is provided for (Matthew 18:15-17).
4. The Lord’s Supper is given (Matthew 26:17-30).
5. The church only needs to be purchased with the blood of Christ. (*Acts 20:28*) “*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of*

**Review** this gradual development of the start of the church.

*God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”*

**D. The upper room (John 20:19-22)**

1. After purchasing the church on the cross, Christ meets with them in the upper room.
2. He breathes the Holy Spirit upon them, thereby fusing them together into an organism (vv. 19-22). This is the birthday of the church.
3. The church is commissioned. *John 20:21* “Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.” This is a repetition and enlargement of the commission already given (Matthew 4:19).

**Explain** the church’s commission – the Great Commission.

**E. On the Day of Pentecost**

The church is empowered by the Holy Spirit for the task of world evangelism. *Acts 1:8* “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

**Explain** the church’s power – the filling of the Holy Spirit. God does the work through us.

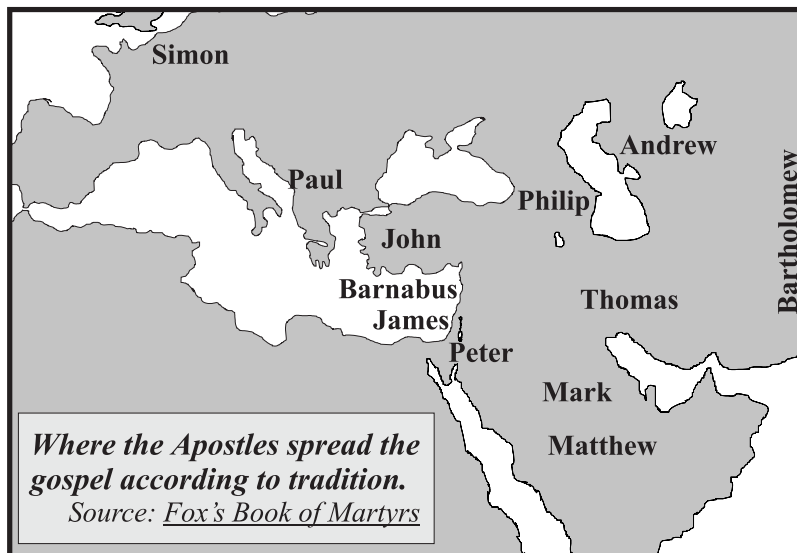
**F. Throughout the Book of Acts**

1. Through Philip the gospel goes to Ethiopia.
2. Through Peter the gospel goes to the Gentiles of Samaria and to Jews from throughout the Roman Empire who are in Jerusalem at Pentecost.
3. Through Barnabus, Paul, Timothy, Silas, and others, the gospel travels throughout Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, and islands of the Mediterranean Sea.

**G. Beyond the Book of Acts**

According to tradition:

1. James, the son of Zebedee – ministered in Jerusalem
2. Philip – labored diligently in Upper Asia
3. Matthew – labored in Parthia and Ethiopia
4. Andrew – preached in Scythia
5. Bartholomew – preached in India
6. Thomas – evangelized Parthia (modern Iran)
7. Mark – founded the church in Alexandria, Egypt
8. James, the Less – ministered in Jerusalem
9. Peter – ministered throughout Palestine
10. Luke – traveled with Paul
11. Simon Zelotes – preached the gospel in Mauritania, Africa, and then later in Britain
12. John – founded churches of Smyrna, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and Thyatira
13. Barnabus – ministered in Cyprus



### III. THE PERPETUITY OF BAPTIST CHURCHES

**A. *Not A Perpetual Name*** .....

Baptist church perpetuity is not the tracing of a name that has had at all times a definite meaning. The name has been applied to those who were not Baptist, and to many who were Baptist in principle that existed before the origin of the name.

**Comment:**

Baptist perpetuity is not the tracing of the name "Baptist." It is the tracing of doctrine among groups of various names which were eventually identified by the name "Baptist."

**B. *Spiritual Kinship*** .....

*Spiritual-Kinship* perpetuity is the "tracing of a principle which has been held by various bodies, sometimes with completeness and sometimes not, and sometimes in close association with other like bodies and sometimes by those who were isolated and widely scattered."

**Review** all of *B. Spiritual Kinship*

1. Baptists trace their origin through a succession of churches that are in agreement "in all essential matters of conduct, doctrine, and polity."
2. This doesn't mean that those churches were exactly what Baptist churches are today "in all points, great and small, without addition or diminution." Not all Baptist churches today are exactly alike. But there were fundamental principles (Baptist distinctives) that they did primarily hold to.
3. There was a succession of Christian bodies, known under different names and stretching down from the Apostles' day to today, who kept alive the truth of the gospel in its essential purity. They bore strong resemblance to those who were afterwards called by the name Baptist and usually emphasized some fundamental tenet of our faith.

