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**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON  
AT SPOKANE**

ARLENE'S FLOWERS, INC. d/b/a  
ARLENE'S FLOWERS AND GIFTS,  
and  
BARRONELLE STUTZMAN,  
Plaintiffs,

v.

ROBERT W. FERGUSON, in his  
official capacity as ATTORNEY  
GENERAL for the STATE OF  
WASHINGTON,

Defendant.

NO. 2:13-cv-05094-RMP

EXPERT DECLARATION OF  
PROFESSOR DENNIS BURK

I, DENNIS R. BURK, am over the age of 18 and competent to testify,  
and declare the following under oath and penalty of perjury of the laws of  
the State of Washington that:

**I. BACKGROUND**

1. I currently serve as Professor of Biblical Studies at the Southern  
Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. I also serve as  
Associate Pastor at Kenwood Baptist Church. I am trained and educated as a  
theologian and ordained as a minister. My educational and professional

1 experience is summarized on the curriculum vitae attached to this  
2 declaration, as well as a list of works published in the last ten years. See  
3 Exhibit 1.  
4

5 2. In my experience as a pastor, theologian, and Southern Baptist  
6 professor, I regularly counsel students and church members about how we as  
7 Southern Baptists ought to conform our actions to biblical standards. Part of  
8 my work also focuses on helping to define and shape how the Southern  
9 Baptist Convention communicates its beliefs.  
10

11 3. In rendering my opinions, I am not speaking for any particular  
12 Southern Baptist church, nor the SBC although my views are consistent with  
13 those of the SBC. I base my opinions on knowledge I have gained from  
14 theological education, training and experience in the Southern Baptist  
15 tradition. I believe this knowledge will be helpful in understanding the issues  
16 of religious belief and practice implicated by the foregoing lawsuits.  
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## 20 **II. ASSUMPTIONS**

21 4. For purposes of rendering my opinions, I have assumed the  
22 following facts to be true:  
23

24 5. Barronelle Stutzman is a Christian in the Southern Baptist  
25  
26

1 tradition.

2 6. Ms. Stutzman is a florist, and she owns and works at a florist  
3 shop that she operates as a business for profit.  
4

5 7. The florist shop is separately incorporated as Arlene's Flowers,  
6 Inc.  
7

8 8. The shop has had other florist-employees who do not  
9 necessarily share Ms. Stutzman's faith, some of whom have been openly  
10 gay.  
11

12 9. Robert Ingersoll and Curt Freed have been customers of the  
13 shop for some period of time.

14 10. Ms. Stutzman arranged flowers for Messrs. Ingersoll and Freed  
15 knowing that they identified as gay.  
16

17 11. On March 1, 2013, Mr. Ingersoll went to the shop for the  
18 purpose of asking Ms. Stutzman to design the floral arrangements for a  
19 same-sex marriage ceremony between him and Mr. Freed. Ms. Stutzman  
20 told him that she could not do it because of her relationship with Jesus  
21 Christ.  
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1           12. Ms. Stutzman declined to create the floral arrangements for the  
2 ceremony, based on her religious belief that marriage should only be  
3 between one man and one woman.  
4

5           13. Ms. Stutzman and her shop design and create floral  
6 arrangements without regard for the religious or philosophical beliefs of  
7 wedding participants, as long as the marriage is between one man and one  
8 woman.  
9

10           14. Ms. Stutzman is willing merely to sell flowers off the shelf to  
11 anyone, even with the knowledge that the flowers would be used for a same-  
12 sex marriage ceremony. However, she cannot *design and create* floral  
13 arrangements for a same-sex marriage ceremony because she believes that  
14 would be contributing her creative and artistic talents to support something  
15 she believes to be a sin against God.  
16  
17

