

Christian Theology

Distinctions among Christians

August 16, 2009

Types of Baptists

- As with many Christian groups, there are numerous divisions within the group called Baptists.
- Many of these have their origins and headquarters in the United States.
- A full list would be too long to study, even in a full month! You may have heard of these:
 - American Baptist Churches USA
 - This was the first Baptist denomination in the United States. Its first name was the Triennial Convention and was formed in 1814. After merging with other smaller groups in 1907, it became the Northern Baptist Convention. More name changes followed in 1950 and 1972.
 - Until about 1843, this denomination held no position on slavery.
 - Today, this is a so-called mainline denomination.
 - Southern Baptist Convention
 - This is the world's largest Baptist denomination (16 million).
 - It was formed over a split on the topic of slavery, and it was organized in 1845 as a means of supporting missionaries.
 - This group is conservative and evangelical in its theology.
 - Since at least the 1970s, it has emphasized gender roles.
 - General Association of Regular Baptist Churches
 - This group split from the Northern Baptists in 1932 because the Northerners were becoming too "modern." Churches forming this group were fundamentalist in nature.
 - Churches here are very independent and form a loose fellowship.
 - This group, like the two groups above, follows Calvinist theology – all three are descended from the Particular Baptists.
 - Free Will Baptists
 - This group is on the General (Arminian) side; it is relatively old.
 - One defining belief is that a Christian can fall away from Christ.
 - This group practices three ordinances (including feet washing).
 - Most of its churches are located in the South and in rural areas.
- Woodruff Place used to be affiliated with the American Baptists.