4. “Baptist churches are more like a load of bricks which have been picked up along the way, all alike because made in the same mold but each complete in itself and independent of all the rest.” (The Baptist In History, by R. C. Mosher).
5. In 1819 the King of Holland appointed Dr. Ypeij, Professor of Theology in the University of Groningen, and Rev. I. J. Dermout, Chaplain to the King, both learned men and members of the Dutch Reformed church, to prepare a history of their church. In the authentic volume which they prepared and published at Breda, 1823, they devote one chapter to the Baptists, in which they make the following statement:

We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and who long in the history of the church receive the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the apostles, and as a Christian society has preserved pure the doctrine of the gospel through all ages. (History of the Dutch Reformed Church, by A. Ypeij, Doctor and Professor of Theology at Groningen, and I. J. Dermout, Secretary of the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church, and Preacher at The Hague, at Breda, 1819.)

**Comment:**

Spiritual Kinship is **NOT a chain** of groups of Christians in which one group emerged from the preceding one. Sometimes these groups existed simultaneously in different countries.



- C. *A Baptist church is Baptist if it holds to and carries out the basic teachings of the New Testament.*

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**IV. WHY ARE WE A BAPTIST CHURCH?**

**Review** all of section IV. WHY ARE WE A BAPTIST CHURCH?



We stand directly in the middle of a historic tradition of Bible doctrine. This stance (distinctives) has distinguished true churches from false ones.

We have arranged these distinctives as an acrostic to aid us in remembering them. These are what make a historic Baptist different from Protestants and Catholics.

**B** Bible is our only rule of faith and practice

**A** Autonomy of the local church

**P** Priesthood of the believer

**T** Two ordinances of the church  
(Baptism and the Lord's Supper)

**I** Individual Soul Responsibility

**S** Separation  
(Personal, Ecclesiastical, and Political)

**T** Two officers of the church  
(Pastors and Deacons)

A fuller explanation of these distinctives are found in the supplements at the end of this lesson.

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## V. THE TRAIL OF BLOOD

Stop here and read through the little book entitled, *The Trail of Blood* by J.M. Carroll. This small primer gives a synopsis of church history.

Answer the following questions. (Page numbers may vary between editions of *The Trail of Blood*.)

**A.** *List three ways many of our Baptist ancestors were dealt with. (page 2)*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

A Catholic monk taunts a crucified Christian. His crime – he refused to have his infant baptized!



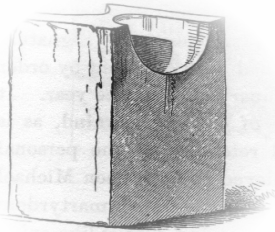
**B.** *What was possibly the first serious departure from New Testament church order? (page 12)*

\_\_\_\_\_

**C.** *What is the year of the first recorded baptism of a child? (page 13)* \_\_\_\_\_

**D.** *What happened in the year 251 A.D.? (page 14)*

\_\_\_\_\_



A Catholic "beheading block."

**E. *In what year did the Dark Ages begin? (page 19)***

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Several groups of Christians challenged the Roman church by using the New Testament as the basis of their beliefs. The pope ordered them to quit preaching and eventually developed the office of the Inquisition – a search



and destroy machine to eliminate all “heretics.” This secret church court tortured Christians and turned them over to the state for punishment in the form of loss of property or burning at the stake.

**F. *What one doctrine does the Greek Orthodox reject? (page 26)***

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**G. *What action was taken by the Council of Toulouse in 1229 AD? (page 37)***

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**H. *To what century can the name “Anabaptist” be traced? (page 39)***

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**I. *What book did John Bunyan write? (page 43)***

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**J. *Why was Mr. Painter whipped? (page 48)***

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**K.** *According to the chart, from which ‘Church’ did the Methodist denomination come?*

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**L.** *From the book and the chart, fill in the list of names given at various times to our Baptist forefathers.*

- C \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 11:26)
- M \_\_\_\_\_ (Phrygia)
- D \_\_\_\_\_ (Africa)
- N \_\_\_\_\_ (Italy)
- P \_\_\_\_\_ (Armenia)
- W \_\_\_\_\_ (Europe)
- A \_\_\_\_\_ (France)
- B \_\_\_\_\_ today)

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## **VI. BOOKS ON BAPTIST HISTORY**