18           15. As of 2006, the law of the State of Washington prohibits  
19 discrimination in public accommodations based on sexual orientation. As of  
20 2012, the law of the State of Washington defines marriage as a civil contract  
21 between any two persons, who have each attained the age of eighteen years,  
22 and who are otherwise capable, without regard for their sex. The State of  
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1 Washington and private plaintiffs contend that a florist shop is a public  
2 accommodation, and that declining to create floral arrangements for use at a  
3 same-sex marriage ceremony violates the legal prohibition of discrimination  
4 based on sexual orientation.  
5

### 6 **III. SUMMARY OF EXPERT OPINIONS**

7  
8 16. Southern Baptist and evangelical theology holds to the  
9 orthodox Christian belief that marriage is a union of a man and a woman, as  
10 God declared in Scripture. The Institution of marriage is one of the ways that  
11 God reveals himself to mankind and invites us to participate in the divine  
12 relationship. Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31-32.  
13

14 17. Marriage is the means by which we understand the nature of the  
15 Church and its relationship to the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ.  
16 Marriage is an institution of such importance that the Bible compares it to  
17 the relationship between Christ and the Church. Ephesians 5:25-33.  
18

19 18. Christians consider marriage a religious institution with biblical  
20 significance, regardless of whether the marriage is performed in a church  
21 and regardless of whether the participants are Christian.  
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1           19. In light of this, same-sex marriage is considered a sin by  
2 Christians in the Southern Baptist tradition because it involves two men and  
3 two women rather than one man and one woman. To call it sin does not  
4 imply that it is worse or better than other sins, or that God's mercy and  
5 forgiveness do not extend to persons engaged in such activity.  
6

7           20. Marriage between non-religious persons (e.g., atheists or  
8 agnostics), non-Christians (e.g., Muslims or Hindus) or non-Southern  
9 Baptists (e.g., Presbyterians or Roman Catholics) is not considered to be a  
10 sin, as long as it involves only one man and one woman. On the contrary,  
11 such marriage is a form of grace offered by God to all people as a source of  
12 support and comfort and a way of fostering their relationship with Him.  
13

14           21. A Christian in the Southern Baptist tradition has a mandatory  
15 religious obligation to love his or her neighbor and to avoid sin. Romans  
16 12:2; Colossians 3:5-10; James 1:22-27. This duty entails an obligation *not*  
17 to state or imply that something another person is doing is *not* sin, when in  
18 fact it is. It also entails an obligation *not* to assist or participate when another  
19 person proposes to do something sinful. In this sense, refusal to participate  
20 in a same-sex marriage ceremony to forestall sin is required as an act of love  
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1 toward the participants, even though they may not perceive it that way (and  
2 perhaps especially when they do not perceive it that way). That should  
3 always be done in a gentle and loving manner.  
4

5 22. A person would not necessarily have a duty to investigate  
6 whether every marriage he or she serves is Christ-honoring and biblically  
7 permissible, such as in the case of a second marriage in which it is not  
8 immediately apparent whether the marriage would be biblically permissible.  
9 But when there is an obvious or known deviation from biblical  
10 commandments, such as in the case of a marriage ceremony between two  
11 members of the same sex, a Christian in the Southern Baptist tradition  
12 should not use his or her creative talents to assist in that ceremony. I  
13 Corinthians 8:7-9. A wedding ceremony calls attention to the glory of  
14 uniting the couple before God and solidifies a public commitment. In other  
15 words, it is not just private expression.  
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20 23. A Christian in the Southern Baptist tradition also has a  
21 mandatory religious obligation not to mislead others about the truth of what  
22 he or she believes. Like the duty to love one's neighbor, this duty similarly  
23 entails an obligation *not* to state or imply that something another person is  
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1 going to do is *not* sin, when in fact it is, and *not* to assist or participate when  
2 another person proposes to do something sinful. When a Christian in the  
3 Southern Baptist tradition participates in a same-sex marriage ceremony, it  
4 has the potential to mislead others regarding what the tradition stands for  
5 and what the participant believes. *Cf.* I Corinthians 8:7-11.  
6

