



Middleburg Memos

“Back to the Basics” Series

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The New Testament church—the body and bride of Christ—stands at the very _____ of God’s _____.

Baptists are shaped by a strong, vibrant New Testament vision of the church as the people of God—a _____ people and a people on _____.

Turn to **Matthew 16:13–19**. In this passage, sometimes called the _____, Jesus declared the establishment of the church and instructed the disciples about its meaning.

Jesus stated that the church is established NOT on _____ but on _____ that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This is the confession of all true Christians, and it is the great foundation on which the church stands.

The Greek word _____, the primary New Testament word for _____, means the _____. *This word is used 115 times in the New Testament, mostly in the Book of Acts and the writings of the apostle Paul and the general Epistles. At least 92 times this word refers to a local congregation. The other references are to the church in general or all believers everywhere for all ages.*

Four Characteristics of the Church:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

_____ (self-governing) means that every local congregation is invested with full _____ to fulfill its ministry. Baptists do not believe in a hierarchical system above the local church because none is found in the New Testament.

_____ means that while we acknowledge the autonomous nature of local congregations, we also stand with all Christians in affirming the Lordship of Jesus Christ over His church.

The concept of _____ lies at the heart of the Baptist vision of the church. A church is not merely a voluntary _____ or a social _____.

The church is a congregation of _____ who covenant together to _____ Christ’s ministry. A covenant binds church members together to one another in a sacred bond of _____ and _____ before Christ.

The Baptist Faith and Message states that a local church is a congregation of _____. Baptism is the believer’s _____ of faith in Christ, a sign and symbol of the new birth.

Churches are called and equipped to fulfill the _____ (**Matthew 28:19–20**) and the _____ (**Mark 12:30–31**) given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are no _____ on the local church’s gospel responsibility, even as the church ministers to its own _____.

The New Testament gives no support to _____ Christianity. Christians are to _____ themselves in the ministry of the local congregation, finding and filling various roles of _____.

The New Testament provides a blueprint for church structure. The scriptural officers of the church are _____ and _____.

Cross-References: *Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3*