There are many excellent books dealing with the subject of Baptist history. Here is a brief list:

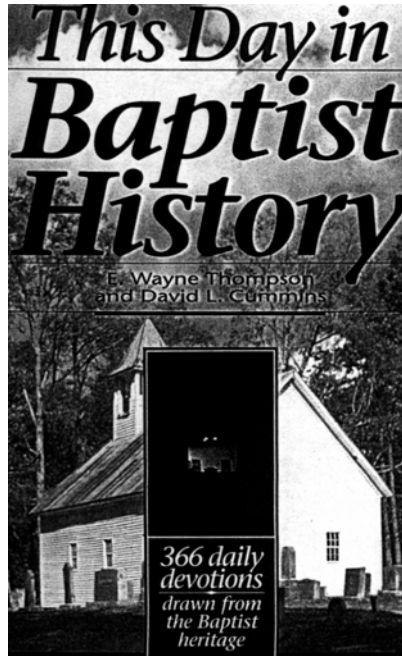
- **A History of the Baptists**, by John T. Christian, Bogard Press, Texarkana, Texas.
- **A Brief History of the Baptists**, by Edward Overbey, The Challenge Press, Little Rock, Arkansas
- **The Baptist Heritage**, by J. M. Holliday, Bogard Press, Texarkana, Texas
- **A History of the Baptists**, by Thomas Armitage, Baptist Heritage Press, Watertown, Wisconsin
- **The Origin of the Baptists**, by S. H. Ford, Bogard Press, Texarkana, Texas.
- **A People for His Name**, by M. A. Seiver, University Publishers, Chattanooga, Tennessee
- **Baptist Church Perpetuity or History**, by W. A. Jerrel, Calvary Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas

**Comment:**

These books can be ordered through our church bookstore.

- **Short History of the Baptists**, by Henry Vedder, Judson Press, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

*This Day in Baptist History* is a devotional book containing 366 stories from Baptist History. It will increase your appreciation for the sacrifice our forefathers made so we could have religious liberty. Perhaps you would want to use it during your family altar time.



#### **SPIRITUAL GROWTH LESSON**

- ❑ Read your L Lesson (Lord's Supper) and answer all the questions.
- ❑ Continue reading through the New Testament *at your own pace*.
- ❑ Take sermon notes using your *Spiritual Journal* and be prepared to share highlights next week.
- ❑ Give out copies of *Life's Greatest Discovery* or *The Amazing Story Behind Amazing Grace*.
- ❑ Where would you like to meet for next week's session?
- ❑ Be sure to bring your Bible, pen, L Lesson, and *Spiritual Journal*.

**Encourage** your Timothy and cast a vision for him regarding spiritual growth.

Pray for him and have him pray aloud.

**REMEMBER!!!**  
**Turn in the "Discipler Report Back" page by dropping it off at the Hospitality Booth in the church foyer.**

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## **Why I Am A Baptist**

by Noel Smith

Founding Editor of the *Baptist Bible Tribune*

Here are a few of the reasons why, in the midst of the dissolution of the basic institutions of civilization, being a Baptist increasingly gives me a feeling of spiritual and intellectual anchorage.

Baptists are a people. They have an historical identity. They have an historical image. Their continuity is the longest of any Christian group on earth. Their doctrines, principles, and practices are rooted in the apostolic age.

I am not a Pharisaical sectarian. But I don't confuse Baptists with the Reformation, with the Reformers. The Reformers wanted to reform the Roman Catholic Church; the Baptists were against the church. Because it was not a New Testament church, Protestantism originated in the Reformation. Protestantism is protest-ism. That's negative. Negativism has within it the seed of its own disintegration.

The Baptists were not reformers. They were not protestors. They were positive.

Freedom of conscience is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

The separation of church and state is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

Religious liberty is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

Believer's baptism is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

Baptism of the believer by immersion in water, symbolizing the believer's death, burial, and resurrection with Christ, is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

The local, visible, autonomous assembly, with Christ as its only head and the Bible as its sole rule of faith and practice, is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine.

Worldwide missions is not a Reformation doctrine; it is a Baptist doctrine. The Reformers had no missionary vision and no missionary spirit. For almost two hundred years after the Reformers, the Reformation churches felt no burden to implement the Great Commission.

What kind of a world would the Western world have been had Protestantism become its master?

The general attitude today is that truth is determined by the passing of time; that there are no eternal, abiding truths. “You can’t turn the clock back. Time invalidates all truths. Time invalidates one set of truths and fastens another set upon us.”