7  
8 24. A Christian in the Southern Baptist tradition has a mandatory  
9 religious obligation to avoid personal sin. John 14:15; James 4:17. This duty  
10 entails an obligation *not* to participate or provide material cooperation with a  
11 sinful act of another. A person who creates floral arrangements for a same-  
12 sex marriage ceremony is providing material cooperation with a sinful act.  
13

14 25. A Christian in the Southern Baptist tradition who is a business  
15 owner is obligated to integrate his or her faith into the conduct of the  
16 business. The owner of the business should ensure that employees and  
17 customers are treated in accordance with their equal dignity and worth  
18 before God. The owner should also ensure that the business complies with  
19 the duties to love one's neighbor, avoid giving others the impression that she  
20 approves of marriages between members of the same-sex, and avoid material  
21 cooperation with sinful acts.  
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1           26. A Christian in the Southern Baptist tradition who owns a  
2 business is not obligated to question every customer regarding the potential  
3 uses to which the products or services sold by the business might be put. In  
4 addition, a business owner who becomes aware that his or her products or  
5 services might be used for a sinful or immoral purpose is not generally  
6 obligated to refuse to sell such products or services, although the duty to  
7 love one's neighbor and avoid scandal might involve refusal to sell such  
8 products or services under certain circumstances. In either case, the equal  
9 dignity and worth of the customer requires the business owner to respect the  
10 customer's God-given free will. However, the business owner must not  
11 engage in a transaction that involves participation in or material cooperation  
12 with a sinful act because it would constitute personal sin on the part of the  
13 business owner, and would therefore be subject to God's judgment.

#### 18                   **IV. FACTS AND DATA CONSIDERED BY EXPERT IN** 19                   **FORMING OPINION**

20           27. I consult a variety of theological works and publications,  
21 including the Holy Bible, the Baptist Faith and Message, and Resolutions of  
22 the SBC on marriage and sexual orientation.  
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1           28. I have also spoken to Barronelle Stutzman about her faith in  
2 relation to the facts of this case.

3  
4           29. I have read the complaints filed against Barronelle Stutzman  
5 and Arlene's Flowers in (1) *State of Washington vs. Arlene's Flowers, Inc.,*  
6 *d/b/a Arlene's Flowers and Gifts, and Barronelle Stutzman*, Superior Court  
7 of the State of Washington for Benton County, Cause No. 13-2-00871-5; and  
8 (2) *Robert Ingersoll and Curt Freed vs. Arlene's Flowers, Inc., d/b/a*  
9 *Arlene's Flowers and Gifts; and Barronelle Stutzman*, Superior Court of the  
10 State of Washington for Benton County, Cause No. 13-2-00953-3.  
11

12  
13                   **V. EXHIBITS SUMMARIZING OR SUPPORTING**  
14                   **EXPERT'S OPINIONS**

15           30. The following documents from the Southern Baptist  
16 Convention are attached as Exhibit 2 to this declaration:

17  
18           SBC Baptist Faith and Message, Article XVIII (2000), regarding The  
19 Family.

20           SBC position statement on Sexuality (undated).

21           SBC Resolution on Covenant Marriage (June 2001).

22           SBC Resolution on Kingdom Families (June 2003).

23           SBC Resolution on Protecting the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)  
24 (June 2011).  
25  
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1 SBC Resolution on “Same-Sex Marriage” and Civil Rights Rhetoric  
2 (June 2012).

3 SBC Resolution on Persecution of Christians (June 1988).

4 SBC Resolution on Violations of Religious Freedom and Assembly in  
5 the United States (June 2013).

6 Resolution on Protecting Religious Liberty (June 2012).

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1 I declare under the penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and  
2 correct to the best of my knowledge.

