

# WHY I AM A BAPTIST

ON BOARD: What was the greatest victory to come out of the American Revolution?  
Religious liberty

BAPTIST HISTORY: 1600 years of bitter persecution (some say 50 million Ana-Baptists [re-baptize] slaughtered from 426 A.D. through the Dark Ages), then Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians (state churches) and Baptists (in small groups) came to America. Baptists still persecuted by arrest, jail, fines, whipping, exile, property confiscated. Why? Because they refused to baptize infants. Roger Williams was banished from the Mass. Bay Colony. Together with John Clarke, they decided to form their own colony, Rhode Island, w/o permission or authority of England. 1638. Legal charter in 1663 (refused by Cromwell, but okayed by Charles II). Share story of Clarke, Crandall and Obediah Holmes in 1652 traveling to MBC to preach at a blind pastor's house. Holmes refused to pay the 20 pound fine and was whipped so badly he couldn't lie down for two weeks. North and South persecution.

One huge underlying reason for it was that the Church of England couldn't exist without government support. That idea came to America and slowly and finally was replaced with Religious Freedom when Congress declared it in 1791.

Without the unceasing work of Baptists influencing the founders of the Constitution, particularly James Madison, we would have had one to four State Churches (Patrick Henry's bill - each denomination except the Baptists wanted tax dollars to support it.)

NOTE: THIS ACROSTIC IS NEITHER COMPLETE, NOR IS IT AN ORDERED TREATMENT OF DOCTRINE, NOR IS IT EXCLUSIVE TO BAPTISTS.

## B Biblical Authority

- Scripture is the only and supreme authority for faith and practice
- Adding, detracting, and distorting are 'doctrines of men' and cursed
- 1689 Confession page 7:1 and page 9:6a and page 10:9, 10
- II Tim. 3:16, 17; Matt. 15:9
- John 17:17; Heb. 4:12; II Peter 1:20, 21

## A Autonomy of the Local Church

- I Cor. 1:2; Titus 1:5; Rev. 2, 3 - hierarchy not mentioned - councils, synods, dioceses, classis, general assemblies - Christ alone is Head
- Col. 1:18; Acts 13-14; 20:19-30; Eph. 1:22, 23
- Acts 6 -choosing of Deacons (not the O.T. casting of lots, but congregation)
- What about Acts 15? FF Bruce - "no strong verbs of commanding."
- But there are shared orthodoxy, resources, accountability, suffering - no church is an island.

## P Priesthood of the Believer

- A Baptist concept long before Luther's break with the RC Church
- I Peter 2:5-10; Heb. 4:14-16; I Tim. 2:5, 9
- We can go directly to God in prayer, confession, praise and worship

## T Two Ordinances

- Baptism - Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38-41; Acts 8:36-38; Rom 6:1-6
- Lord's Supper - I Cor. 11:23-26;

## I Individual Soul Liberty - Freedom of Conscience

- Chicago Declaration on Religious Freedom (2000) "the freedom to worship God without government coercion and to exercise liberty of religious conscience is fundamental to any serious notion of human rights and the dignity of humankind."
- 1689 Confession - Page 39:2
- Romans 10:9-17; - personal repentance and faith - baptized infants have no choice and make no choice
- II Cor. 4:2

## S Saved and Baptized Church Membership - Pastor friend saying this doctrine is heretical

- 1689 Confession - Page 46:6
- Paedobaptism and infant church membership extra-biblical - every N.T. command and instance of baptism requires belief; every mention of household baptism relate to faith except Lydia;
- Acts 2:37-41
- Gal. 3:27; Romans 2:29; 6:3, 4; Col. 2:11, 12; I Peter 3:21 - O.T. circumcision has been replaced with N.T. heart circumcision, not baptism

## T Two Offices in the Church

- RC Church hierarchy unbiblical
- Phil 1:1; Acts 6:1-7; I Tim 3:1, 13; Titus 1:5; I Peter 5:1-4
- Two Baptist views of church gov't: Elder rule vs. Congregational rule  
QLBC?

## S Separation of Church and State

- II Cor 6:14 - Absolutely no evidence of a secular or ecclesiastical rule - The "divine right of kings" is heresy, in spite of using King Saul as an example (David would not kill "the Lord's anointed")
- American Baptist influence on the Bill of Rights - Read about John Leland and James Madison's agreement.

## OTHER DISTINCTIVES?