Baptist history repudiates this philosophy of fatalism. Baptists today are believing, teaching, preaching, and practicing the truths that were believed, taught, preached, and practiced two thousand years ago.

It gives me a feeling of stability to reflect that I, as a Baptist, am in the stream of this long continuity of faith and practice.

The Baptist people are a great continuity. They are a great essence. They are a great dignity.

The world never needed them more than it needed them today.

# Distinctive #1:

## **B**IBLICAL AUTHORITY:

The Bible is the only rule of faith and practice.

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### **I. HOW DO BAPTISTS DIFFER FROM OTHER CHURCHES REGARDING BIBLICAL AUTHORITY?**

- A.** *A mutual and common adherence to the whole Bible and its authority is the cohesive force among Baptists.*
- B.** *Other churches' policies:*
1. LUTHERANS turn to Martin Luther as their leader. Their clergy must sign the Augsburg Confession to be ordained.
  2. METHODISTS follow their founder, John Wesley. They must agree to the Methodist Discipline.
  3. PRESBYTERIANS follow John Calvin and subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith.
  4. THE REFORMED CHURCH follows Huldreich Zwingli and its confession of faith.
  5. EPISCOPALIANS' official doctrine is the Thirty-Nine Articles.

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### **II. HOW DO THE CHURCHES APPROACH THE BIBLE?**

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- A. Rationalistic Approach – they would not disregard the Bible altogether but would deny certain parts of it and reject the supernaturalism of it.*
- B. Mystical Approach – “personal experience” serves in interpreting the Bible.*
- C. Ecclesiastical Approach – the church is the final authority, and interpretation of the Bible is in the hands of the church.*
- D. Baptist Approach – The soul of man bows to the authority of the Bible, making reason, the church, and personal experience all subordinate to it.*

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### **III. APPROACHES TO INTERPRETATION**

Historically, there have been two basic approaches to the interpretation of Scriptures.

- A. The Allegorical Method of Interpretation*  
“Spiritualizers believe that since the Bible is spiritual in nature, the interpreter should penetrate behind the speech to the living Spirit. They believe that the written words of Scripture simply cannot contain all that is in the Spirit’s mind, and that to interpret the words literally is to miss the true meanings and the mystical, hidden senses.
- B. The Literal Method of Interpretation*  
“When we interpret the Bible literally, we interpret its words and sentences in their natural, normal, and usual sense. This is the normal way in which we think, talk, and write, and this is the way God’s Word is to be understood.” Literal interpretation does not rule out the use of figures of speech, such as, symbols, metaphors, similes, and so on.

#### **IV. APPROACHES TO REVELATION**

- A. *Baptistic Approach – the Bible is the written revelation of God and is complete.***
- B. *Catholic Approach – the Bible is part of the revelation of God and is incomplete.***

Quotes from The Question and Answer Catholic Catechism, by John A. Hardon. Question 59. – Where do we find the truths revealed by God? Answer – We find the truths revealed by God in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

Question 60. – How does Sacred Scripture compare with Sacred Tradition? Answer – Both Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition are the inspired Word of God, and both are forms of divine revelation. Sacred Scripture is divinely inspired writing; whereas, Sacred Tradition is the unwritten word of inspired persons.

Question 90. – Who is authorized to interpret Scripture and Tradition? Answer - The Church's hierarchy, that is, the bishops under the pope, or the pope alone, is divinely authorized to decisively interpret Scripture and Tradition.

# Distinctive #2

## **A**UTONOMY OF EACH LOCAL CHURCH:

Each local church is sovereign and cannot be controlled by any board, hierarchical system, or other church. Autonomy means: independent, self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating.

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### **I. DEFINITION OF A NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH.**

#### **A. *Biblical definition***

A scriptural independent New Testament church is an organized band of baptized believers practicing the New Testament ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper and actively engaged in carrying out the great commission.

#### **B. *Modern usage***

The word "church" is used as follows:

1. A local congregation of Baptist believers carrying out the great commission and practicing the ordinances.
2. A denominational group of congregations.
3. A universal body (the invisible church) of professed Christians.
4. A building used for specific religious worship.

NOTE: Uses 2, 3, and 4 have no Biblical authority.

## **II. THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE LOCAL NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH**

The New Testament church was independent with regards to:

- A. Self-judgment of its own membership (1 Corinthians 5:13; Matthew 18:15-17).*
- B. Self-election of its own officers (Acts 6:5).*
- C. Self-determination of its relations with other local churches (Acts 15:1-30).*
- D. Self-judgment of its own internal affairs (1 Corinthians 11:17-24).*
- E. Self-ownership of its own possessions (Acts 5:1f).*

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## **III. THE FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENCE**

The autonomy of the local church is built on two New Testament principles:

*A. The competence of the individual to know God's will*

We must accept the fact that God may direct His children individually.