3 Signed at Louisville (city), KY (state),  
4 this 25 day of August, 2014.  
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12 DENNIS R. BURK  
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# **EXHIBIT 1**

**DENNIS RAY BURK, JR.**

9704 Bay Hill Dr  
Louisville, KY 40223  
(502) 693-8636  
dennyrburk@gmail.com

**PERSONAL**

**Present Positions:** Associate Professor of Biblical Studies and Ethics  
Director of the Center for Gospel and Culture  
Boyce College  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Associate Pastor  
Kenwood Baptist Church  
Louisville, Kentucky

**Born:** November 14, 1972, Lake Charles, Louisiana

**EDUCATION**

**Doctor of Philosophy,** The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, 2004  
Supervisor: Dr. Thomas R. Schreiner  
Major: New Testament  
Dissertation Title: "A Linguistic Analysis of the Articular Infinitive in New Testament Greek"

**Master of Theology,** Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, TX, 2001  
Supervisor: Daniel B. Wallace  
Double Major: New Testament and Historical Theology  
Th.M. Thesis: "The Meaning of *Harpagmos* in Philippians 2:6"

**Bachelor of Arts,** Summa Cum Laude, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA, 1996  
Major: History  
Minor: English

## BOOKS

*What Is the Meaning of Sex?* Wheaton: Crossway, 2013. ISBN: 1-4335-3609-9.

*Articular Infinitives in the Greek of the New Testament: On the Exegetical Benefit of Grammatical Precision.* New Testament Monographs. Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2006. ISBN: 1-90504-8416.

*Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, ed. William D. Mounce, Miles Van Pelt, D. Matthew Smith. Zondervan, August 2006. [Contributor] ISBN: 0-310-24878-7.

## ARTICLES

"Evangelism and Church Discipline" in *A Guide to Evangelism*, ed. Dan DeWitt, pp. 28-33 (Louisville, KY: SBTs Press, 2013).

"The Righteousness of God (Dikaioṣunē Theou) and Verbal Genitives." *The Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 34.4 (2012): 346-60.

"Christ's Functional Subordination in Philippians 2:6: A Grammatical Note with Trinitarian Implications" in *The New Evangelical Subordinationism? Perspectives on the Equality of God the Father and God the Son*, ed. H. Wayne House and Dennis Jowers (Eugene, OR: Pickwick) [forthcoming].

"How Do We Speak about Homosexuality?" *The Journal for Biblical Manhood & Womanhood* 17.1 (2012): 31-37.

"Revising Hell into the Heterodox Mainstream." *The Sword and Trumpet* 79.8 (2011): 19-25.

"The Translation of Gender Terminology in the NIV 2011." *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 16.1 (2011): 17-33.

"Does the Church Know Her Commission?" *Tabletalk* (February 2011).

"Gender Confusion and a Gospel-Shaped Counter-Culture" in *Don't Call it a Comeback: The Old Faith for a New Day*, ed. Kevin DeYoung. Wheaton: Crossway, 2011.

"Why Evangelicals Should Not Heed Brian McLaren: How the New Testament Requires Evangelicals to Render a Judgment on the Moral Status of Homosexuality." *Themelios* 35.2 (2010): 212-26.

"The *SBJT* Forum" with C. Ben Mitchell, Mark T. Coppenger, Chad O. Brand, and Stephen Wellum. *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 13.2 (2009): 68-78.

"Is Paul's Gospel Counterimperial? Evaluating the Prospects of the 'Fresh Perspective' for Evangelical Theology." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51 (2008): 309-37.

"Discerning Corinthian Slogans through Paul's Use of the Diatribe in 1 Corinthians 6.12-20." *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 18.1 (2008): 99-121.

"The *SBJT* Forum" with D. A. Carson, Barry Joslin, and Everett Berry. *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 12 (2008): 104-13.

“Evangelicalism Today” a forum with Russell Moore, John Franke, Darryl Hart, Michael Horton, and David Lyle Jeffrey. *Touchstone* (November 2007).

“Inerrancy Is Not Enough: A Proposal To Amend the Doctrinal Basis of the Evangelical Theological Society” with Ray Van Neste. *Criswell Theological Review* NS Vol. 5, no. 1 (2007): 69-80.

“Younger Evangelicals and Women in Ministry: A Sketch of the Spectrum of Opinion” with Jim Hamilton. *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 12.2 (2007): 26-40.

