

# THE BAPTIST "WORD" IS FREEDOM!

Our liberties define Baptists like nothing else. To compromise them, would be to lose our distinctive gift.

"The one word that comes closer than any other to capturing the historic Baptist identity is the word, FREEDOM. This is a strange assertion at a time when many view Baptists as narrow, provincial and even reactionary." -- *Walter Shurden*

While some Baptists have foolishly relinquished their freedoms, other groups have embraced them. Lutheran historian Martin Marty has called this the "Baptistification" of American Christianity in which the principles of Baptist Liberties have been embraced by many other traditions.

"For freedom, Christ has set us free!" *Galatians 5:1a*



Many Baptists have taken personal risks and suffered a great price to stand up for freedom. Martin Luther King, Jr. was an American Baptist pastor whose fight for freedom for African Americans in the 1950's and 60's earned a Nobel Peace Prize and a deserved and beloved place in the hearts of many as one of the greatest Americans ever.

