

SOUL LIBERTY

Shaping one's own relationship with God

Soul Liberty is the deep conviction that every man or woman can enter into direct relationship to God without outside mediation. Baptists resist anything that appears to oppress freedom of the soul.

Our practice of believer's baptism arises out of our insistence upon soul liberty. No one can decide for another, not even a parent for a child, a person's relationship with God. Thus, we baptize only after an individual has made a personal decision of faith.

"It is easy for us to yield our integrity and responsibility to some accepted authority: beloved pastor, honored teacher, influential book—even an edition of the Bible, respected parents or dynamic church. These all have their proper role of influence, but the final choice of belief and practice must be made in the secret of the soul's naked presence before God alone." - *Brownlow Hastings, 1981*



Roger Williams angered the Puritans by preaching about the freedom of each person's conscience before God. When the Puritans attempted to arrest him, he escaped into the harsh Massachusetts winter. Narragansett Indians found him. In 1640, he purchased land from them and for the first time, citizens were allowed to believe as they wished in the colony of Rhode Island.