“Is Inerrancy Sufficient? A Plea to Biblical Scholars concerning the Authority and Sufficiency of Scripture.” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 50.1 (2007): 76-91.

“On the Articular Infinitive in Philippians 2:6: A Grammatical Note with Christological Implications.” *Tyndale Bulletin* 55 (2004): 253-74.

### PAPERS

Paper Presented at the National ETS Meeting, Fall 2012: “Is There Really Such Thing as Male and Female? The Challenge of Intersex to a Complementarian Understanding of Gender”

Paper Presented at the National ETS Meeting, Fall 2011: “Jesus vs. Paul Cage-match: Do Red Letters Trump Black Letters as a Normative Basis for Sexual Ethics?”

Paper Presented at the National ETS Meeting, Fall 2009: “Why Evangelicals Should Ignore Brian McLaren: How the New Testament Requires Evangelicals to Render a Judgment on the Moral Status of Homosexuality.”

Paper Presented at the National ETS Meeting, Fall 2008: “God’s Inactive Righteousness: A Clarification Regarding the Meaning of Paul’s ‘Righteousness’ Language.”

Paper Presented at the National ETS Meeting, Fall 2007: “Justification as Already and Not Yet in the Theology of Paul.”

Paper Presented at the National ETS Meeting, Fall 2006: “The ‘Fresh Perspective’ on Paul: A Theology of Anti-Americanism.”

Paper Presented at the Southwest Regional ETS Meeting, March 25, 2006: “Inerrancy Is Not Enough: Reflections on an Indispensable and Insufficient Doctrine.”

Paper Presented at the National ETS Meeting, Fall 2005: “N. T. Wright, Corinthian Sloganeering, and Paul’s Doctrine of the Resurrection in 1 Corinthians 6:12-20.”

Paper Presented at the National ETS Meeting, Fall 2003: “Philippians 2:6 and Functional Inequality within the Godhead.”

Paper Presented at the Southwest Regional ETS Meeting, Spring 2000.



## REVIEWS

- Review of *Real Marriage: The Truth about Sex, Friendship, and Life Together*, by Mark and Grace Driscoll, *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 16.1 (2012): 72-79.
- Review of *God, Marriage, and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation* (2nd ed.), by Andreas J. Köstenberger and David W. Jones, *Themelios* 37.1 (2012): 143-45.
- Review of *The Human Faces of God: What Scripture Reveals When It Gets God Wrong (and Why Inerrancy Tries to Hide It)*, by Thom Stark, *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 15.3 (2011): 83-86.
- Review of *Christ and Caesar: The Gospel and the Roman Empire in the Writings of Paul and Luke*, by Seyoon Kim, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 52 (2009): 615-18.
- Review of *The Nature of the Atonement: Four Views*, ed. James Beilby and Paul R. Eddy, *Criswell Theological Review* NS Vol. 5, no. 1 (2007): 119-121.
- Review of *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old & New Testaments*, by James M. Hamilton, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50 (2007): 417-19.
- Review of *Jesus' Blood and Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Imputation*, by Brian Vickers, *Criswell Theological Review* NS Vol. 4, no. 2 (2007): 117-19.
- Review of *BibleWorks 7: Software for Biblical Exegesis and Research*, in *Criswell Theological Review* NS Vol. 4, no. 2 (2007): 128.
- "Much Ado About Typos." *Touchstone Magazine*, vol. 19, issue 10 (December 2006): 42-43. Review of *Misquoting Jesus: The Story behind Who Changed the Bible and Why*, by Bart Ehrman.
- Review of *The Last Word: Beyond the Bible Wars to a New Understanding of the Authority of Scripture*, by N. T. Wright, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 49 (2006): 622-25.
- Review of *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*, by N. T. Wright, *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 10 (2006): 83-84.
- Review of *Where Is Boasting: Early Jewish Soteriology and Paul's Response in Romans 1-5*, by Simon J. Gathercole, *Criswell Theological Review* NS Vol. 3, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 104-105.
- Review of *Choosing a Bible: Understanding Bible Translation Differences*, by Leland Ryken, *Criswell Theological Review* NS Vol. 3, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 117-118.
- Review of *Becoming Conversant with the Emerging Church: Understanding a Movement and Its Implications*, by D. A. Carson, *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* Vol. 2, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 88-89.
- Review of *Making Sense of the New Testament: Three Crucial Questions*, by Craig L. Blomberg, *Criswell Theological Review* NS Vol. 3, no. 1, (Fall 2005): 104-106.
- Review of *Justification—What's at Stake in the Current Debates*, ed. Mark Husbands and Daniel J. Treier, *Criswell Theological Review* NS Vol. 2, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 113-116.

