

WHAT DO BAPTIST BELIEVE?

A Study of the *Baptist Faith and Message*

THE CHURCH (9)

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

- 1. The Church was founded upon Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:13-19; 1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:19-22; Col. 1:18; Acts 2:1-21, 38-47).**
- 2. The Church is the body and bride of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-23; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-32; Rev. 19:7-8).**
- 3. The Church's purpose is to glorify God (Eph. 3:21; 4:13-16; 2 Tim. 2:2, 15; 3:16-17; Acts 2:47; 1 Jn. 1:3; Lk. 22:19; Acts 2:38-42; Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8).**
- 4. The Church is "an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers" (BFM Commentary, 88) (Acts 15:19-31; 20:28; 1 Cor. 5:4-7, 13; Titus 1:5; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).**
- 5. The Church has two scriptural officers (Pastors and Deacons) and two scriptural ordinances (Baptism and Lord Supper) (Phil. 1:1; Acts 6:3-6; 20:28; 1 Tim 3:1-13; 2 Tim. 4:2; Acts 2:38-42; 8:36-39; Rom. 6:1-11; 1 Cor. 11:23-32).**
- 6. The Church is equipped to engage in ministry (Gifts, great commission, and great commandment) (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Mk. 12:30-31; Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).**
- 7. The Church will spend eternity in heaven (John 14:1-6; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; 2 Cor. 5:1-8; Col. 1:5; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 21:1).**

Dr. David C. Hayes

West Monroe Baptist Church

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