

ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church” (1 Corinthians 14:34, 35).

We differ doctrinally. For example, we believe **the temporary sign gift of speaking in tongues** has fulfilled its Biblical purpose and **has ceased** to function (Mark 16:17-20; 1 Corinthians 14:22; Hebrews 2:4). We believe in the **pre-tribulational rapture** taught in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. We believe in **separating from false teachers** and false churches such as Roman Catholicism (Romans 16:17). We believe that **God created the earth in six literal twenty-four hour time periods** (see Genesis 1). Not only do many Baptist Union pastors and churches no longer believe these doctrines; neither does the Baptist Union training school (Morling College).

We differ in that **we only promote conservative music** that glorifies the Lord and edifies (builds up) God’s people. If we

perform music that is designed to appeal to our flesh, it will produce fleshly results. But music that is designed to stir our souls produces spiritual fruit that glorifies the Lord. For this reason, you will still hear the meaningful, time-honoured hymns sung at an Independent Baptist church.

A Concluding Invitation

We do not believe that we are the only ones going to heaven. And we certainly do not claim to be flawless. However, we do believe that Independent Baptists most closely follow the pattern God gave us in the New Testament. Not only do we love the Lord. We love the Bible He gave us.

Is this the kind of church you’ve been looking for? Have you longed for a church that stands for these things, a place where you will be fed spiritually by the preaching of God’s Word?

If you are not yet an active member of an Independent Baptist church, we invite you to find one in your community and join it.

So tell me, who are the **Independent Baptists?**

Open your pantry, and you'll find every tin has a label. If you were to rip them all off, the next time you went to prepare a meal would probably be a guessing game.



Not only do we need labels to identify what is on our pantry shelves, but we also need them to distinguish what churches believe. This is why we are glad to retain the word "Baptist" in our church name.

Every denomination has its distinctives, both in their doctrine and practice. For example, Roman Catholics are known worldwide for their teachings on purgatory, keeping seven sacraments to go to heaven, the authority of their pope, and praying to Mary and other "saints." Anglicans, Presbyterians, the Uniting Church, Pentecostal churches — all churches have distinctive marks, beliefs and practices that set them apart. We Baptists are also unique.

What Distinguishes Independent Baptists?

Here are 7 values that make us distinct:

Bible-Centred

Independent Baptists closely follow the pattern that is given to us in the New Testament. Historically, what has distinguished us is that we have always been Bible-believers, even if it meant persecution or death. Our faith and practice (that is, what we believe and what we do) is based on the Word of God alone. We do not look to the writings of a pope, to denominational headquarters, to the Watchtower Society, or to *The Book of*

Mormon or any other person, creed, or organisation. The Bible is enough for us.

"I am a Baptist because I believe that the basic and original Baptist position is that of the New Testament Church. I believe that anybody who gets hold of a New Testament, reads it, and obeys it is very likely to come out of that experience a Baptist."
— Vance Havner

Mr. Havner recalled a Baptist preacher who had been converted from another faith. When asked what caused it he said "It was just plain carelessness. Somebody left a New Testament open and I read it."

According to 2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21 and Proverbs 30:5, the Bible is the very Word of God without error. Not one verse should be ignored, deleted, or adapted to fit our viewpoint. For this reason, we encourage you to use the trustworthy King James Bible.

When you step into an Independent Baptist church, you will notice that the vast majority of the congregation carries a Bible. This is because we want to see for ourselves the Bible verses that the preacher refers to. The Bible praises the people of Berea because: *"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so"* (Acts 17:11).

An important outflow of our high regard for the Bible is that we take each passage of Scripture literally unless it clearly demands symbolism. We would be ashamed to set

ourselves up as judges regarding what part of the Bible we wish to take literally, and what we wish to consider a story. This means, unlike some denominations, that we believe in a literal, fiery hell where those who reject the salvation offered by Christ will dwell forever (Matthew 25:46). Another example of this is that we believe that God created the earth in six literal twenty-four hour time periods (Genesis 1; Exodus 20:11).

Salvation by Grace Through Faith

Because we shamefully sin against God, man's greatest need is to be forgiven and scrubbed clean. Until that happens, we live under God's wrath (John 3:36). Being good can't secure our forgiveness. Nor can keeping the alleged seven sacraments or any other religious work.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8, 9).