1. The Bible is the authority for each person (2 Timothy 3:15-17).
2. A responsibility to obey implies a knowledge of His will in life (Acts 5:29).
3. The dedicated Christian will know God's will (Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 5:17-18).
4. The Holy Spirit is the teacher of each (John 14:26).

5. All believers are equal before God (Gal. 3:28).

***B. The responsibility of the church to carry out God's will is based on the foundation that its members know God's will.***

1. Christ instructed the church to act as a whole (Matthew 18:15-17).
2. The early church acted as a body (Acts 13:1-3; 15:23-26).
3. The responsibilities of the church and the state are separate (Matthew 22:17-21).

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#### **IV. THE AUTONOMOUS PRINCIPLE IN PRACTICE**

***A. The local church is neither subject to nor part of any other organization within its own constituency.***

1. It is composed of individuals not organizations (Acts 2:41-42).
2. Organizations within the church exist for fellowship and do not control the local church.

***B. The local church is not subject to any ecclesiastical powers without its own constituency.***

1. It has no denomination, convention, or other hierarchical body in authority over it.
2. The final governing authority in the autonomous Baptist church is the church itself directed by its Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

***C. The local church is not subject to the state nor the state to the church (Matthew 22:17-21).***

### **Forms of church governments:**

- **Papal** – a hierarchical system of totalitarian authority.
- **Episcopalian** – this word means bishop; the authority of church governments rests with the bishops. This board of men rule the churches under them.
- **Presbyterian** – this word means elder. Elders are chosen to rule the church denomination as well as the churches.
- **Congregational** – the final authority remains with the people. Certain responsibilities are delegated to individuals, but it is the members themselves who own the property, call their pastors, and control the church. They answer to no outside board and recognize only Jesus Christ as their Head. Baptists have always believed the Scriptures teach this form of government.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Baptist churches are not part of a larger body. They may fellowship with one another to accomplish missionary work that one could not accomplish alone, but each church remains a separate entity. Their efforts together may place a moral obligation on each other but neither a legal nor organizational obligation. They remain independent.

### **TWO LESSONS:**

- The church of the New Testament was a church that owned, controlled, and perpetuated itself.
- There is no New Testament instance of a local body of believers being more loyal to some outside and external association, institution, or convention of Churches than they were to their own local church.

# Distinctive #3

## **P**RIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS:

Every “born-again” believer may pray directly to God through Jesus Christ, the High Priest, without a human intercessor.

The Old Testament priests were the only ones who dared enter the presence of God. They were ceremonially cleansed and solely acceptable to stand before the Holy God. Today, believers *are* “washed . . . from . . . sins in His own blood” (Rev. 1:5-6). We are cleansed and able to approach God through our Great High Priest, Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5).

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### I. THE MEANING OF PRAYER

- A. *Prayer is communion with God.*
- B. *Prayer is worship by which believers fellowship with and petition God.*
- C. *Prayer can be both public (Acts 4:24-31) and private (Matthew 6:6).*

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### II. THE BASIS OF PRAYER

- A. *Jesus Christ is the only mediator between man and God the Father (1 Timothy 2:5).*
  - 1. This is the significance of the veil of the Temple rent in twain at the crucifixion of Christ (Matthew 27:51).

2. Since then, no human saint or “priest” is needed to assist you in approaching the Father.

***B. Jesus Christ is not only the believer’s Savior and Lord, but also his High Priest.***

1. The believer’s privilege of immediate access to God (Hebrews 4:14-16).
2. Every believer is a priest (1 Peter 2:5,9; Rev. 1:5-6).

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### **III. THE MINISTRY OF PRAYER**

***A. For personal peace (Philippians 4:6-7)***

***B. For Christian service (Ephesians 6:18-20; 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2)***

“Prayer is the nerve that moves the muscle of omnipotence.”

