

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A BAPTIST? We hold to Biblical Authority.

1. INSPIRATION: The Bible comes from God. origin, process, and nature of God's Word

Definition of inspiration: "God exhaled" or "God-breathed." This identifies origin, not "I was inspired to write..."

2 Tim 3:14-17 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned [them,] and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 1:16-21 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke [as they were] moved by the Holy Spirit.

Rev 22:18-19 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and [from] the things which are written in this book.

2. INERRANCY: Since all of the Bible comes from God, every word (*verbal*) & every part (*plenary*) is without error.

This relates to original writings. Copies can differ some, and thus translations differences, but not in major ways.

Matt 5:17-18 Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. [not even every word, but even the smallest detail of each individual character!]

Psalms 119:89 Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.

Psalms 119:152 Concerning Your testimonies, I have known of old that You have founded them forever.

Psalms 119:160 The entirety of Your word [is] truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments [endures] forever.

3. RELIABILITY: God has made sure that the Bible has been transmitted with care and accuracy.

- *Not one specific translation (e.g. "KJV Only") – each translation needs to be evaluated on its own merit for accuracy*
- *Why all the new "translations"?*
- *We have some very accurate literal translations; passages with differences concern small details, not key truths*
- *Literal vs. Dynamic Equivalence*
- *It is very important to have literal translations – details matter! (Col 2:6-7 in "God's Word" vs. NKJV)*

4. SUPREMACY: Because the Bible comes from God, it is far better than man's ideas, theologies, or philosophies.

Matt 15:1-11 Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread." He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, Whatever profit you might have received from me [is] a gift [to God] --] 'then he need not honor his father or mother.' Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. "Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with [their] lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching [as] doctrines the commandments of men.' "When He had called the multitude to [Himself,] He said to them, "Hear and understand: Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man."

Col 2:6-8 As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

5. AUTHORITY: God gave the Bible to inform us and to direct us. It is to be believed and obeyed above all else.

Majority rule (democracy), mandating (dictatorship), or mysticism (direct Revelation) must yield to the Bible.

Prov 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

Acts 15:13-17 And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, "Men [and] brethren, listen to me: Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 'After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the LORD who does all these things.'"

Gal 1:6-12 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ. But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught [it,] but [it came] through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Heb 4:12 For the word of God [is] living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

6. ABILITY: The Bible will be the source for God to teach, convert, and change!

Psalms 119:130 The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.

John 8:31-32 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Rom 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

SUMMARY:

- *God's Word is the one and only reliable source of truth.*
- *God's Word is to govern our individual lives, our families, and our churches.*
- *God's Word is to be the foundation for all thinking and teaching, and the basis for all decisions.*
- *Man's ideas are inferior and subordinate to God's Word. Every idea must be measured against what God revealed.*
- *Pastors & churches are obligated to teach God's Word accurately, to obey it diligently, & to uphold and defend it faithfully. "A pastor's job is like a waiter's – to get the food from the kitchen to the table without goofing it up." – John MacArthur.*

Acts 20:26-30 Therefore I testify to you this day that I [am] innocent of the blood of all [men.] For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.

1 Tim 1:3-8 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia – remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, [from] a good conscience, and [from] sincere faith, from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm. But we know that the law [is] good if one uses it lawfully,

2 Tim 2:15-16 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane [and] idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.

2 Tim 4:2-4 Preach the word! Be ready in season [and] out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, [because] they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn [their] ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

James 3:1 My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

Jude 3-4 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.