

Baptists:

WHO? WHAT? WHY?

WHERE? WHEN?

- Baptists number in the millions worldwide and frequently make news.
- Yet little is known about Baptists by the world in general and what is known is often misunderstood.
- Even some Baptists are not familiar with Baptist beliefs and practices, heritage and history.

For example, did you know...

...a Baptist pastor established the first form of government in America that provided complete religious freedom for all

...the first Baptist missionaries from America were not Baptists when they set sail for the mission field but became Baptists on the way to the mission field

did you know...

- ...the first Baptist pastor in England was imprisoned by King James I (of King James Bible fame) for insisting that all persons should have freedom to worship
- ...the first elected president of the Republic of Texas became an outstanding Texas Baptist layman

did you know...

- ▮ ...some of the earliest Baptists practiced baptism by pouring and not by immersion but soon determined that the Bible taught immersion is the correct way to baptize
- ▮ ...some early Baptists in America were publicly whipped for including singing in a worship service because such singing was viewed as unspiritual and unbiblical

did you know...

- ...a Baptist pastor in Virginia met with James Madison to encourage an amendment to the Constitution of the United States guaranteeing freedom of religion
- ...the best known evangelist in the world is a Baptist whose church membership is in Texas

did you know...

- ▮ ...that the first person baptized in the Gulf of Mexico as a Baptist when Texas was still an independent nation founded a major milk company
- ▮ ...that a former President of the United States of America and a Nobel Prize recipient is a Baptist layman Sunday School teacher

did you know...

- ▮ ...that a generous Baptist businessman was the first to develop an effective process for pasteurizing cheese
- ▮ ...that the author of the widely used devotional book *My Utmost for His Highest* was a Baptist from a devout Baptist family, his father and brother being Baptist pastors

- If someone were to ask you, “What is the one thing that distinguishes Baptists from other Christian denominations?”
- What would your answer be?
- Or if you were asked, “What difference does it make being a Baptist Christian?”
- what would you say?
- In the coming weeks, this series of studies will explore such questions.

Why Is There a Lack of Knowledge About Baptists?

- Why do many Baptists today lack understanding of what it means to be a Baptist?
- Several factors likely have contributed to this lack of knowledge:

- * BTS, Baptist Training Service, BTU, Training Union, and Church Training held on Sunday evenings in churches (the name differed in different areas of Baptist life, but the aim of each was to “make disciples”) emphasized Baptist doctrine, practice, and history, but they no longer exist.

- * A multitude of people have joined Baptist churches in recent years from other denominations, and others have come with little or no church background. In both cases, their knowledge of Baptist beliefs and practices is usually limited.

- * Some Baptist churches provide little or no help for members to understand what it means to be a Baptist Christian and a Baptist church.

- * Some persons believe that denominations are either a thing of the past or of little importance. (The fact is that the Baptist denomination is growing, not fading away,
- and denominational differences are important.

ANSWERS TO THE DID YOU KNOW SECTION OF

- ...a Baptist pastor established the first form of government in America that provided complete religious freedom for all
- ROGER WILLIAMS

did you know...

- ▮ ...the first elected president of the Republic of Texas became an outstanding Texas Baptist layman
- ▮ SAM HOUSTON
- ▮ ...some of the earliest Baptists practiced baptism by pouring and not by immersion but soon determined that the Bible taught immersion is the correct way to baptize
- ▮ EARLY GENERAL BAPTISTS

did you know...

▮ ...the first Baptist missionaries from America were not Baptists when they set sail for the mission field but became Baptists on the way to the mission field

▮ ADONIRAM AND ANN HASSELTINE JUDSON

▮

...the first Baptist pastor on English soil was imprisoned by King James I (of King James Bible fame) for insisting that all persons should have freedom to worship

▮ THOMAS HELWYS

did you know...

...some early Baptists in America were publicly whipped for including singing in a worship service because such singing was viewed as unspiritual and unbiblical.

BAPTISTS IN COLONIAL AMERICA

...the first Baptist missionary from the United States to another country was an African-American who had been a slave

GEORGE LEILE

did you know...

- ▮ ...a Baptist pastor from Texas preached a sermon from the steps of the United States Capitol in Washington D. C. on religious liberty
- ▮ GEORGE W. TRUETT
- ▮ ...A Baptist pastor in Virginia met with James Madison to encourage an amendment to the Constitution of the United States guaranteeing freedom of religion
- ▮ JOHN LELAND

did you know...

- ▮ ...the best known evangelist in the world is a Baptist whose church membership is in Texas
- ▮ BILLY GRAHAM
- ▮ ...that the first person baptized in the Gulf of Mexico as a Baptist when Texas was still an independent nation founded a major milk company
- ▮ GAIL BORDEN JR.

did you know...

- ▮ ...that a generous Baptist businessman was the first to develop an effective process for pasteurizing cheese.
- ▮ JAMES L. KRAFT
- ▮ ...that the author of the widely used devotional book *My Utmost for His Highest* was a Baptist from a devout Baptist family, his father and brother being Baptist pastors
- ▮ OSWALD CHAMBERS

did you know...

- ▮ ...that a former President of the United States of America and a Nobel Prize recipient is a Baptist layman Sunday School teacher

- ▮ JIMMY CARTER

What is a Baptist Church?

- Simply put, a Baptist Church is a local group of people who firmly believe and practice the following things as presented in the Bible:

Baptists Believe the Bible is Perfect.

- We accept every word of it completely – from cover to cover. God claims: “Every word of God is pure.” Proverbs 30:5.
- not books about the Bible, nor do we teach extra prayers, or teach our own church doctrines, but only the truths found clearly in the Bible.

Baptists Preach and Teach only the Bible

- “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God might be perfect.” 2 Timothy 3:16,17
- We base every belief and every aspect of Christianity only on the Bible – to the exclusion of all traditions, no matter how good they may be.

Baptists Believe the Gospel is the good news

- that Jesus Christ died on the cross for all sins of all time, was buried, and then rose again just as He promised three days later for the salvation of His followers from hell!
- “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel... that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” 1Corinthians 15:1-4.

Baptists Believe all people are born sinful and separated from God,

- and must be born again from the heart by simple and obedient faith in the Gospel!
- “Jesus answered and said unto him, **Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**”
John 3:3. Jesus commands, “Ye must be born again” John 3:7!

Baptists Believe a person who is saved (born again) by God's grace is eternally secure in His care

- ▢ you cannot lose your salvation once you receive it. Jesus said in John 10:28,
- ▢ “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

Baptists Believe in a literal heaven, and a literal hell,

- and reject the idea of purgatory, nirvana or any other place that is contrary to the word of God. Jesus promised His followers a place in God's heaven,
- “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14:1-3.
- Jesus also will say to the damned, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Matthew 25:41

Baptists Believe if a person rejects Jesus Christ, and trusts instead in their religion, or their good efforts, that person will not gain heaven, but end up in hell.

□ “And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition... Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.”
Mark 7:9,13

□ “He that believeth on him (Jesus) is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already.” John 3:18