

Discovery 101: Member Orientation

Avalon Baptist Church

Session 2: Why are we Baptist?

Point 1: There are Several Systems in a Body; We are Distinct because...

There are several _____ in a _____ (skeletal, digestive, renal, cardiovascular). Similarly, God has allowed _____ in the _____ of His Church. There are false denominations who are not in the body, but those who agree on Christ and his Kingdom definition are part of the true body, and we are but a part.

20Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. 21The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." 22In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. 23And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, 24while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. 25This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. 26If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.

- 1 Corinthians 12:20-26

To be a Baptist you will need to understand that there are some _____ that determine the function and form of our _____ in God's Kingdom Body.

Biblical Authority – *Sola Scriptura*:

- _____ is our sole authority for faith and practice. As final authority on all matters of faith, practice, and polity, the Bible supersedes the tradition of man, false science, religious creeds, or popular opinion.
- The Bible is _____ and _____ by God; it bears His absolute authority and is the _____ and _____ guide to faith and life.

16All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.

- 2 Timothy 3:16

Psalm 12:6-7; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:20-21

Autonomy of the Local Church:

- Each local outpost of the Kingdom is _____ and is accountable to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Each local outpost is supported primarily by _____, and pastors are appointed by the _____.
- No external office can dictate an outpost's personal beliefs.
- No one church may exert authority over another.

3But the person who loves God is the one whom God recognizes.

- Corinthians 8:3

Colossians 1:18; Matthew 18:15-20; Acts 15:22-21; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5, 19, 23

Priesthood of the Believer:

- All born-again believers have the privilege of _____ to God.
- Jesus Christ is the _____ between God and man. We need no other human agent or spiritual mediator.
- Individual believers can _____ and _____ His Word.

5But one of the twenty-four elders said to me, "Stop weeping! Look, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the heir to David's throne, has won the victory. He is worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals."

- Revelation 5:10

Two Ordinances

- The local church is mandated by God to practice
 - _____ by immersion
 - A symbol of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection
 - Public Display of obedience to new life

19Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

- Matthew 28:19

- _____, or Communion
 - A symbol of Christ's broken body and shed blood

- A time for worship and reflection on Jesus' sacrifice

29For if you eat the bread or drink the cup without honoring the body of Christ, you are eating and drinking God's judgment upon yourself.

- 1 Corinthians 11:29

Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32

Individual Soul Liberty

- Every human soul has God-given _____ and _____ what to believe.
- No one should be _____ to believe against his/her will.
- Every person is _____ to God and will be judged according to their chosen beliefs and practices.

36And anyone who believes in God's Son has eternal life. Anyone who doesn't obey the Son will never experience eternal life but remains under God's angry judgment."

- John 3:36

John 3:36; Romans 14:4-12; 2 Corinthians 4:2; Titus 1:9

Saved, Baptized Church Membership

- Local church membership requires
 - _____ of personal faith in Christ
 - _____ of faith through believer's baptism.
- Fellowship and guidance of the local church are essential for Christian Life.

12The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. 18But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it.

- 1 Corinthians 12:12, 18

Acts 2:41-47; 1 Corinthians 12:12,18; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Hebrews 10:23-25

Two Offices

- Scripture mandates two offices for the local church.
 - The _____
 - Leads, feeds, guides, and guards the church at the direction of Christ.

- Ministers to the _____ of God as direction for the church.
 - The _____
 - Help the Pastor/Elders care for the _____ to allow Pastors to prioritize counsel and Scriptural service
- At Avalon we have what we call Elders
 - We use this term to refer to specifically called or ordained lay-leaders

1But as the believers rapidly multiplied, there were rumblings of discontent. The Greek-speaking believers complained about the Hebrew-speaking believers, saying that their widows were being discriminated against in the daily distribution of food. 2So the Twelve called a meeting of all the believers. They said, "We apostles should spend our time teaching the word of God, not running a food program. 3And so, brothers, select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will give them this responsibility. 4Then we apostles can spend our time in prayer and teaching the word." 5Everyone liked this idea, and they chose the following: Stephen (a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit), Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas of Antioch (an earlier convert to the Jewish faith). 6These seven were presented to the apostles, who prayed for them as they laid their hands on them. 7So God's message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too.

- Acts 6:1-7

1 Timothy 3:1-13; Acts 6:1-7; Philippians 1:1

Separation Of Powers of Church and State

- God establishes both _____ and _____ leadership with distinct purposes. Neither should control the other.
- Believers in a free (or unfree) society should not compromise faith with local or national governments for influence or favor
 - Believers *should* involve themselves in local/national _____ for the purpose of displaying _____ citizenship/leadership
- A government should not interfere with the local church's preaching, activities, and ministry.

17Now tell us what you think about this: Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" 18But Jesus knew their evil motives. "You hypocrites!" he said. "Why are you trying to trap me? 19Here, show me the coin used for the tax." When they handed him a Roman coin, 20he asked, "Whose picture and title are

stamped on it?" 21 "Caesar's," they replied. "Well, then," he said, "give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God."

- Matthew 22:17-21

Matthew 5:13-16; 22:15-22; 28:19-20; Romans 13:1-7; Philippians 2:13.