



## **5 Starter Facts About Baptists**

1. Baptists believe the Bible is free of error and the only source of God's word. There are ~48 million Baptists worldwide and ~19 million in the United States.
2. Baptism is only performed after a profession of Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior, as opposed to infants like in other Christian traditions. Baptists must be fully immersed in the water, usually by being lowered backwards into the water. Church membership is restricted to those who give clear evidence of their faith.
3. Each local church is self-governing and independent of others. Baptists are not under a greater body or leader, like a pope. Each church usually has a pastor, deacons, and trustees, but leadership and doctrine are decided democratically by the members, leading to a variation of beliefs between Baptist churches.
4. Many conservative Baptists oppose gambling, alcohol, and tobacco, and some even prohibit dancing and watching movies. This is especially common in Southern Baptists populations.
5. Baptists have led the way in fighting for freedom of religion and separation of church and state in the U.S. Historically, Baptists were influential in the formation of the first civil government based on the separation of church and state in what is now Rhode Island.

Learn more at:

<https://allianceofbaptists.org/>

<http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/>

*These five points are not meant to be comprehensive or authoritative. We hope they encourage you to explore this spirituality more deeply and seek out members of this community to learn about their beliefs in action. In understanding our differences we will better understand our common humanity.*

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