### POPULAR ARTICLES

- "The Transcendent Issue: Abortion in 2012 Election," *Towers* 11.3 (October 2012): 14-15.
- "Gay marriage, the slippery slope & polygamy," Baptist Press, September 5, 2012, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "Is it hateful to suggest gays can change?" Baptist Press, August 13, 2012, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "Resolute in a Gender-Confused Culture," *Southern Seminary Magazine* 80.3 (2012): 44-45.
- "Komen's abortion ties now more clear than ever," Baptist Press, February 3, 2012, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "What is a gay Christian?" Baptist Press, September 27, 2011, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "'Pregnancy reduction,' an everyday horror," Baptist Press, August 17, 2011, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "The census & the future of the Great Commission," Baptist Press, July 8, 2011, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "How should Christians react to bin Laden's death?" Baptist Press, May 2, 2011, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "Is Rob Bell's book really worth debating?" Baptist Press, April 12, 2011, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "America's abortion schizophrenia," Baptist Press, February 10, 2011, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "A Manifesto for Training Ministers," *Southern Seminary Magazine* 77.2 (2009): 36-37.
- "Wright's most dangerous comment," Baptist Press, April 29, 2008, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "Literacy and the Gospel," Baptist Press, August 22, 2007, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "Responding to the massacre," Baptist Press, April 19, 2007, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "Is embryonic stem-cell research murder?" Baptist Press, August 9, 2006, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "Fictional license differs from doctrinal distortions," in *The Louisiana Baptist Message*, Vol. 121, Issue 23 (June 15, 2006): page 3. [See also "'Da Vinci' not as dangerous as 'Left Behind'?" Baptist Press, May 30, 2006, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).]
- "The Gospel according to Hollywood," Baptist Press, March 8, 2006, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).
- "Why All the Translations?" North American Mission Board, Apologetics Website, on-line: [www.4truth.net](http://www.4truth.net).
- "Ministering alongside the 'bologna brigade,'" Baptist Press, September 23, 2005, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).

“Does God care about filibusters?” Baptist Press, April 20, 2005, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).

“Research or the Bible?” Baptist Press, August 29, 2003, on-line: [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net).

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

Associate Professor of Biblical Studies, Boyce College, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, 2008-present.

Dean of Boyce College, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, 2008-2011.

Associate Professor of New Testament, The Criswell College, Dallas, TX, August 1, 2004 to 2008.

Instructor of New Testament Interpretation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, Spring 2004

Guest Lecturer, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, Fall 2001, 2002

Guest Lecturer, Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, TX, Spring 2000

Garrett Fellow, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, for Dr. Robert H. Stein and Dr. Russell Moore

President of the Graduate Club, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003-2004

Member of Evangelical Theological Society, Society of Biblical Literature, and Institute for Biblical Research

### **SUBJECTS QUALIFIED TO TEACH**

Greek, New Testament, Old Testament, Exegesis, New Testament Theology, Biblical Theology, Hermeneutics, Systematic Theology, Religious Studies, Ethics

### **MINISTERIAL EXPERIENCE**

Certificate of Ordination, Springs of Grace Baptist Church, Shreveport, LA, December 17, 2000

Certificate of License, Springs of Grace Baptist Church, Shreveport, LA, December 17, 2000