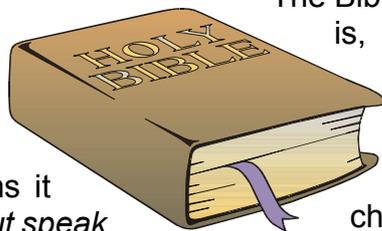
Only the blood of Jesus Christ, spilled as He died on a cross, was enough to pay the penalty for our sin (Hebrews 9:22, 28). Turning from sin and trusting Christ's sacrifice is all that is necessary to be washed clean, to remove God's wrath, and to guarantee heaven for us (1 John 5:13).

Have you personally received the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour (John 1:12)?

Sound in Doctrine

When you look for a church, keep in mind — the doctrine a church embraces is more important than the programs it offers. Paul wrote Titus, *"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine"* (Titus 2:1).

A "doctrine" is simply a teaching. The Bible is full of doctrine. The pastor is responsible to preach and teach what the



Bible says and help the church avoid false doctrine (anything contrary to the Bible).

Have you ever been confused about the Bible's teachings? *"God is not the author of confusion..."* (1 Corinthians 14:33).

Error results when men take Scriptures out of context or are careless with God's Holy Word. That's why it's essential that you *"study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"* (2 Timothy 2:15).

Striving for Purity

God expects His people to strive after pure living, pure thinking, pure speaking, and pure motives. We strive to obey God's commands in this. *"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness"* (1 Thessalonians 4:7).

Our goal is to *"keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight"* (1 John 3:22). That's why we don't relish the world's impure music, impure entertainment and impure living.

Purity is not optional. It's a command: *"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart"* (2 Timothy 2:22).

Baptism by Immersion

The Bible teaches believer's baptism, that is, only saved people are to be baptised. The Bible also calls for immersion, where a person is fully dipped in the water. This means that sprinkling or "christening" of a child is an unbiblical practice.

Self-Governing

We are non-denominational. We do not look to any person, synod or organisation to govern us. Christ is the Head of each church. He alone makes its rules. As a

congregation, we seek the Lord's will regarding decisions that need to be made.

We are self-governing. The New Testament church acted in self-judgment (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:13), self-election (Acts 6:14), as well as self-settlement (1 Corinthians 6). Independent Baptists follow these Biblical examples.

A Heart for Missions

We participate in worldwide evangelism by supporting church-planting missionaries in prayer and finances. We voluntarily cooperate with thousands of Independent Baptist churches all over the world to share the gospel and plant churches.

When Did Baptists Begin?

Baptists are not new. Churches that believed what we do were planted by the Lord Jesus and His apostles. Gradually they became known as Baptists.

In 1819 the King of Holland appointed Dr. Ypeij, Professor of Theology in the University of Groningen, and Rev. I. J. Dermout, Chaplain to the King, both learned members of the Dutch Reformed Church, to prepare a history of their church. In the volume which they prepared and published at Breda, 1823, they devote one chapter to the Baptists, in which they make the following statement:

We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and who have long in history received the honor of the origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community that has stood since the days of the Apostles, and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all the ages.

—*History of the Dutch Reformed Church*, Vol I, p. 148.

John Ridpath, a Methodist, had this to say of Baptists: "I should not readily admit that there was a Baptist church as far back as A.D. 100, although without doubt there were Baptists then as all Christians were then Baptists."

— *Jarrel's Church Perpetuity*, p. 59.

We are thankful for the heritage passed down to us by our Baptist forefathers. Many of them gave their lives during the Dark Ages because they refused to baptise their child or because they loved God's Word too much to compromise.

Why Independent Baptist?

All Baptist Churches were independent until 1905, when the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) was formed in London. It wasn't until 1926 that the Baptist Union of Australia was formed and became a member of the BWA. It should be understood that all Baptist churches were independent in Australia up until this time.

Do Independent Baptists Differ from the Baptist Union?

Yes, we do. Here are a few variations between us and the Union...

We differ in that **we do not ordain women to be pastors or deacons**. We thank God for the influence of a godly woman. Yet we are convinced that God chooses each of our roles, and He did not ordain the public preaching of His Word to be the place of women.

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (1 Timothy 2:11, 12).

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them