***C. For God’s glory (2 Corinthians 4:15; Heb. 13:15)***

***D. A simple acrostic to remember the components of prayer is ACTS.***

**A** doration -- praise and worship of the soul to God (Ps. 95:6)

**C** onfession -- repentance from every known sin (Ps. 32:5)

**T** hanksgiving -- (Philippians 4:6)

**S** upplication -- intercession, requests, petitions, desires (1 Timothy 2:1)

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### **IV. SOME HINDRANCES TO PRAYER**

***A. Sin (Psalm 66:18)***



- B.     *Unbelief (James 1:6-7)***
- C.     *An unforgiving spirit (Mark 11:25)***
- D.     *Asking amiss (James 4:3)***
- E.     *Spousal conflict (1 Peter 3:7)***

**CONCLUSION:** What are our responsibilities as New Testament priests?

- To offer up prayer and praise to God (1 Peter 2:5)
- To declare the praises of God before others (1 Peter 2:9)  
The word “praises” could be translated “eminent qualities,” “excellencies,” or “virtues.” As believer-priests, we should live so that our heavenly Father’s qualities are evident in our lives. We are to serve as witnesses of the glory and grace of God, who called us “out of darkness into His wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9). This is witnessing.

# Distinctive #4

## **T**WO ORDINANCES OF THE LOCAL CHURCH:

There are two ordinances of the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

What is an ordinance? “An outward rite appointed by Christ to be administered in the church as a visible sign of the saving truth of the Christian faith.”

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### **I. BAPTISM**

#### **A. *The Meaning of Baptism***

New believers identify with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection through baptism (Romans 6:3-5). It is an outward symbol of an inward reality. That reality is conversion. The believer identifies with the Lord, showing he has died with Christ, been buried with Christ, and has been raised to walk a new life. Saving faith always precedes baptism (Acts 8:12, 35-39; 9:17-18; 10:44-45; 16:30-34).

#### **B. *The Mode of Baptism***

Does it matter how a believer is baptized? Baptists believe the answer is “yes.” Baptism by immersion is the only correct way. Why?

1. The word “baptize” means immerse.  
Transliterated word.
2. Only immersion correctly pictures that which baptism symbolizes - death, burial, and resurrection. Sprinkling and pouring cannot symbolize this.

3. The context of Scripture relating to baptism demands immersion. Large amounts of water are mentioned. (Matthew 3:16; John 3:23; Acts 8:39).
4. History records the practice of immersion was used by the early church until about AD 250.

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## **II. THE LORD’S SUPPER**

“Holy Communion is one of the sacraments instituted by Christ Himself.” The dictionary states “sacrament” symbolizes or confers grace. Baptists do not believe baptism and the Lord’s Supper confer grace, they are not sacraments, but ordinances.

### ***A. Various views of the Lord’s Supper***

1. The Lutherans believe in “consubstantiation” in which they claim the “real presence” of the Lord in a special way.
2. The Roman Catholic view is called “transubstantiation” and is a claim by the Roman Catholics that their priests “transform” the bread and cup into the literal body and blood of Christ. This was set forth in the Council of Trent.
3. The Baptist position concerning the Lord’s Supper is that it is a memorial table, picturing the body and blood of Christ and serving only as a reminder of His sacrifice.
  - a. The ordinances were instituted by Christ on the eve of His death (Matthew 26:26-30).
  - b. Purpose – memorial service (1 Corinthians 11:25-26).
  - c. Two-fold aspect:

- (1) Worship (1 Corinthians 11:23-27).
- (2) Examination (1 Corinthians 11:28-32).

**B. *Who should participate in the Lord's Supper?***

Great confusion exists here; let us allow the Bible to speak for itself. The pattern of Acts 2:41-42 is as follows: The early Christians: believed, were baptized, belonged to the church, and then broke bread. Acts 18:8 reveals how the Corinthians believed the gospel and were baptized. The Corinthian church was a baptized body of believers to whom Paul wrote “. . . keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you” (1 Corinthians 11:2). The Lord's Supper was given to a local church and not to individuals. It is not to be administered to individuals (e.g., among Christian businessmen organizations, at camps, in theological schools, and so on).

**CONCLUSION:**

The ordinances were given by Christ (commanded by Christ, given to Christians at large, and were understood and obeyed by the apostolic churches). They are not sacraments. They neither give salvation, help salvation, nor keep salvation. We observe the ordinances due to commandment (Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:24).

# Distinctive #5

## **I**NDIVIDUAL SOUL LIBERTY:

Each individual has the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. He can interpret the Scripture and worship God as he believes the Bible teaches.

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### **I. THE INDIVIDUALITY OF ALL PEOPLE**

#### **A. *People were created as individuals.***

1. There are no two alike.
2. We are not created as robots, but with self-consciousness and self-determination.
3. Each is created with an intellect, emotions, and will.
4. Freedom of choice was given in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:6-7).

#### **B. *People have individual wills.***

1. We can choose to accept Christ as Savior.
2. We can choose to serve Him or disobey.
3. We have a right to disagree with others (Romans 14:5).