Associate Pastor, Kenwood Baptist Church, Louisville, KY, June 2011-Present

Elder, Kenwood Baptist Church, Louisville, KY, 2009-Present

20-something Singles Sunday School Teacher, First Baptist Church, Dallas, TX, January 2005-Present

College Sunday School Teacher, Ninth & O Baptist Church, Louisville, KY, May 2002-July 2004

Singles Discipleship Coordinator, Park Cities Presbyterian Church, Dallas, TX, August 2000-May 2001

Pastoral Staff Intern, Springs of Grace Baptist Church, June-August, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997

Youth Pastor, First Baptist Church, Trenton, TN, June-August 1993

Pulpit Supply, Fall 2001-Present

# **EXHIBIT 2**

# The Baptist Faith and Message

## THE 2000 BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE

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### I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

*Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

### II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

#### A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

*Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.*

## B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

*Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.*

## C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

*Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.*

## III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.*

## IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.



*Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.*

## V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.*

## VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

*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.*

## VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

*Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*

## VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

*Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.*

## IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

*Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.*

## X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

*Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.*

## XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.*

## XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of

missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

*Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.*

### XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

*Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.*

### XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people.

Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

*Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.*

## XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

*Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.*

## XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

*Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.*

## XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

*Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.*

## XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

*Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.*

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# Position Statements

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Every denomination is experiencing tension, and Southern Baptists are no exception. Of course, tension can be healthy. It serves to clarify beliefs. But tension also has a down side. It can generate misleading statements and create confusion in the local church. We know that some may be struggling to sort out truth from fiction.

Because this is so, we offer you these simple position statements which reflect the actions of the Convention and its entities. We hope that they will prove helpful to you.

## Priesthood of All Believers

We affirm the priesthood of all believers. Laypersons have the same right as ordained ministers to communicate with God, interpret Scripture, and minister in Christ's name. That is why the Convention requires strong lay involvement on its boards.

This doctrine is first and foremost a matter of responsibility and servanthood, not privilege and license.

It is of course, a perversion of this doctrine to say that all views are equally valid, that you can believe anything and still be a Baptist or that the pastor has no unique leadership role.

## Soul Competency

We affirm soul competency, the accountability of each person before God. Your family cannot save you. Neither can your church. It comes down to you and God. Authorities can't force belief or unbelief. They shouldn't try.

Against this backdrop of religious freedom, it's important for us Baptists to set forth our convictions. By stating them in a forthright manner, we provide nonbelievers with a clear choice.

## Creeds and Confessions

In some groups, statements of belief have the same authority as Scripture. We call this creedalism. Baptists also make statements of belief, but all of them are revisable in light of Scripture. The Bible is the final word.

Because of this distinction, we are generally more comfortable with the word "confession." Still, we are "creedal" in the sense that we believe certain things, express those beliefs and order our institutions accordingly. There have always been Baptist limits. And within these limits, there have always been Baptist preferences.



## Women in Ministry

Women participate equally with men in the priesthood of all believers. Their role is crucial, their wisdom, grace and commitment exemplary. Women are an integral part of our Southern Baptist boards, faculties, mission teams, writer pools, and professional staffs. We affirm and celebrate their Great Commission impact.

While Scripture teaches that a woman's role is not identical to that of men in every respect, and that pastoral leadership is assigned to men, it also teaches that women are equal in value to men.

## Church and State

We stand for a free church in a free state. Neither one should control the affairs of the other. We support the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, with its "establishment" and "free exercise" clauses.

We do, of course, acknowledge the legitimate interplay of these two spheres. For example, it is appropriate for the state to enact and enforce fire codes for the church nurseries. It is also appropriate for ministers to offer prayer at civic functions. Neither the Constitution nor Baptist tradition would build a wall of separation against such practices as these.

