

What is a Historic Baptist?

*Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. **Jude 3***

The Historic Baptist position may be defined as a distinct doctrinal position held by millions of Baptists that can be traced back to Jesus Christ's day. These millions may not have use the term "Baptist," nevertheless the doctrine which they practiced has not changed. The Historic Baptist position is that of holding "*the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*" (Jude 3). Since this faith was "*once delivered*" then there is no need to redeliver it. Therefore that "once delivered faith" has not changed. It has remained the same since Jesus proclaimed it 2000 years ago and is still observed today by (historic) Baptists.

We use the term "historic" because it succinctly and directly describes New Testament Baptists. Webster's 1828 dictionary defines the word "history" as: "An account of facts, particularly of facts respecting nations or states; a narration of events in the order in which they happened, with their causes and effects" (emphasis added). Facts do not change. People change, and religions change, but facts do not. Therefore history cannot change. Once something has transpired, the facts of that event cannot be altered.

Jesus said that He would build a church, and build it He did during his three year earthly ministry. Throughout this ministry He taught the apostles, (the first members of the church, 1 Corinthians 12:28) about its polity. He gave three years of His earthly life to the church, *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, Ephesians 5:25*. His teachings (traditions) are recorded history. That record is known as the Holy Bible. Jesus also promised that this institution of the local church which He began would continue down through the ages (Matthew 16:18). Hence, a historic Baptist church is one that practices the principles and precepts that Jesus taught to the first century church.

Today's historic Baptist churches still preach and practice these traditions as taught by Jesus and the apostles.

2 Thessalonians 2:15 *Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.*

2 Thessalonians 3:6 *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.*

Romans 16:17 *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*

Here are a few of the major doctrines which New Testament Baptist churches have held to these past 2000 years.

1. The Bible is the only rule of faith and practice (II Timothy 3:16). There are many church denominations that would claim this same truth, but when it comes to their practice they are not aligned with the New Testament.
2. Salvation is obtained by faith and grace alone in the Lord Jesus Christ. This decision is made only once and lasts for eternity (John 1:12; 3:16; 10:28; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-9).
3. Church membership in a New Testament church is made up of people who have been regenerated and then immersed, in that specific order (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41,47).

Historic Baptists have never received anyone with alien baptism, (that is, someone who had baptism from a church that was not of like faith and practice).

4. The autonomy (independence) of the local church (Matthew 18:17; I Corinthians 5:4-5,13).
5. The priesthood of the believer, (that is, the right of the individual to interpret Scripture for himself) and to have direct access to God (I Peter 2:9).
6. The right of all people to soul liberty or religious liberty. Historic Baptists have always taught that every person should have freedom to worship according to the dictates of their heart.
7. The church has only two ordinances, (1) believer's baptism and (2) the Lord's Supper (observed by members only). They are to be observed only in that order (Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 11:23-30).
8. The Separation of Church and State. This is not to be construed as the exclusion of Christian involvement in society, but rather to serve as a moral influence (Matthew 22:21).
9. Ecclesiastical separation. That is, separation from other institutions which do not conform to the New Testament pattern for a church.

Many churches carry the name Baptist, but if they do not practice these major doctrines then they are not true New Testament churches. This tract was written to help describe what "type" of Baptist we are. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Martin.

New Testament Baptist Church
2119 3rd Ave. SE
Rochester, Minnesota 55904

Pastor Curtis Martin
Phone: 507-292-0745
Website: www.ntbt.org