#### **C. *God directly instructs individuals.***

1. The Holy Spirit teaches people.  
*1 John 2:27* “*But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.*” The Holy Spirit does the anointing (v.20).

2. The Holy Spirit teaching you does not negate the need for human teachers (Ephesians 4:11-14).

**D. *God deals with people as individuals.***

1. God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34).
2. God looks on all as sinners and receives anyone who turns to Him regardless of race, sex, color, social standing, intelligence, etc.
3. You are individually responsible before God for your salvation (John 1:11-13).
  - a. “*Not of blood*” that is, not by inheritance
  - b. “*Nor of the will of the flesh,*” that is not by individual effort
  - c. “*Nor of the will of man,*” that is, not by institutional decree
  - d. “*But as many as received Him . . .*”
4. Each person has “individual soul liberty” to choose his own church, determine his own fate, and decide what the Bible teaches (or deny the Bible altogether).

**E. *God judges people as individuals.***

With self-determination comes responsibility for what we determine. God will judge.

1. Great White Throne  
*Revelation 20:13 “ . . . and they were judged every man according to their works.”*
2. Bema  
*2 Corinthians 5:10 “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body . . .”*  
*Romans 14:12 “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”*

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## **II. AN APPLICATION OF THIS DISTINCTIVE**

This belief leads Baptists to the following:

- A. *Baptists reject the doctrine of infant baptism.***  
Individuals must decide for themselves. It cannot be forced upon them.
- B. *Baptists do not practice infant church membership.***  
Members must be saved, scripturally baptized, and request church membership.
- C. *Baptists believe in religious liberty.***  
Each individual has the legal right to worship as he may see fit, and no nation has a right to establish a “state church” or make or enforce a law compelling any one to support any ecclesiastical institution.

### **CONCLUSION:**

We believe that neither civil nor ecclesiastical councils can enter the realm of the soul or dictate in matters of conscience. We cannot force our views upon another.  
Witness – YES! Coerce – NEVER!

# Distinctive #6

## **S**EPARATION:

We believe in separation in three realms: political separation, ecclesiastical separation, and personal separation.

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### **I. POLITICAL SEPARATION: SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE**

Every believer should respect, sustain, and obey civil authority, that is, as long as it does not violate his conscience or Scriptural convictions.

#### **A. *God established civil government.***

1. God's three institutions are the home (Genesis 2:20-25), the church (Matthew 16:18), and civil government (Genesis 9).
2. Man corrupted himself in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve had children (Genesis 4-5). With no social laws, every man followed his own conscience. Wickedness prevailed. God destroyed man with a flood (Genesis 7). God established a covenant with Noah that included civil government; its basis was the ultimate human retribution of capital punishment (Genesis 9:5-6). This Scriptural law has never been rescinded.

#### **B. *The Christian's duty to government***

1. Pray for it (1 Timothy 2:1-2).
2. Submit to it (Titus 3:1).
3. Support it (Romans 13:1-7).
4. Honor it (1 Peter 2:17).



**C. *The church's relationship to government***

There are four positions held in the religious world.

1. The church is ABOVE the state, a theory held by the Romanists who hold that their ecclesiastical head is the vicar of Christ on earth.
2. The church is ALONGSIDE the state, a theory held by state churches of various countries.
3. The church is UNDER the state, a theory held by totalitarian governments.
4. The church is SEPARATE from the state, the position championed by Baptists everywhere and held by those governments that have written religious liberty into their fundamental laws.

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**II. ECCLESIASTICAL SEPARATION**

We believe that, as a church, we must separate from apostasy (2 Corinthians 6:14-17; Romans 16:17; 2 John 10-11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14).

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**III. PERSONAL SEPARATION**

We believe that a Christian is to be personally separated FROM the world UNTO Christ.

- A. *FROM the world (Romans 12:1-2).*
- B. *UNTO God (1 Thessalonians 1:9).*
- C. *How do you take the question out of questionable activities?*
  1. LOOK UP (Colossians 3:2)

- a. Does it violate a direct command from God?
  - b. Will God be glorified through my participation in it?
  - c. 1 Corinthians 10:31 “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”
2. LOOK IN (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
- a. What effect will it have on me?
  - b. On my body? Smoking, drinking, drugs, steroids, etc.
  - c. On my mind? What kind of thoughts will result from my participation in it? TV, music, books, magazines, etc. (Philippians 4:8)
  - d. How would I feel if Christ returned while I was involved in this activity?
  - e. Would I want everyone to know that I did it? (John 3:20)
  - f. Can I pray and thank God for it?
3. LOOK OUT (1 Corinthians 8:12)
- a. What effect will it have on the unsaved?
  - b. On the saved? It is a sin to cause a brother to stumble.

**CONCLUSION:**

The Christian has the privilege of living a holy life for Christ. This is also our duty. It is far from boring; and it is not restrictive. It is a joy to please our great God and Savior. Make sure the activities you are involved in and the habits you have are ones that will glorify God. A good motto for a Christian to have is: *1 Corinthians 10:31*  
“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

# Distinctive #7

## TWO OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH:

The offices of pastors and deacons are the only Bible-recognized offices in the local church. The congregation chooses both.

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### I. THE OFFICE OF PASTOR

#### A. *His Titles*

1. Pastor – one who feeds and nourishes
2. Bishop – one who administrates or oversees
3. Elder – one who leads, counsels

NOTE: All three titles refer to the same office. (1 Peter 5:1-4); Titus 1:5-7).

#### B. *His Qualifications (Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 3:1-7)*

1. Blameless, that is, above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2)
2. The husband of one wife, that is, fully devoted to one woman (1 Timothy 3:2)
3. Vigilant, that is, discreet (1 Timothy 3:2)
4. Sober, that is, self-controlled (1 Timothy 3:2)
5. Of good behavior, that is, orderly in conduct (1 Timothy 3:2)
6. Given to hospitality, that is, fond of guests (1 Timothy 3:2)
7. Apt to teach, that is, teaching ability (1 Timothy 3:2)
8. Not given to wine, that is, not a drinker (1 Timothy 3:3)

9. No striker, that is, he doesn't settle disputes by fighting, rather he reacts calmly (1 Timothy 3:3)
10. Not greedy of filthy lucre, that is, not greedy of dishonest gain (1 Timothy 3:3)
11. Patient (1 Timothy 3:3)
12. Not a brawler, that is, reluctant to fight (1 Timothy 3:3)
13. Not covetous, that is, free from the love of money (1 Timothy 3:3)
14. One who rules his house well, that is, manages his house excellently (1 Timothy 3:4)
15. Having obedient children (1 Timothy 3:4)
16. Not a novice, that is, not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6)
17. Having a good report among unbelievers, that is, a good reputation among those outside the church (1 Timothy 3:7)

**C. *His Responsibilities***

1. Preach (Acts 20:28; 2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Peter 5:1-5)
2. Teach (Ephesians 4:11)
3. Rule (1 Timothy 5:17; Heb. 13:17)
4. Work (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)
5. Pray (Acts 6:4; James 5:14-16)
6. Train (Ephesians 4:12)
7. Evangelize (2 Timothy 4:5)

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## **II. THE OFFICE OF DEACON**

**A. *His Qualifications (Acts 6:2-7); 1 Timothy 3:8-13***

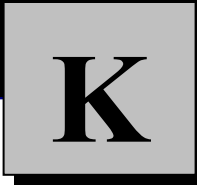
1. Of honest report (Acts 6:3)

2. Filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:3)
3. Filled with wisdom (Acts 6:3)
4. Grave character, that is, a man of dignity (1 Timothy 3:8)
5. Not double-tongued, that is, not have hypocritical speech but rather speech characterized by integrity, consistency, and honesty (1 Timothy 3:8)
6. Not given to much wine (1 Timothy 3:8)
7. Not greedy of filthy lucre, that is, dishonest gain (1 Timothy 3:8)
8. Possessing faith with a pure conscience (1 Timothy 3:9)
9. Tested and proved (1 Timothy 3:10)
10. Blameless, that is, beyond reproach (1 Timothy 3:10)
11. The husbands of one wife, that is, fully devoted to one woman (1 Timothy 3:12)
12. Ruling the children and homes well (1 Timothy 3:12)

**B. *His Responsibilities***

The word “deacon” means servant. The office is a serving office. A deacon is to assist the pastors in serving the church.

# Discipler Report Back



I met with \_\_\_\_\_ on  
\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ and reviewed the contents of this  
lesson. My comments regarding the discipleship time  
together are:

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*(make comments only if they are needed to help the Pastoral  
staff assist you in ministering to this person)*

Discipler's Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Please drop this off at the Hospitality Booth in the  
church foyer on the first service after conducting  
this session. This will help the Pastoral staff stay  
current with the status of our new converts and  
new members being discipled.*

*Thank You*

**This is a  
sample of  
the  
“Discipler  
Report  
Back” page  
that you  
removed  
from the  
back of your  
Timothy’s  
lesson.**

**Return that  
sheet to the  
Hospitality  
Booth in the  
church foyer.**