## Missions

We ask the people of the world to conform to Christ and His Word, and not to our merely human traditions. We seek to lift up national leadership in the countries where we serve, and to respect the cultural expressions of their faith – we honor the indigenous principle in missions. We cannot, however, compromise doctrine or give up who we are to win the favor of those we try to reach or those with whom we desire to work. This would rob our efforts of their integrity and life.

The priority is evangelism which results in churches. This priority is consistent with strong social ministries, including medical care, emergency famine relief, water projects and agricultural assistance.

## Autonomy

We affirm the autonomy of the local church. Each church is free to determine its own membership and to set its own course under the headship of Jesus. It may enter into alliance with other churches as it chooses, so long as those other churches are willing.

The same is true for other Baptist bodies – local associations; state conventions; national conventions. They, too, may determine their membership and set their own course.

If, in its autonomy, a Baptist body expels a church from its fellowship, it does not negate that church's autonomy. The church is perfectly free to go on with its business – but not as a member of that larger Baptist body.

## Cooperation

The Cooperative Program of missions is integral to the Southern Baptist genius. In the early days of our Convention, churches were bombarded with special appeals from various mission causes. The material resources of each ministry were dependent upon the persistence and eloquence of the spokesmen. This societal approach to missions was uneven and exhausting.

In 1925, Southern Baptists chose to join the causes of state and national missions in a denominational plan of unified giving. This Cooperative Program laid the foundation for extraordinary growth and fruitfulness.

## Sexuality

We affirm God's plan for marriage and sexual intimacy – one man, and one woman, for life. Homosexuality is not a "valid alternative lifestyle." The Bible condemns it as sin. It is not, however, unforgivable sin. The same redemption available to all sinners is available to homosexuals. They, too, may become new creations in Christ.

## Sanctity of Life

Procreation is a gift from God, a precious trust reserved for marriage. At the moment of conception, a new being enters the universe, a human being, a being created in God's image. This human being deserves our protection, whatever the circumstances of conception.

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# On Covenant Marriage

New Orleans, Louisiana - 2001

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WHEREAS, The family is the first institution established by God (Genesis 2:18-25; Ephesians 5:22-33) and is ordained by God as the basic unit of society (Genesis 1:26-31); and

WHEREAS, Marriage is a sacred covenant between one man, one woman, and a holy God, intended for life (Matthew 19:4-9; Romans 7:2); and

WHEREAS, Marriage is honorable and is the only context for appropriate sexual expression according to biblical standards (Hebrews 13:4); and

WHEREAS, Increasingly, the institution of marriage is being attacked from many directions; and

WHEREAS, The breakup of marriages has lasting and devastating consequences for children as well as adults; and

WHEREAS, The disintegration of marriage has tragic implications for the future of our churches and our nation; and

WHEREAS, Many state governments are becoming supportive of the Covenant Marriage movement; and

WHEREAS, LifeWay Church Resources has developed materials for husbands and wives to renew their marriage covenants; and

WHEREAS, Many of our Southern Baptist Convention entities and churches are active in the Covenant Marriage movement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 12-13, 2001, affirm the Covenant Marriage movement; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we applaud those state officials who have advanced the Covenant Marriage movement and encourage others to follow their example; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we encourage all Southern Baptists to commit themselves to the biblical

principles expressed by the Covenant Marriage movement; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we urge Southern Baptist churches to celebrate enthusiastically and emphasize annually the third Sunday in February, or some other day of their choice, as Covenant Marriage Sunday beginning on Sunday, February 17, 2002.

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# On Kingdom Families

Phoenix - 2003

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WHEREAS, The family is the foundational unit of human society, established by the creational intent of God; and

WHEREAS, The family is rooted in God's good gift of marriage, which the Creator defines as the lifelong union of one man and one woman (Genesis 1:26–27; Genesis 2:18–25); and

WHEREAS, Scripture affirms that such a family unit is God's design for the nurturing of children (Deuteronomy 6:4–9; Psalm 127:1–5; Ephesians 6:1–4); and

WHEREAS, The neglect of God's purposes for the family robs us of the joy and fulfillment that He intends for us; and

WHEREAS, The biblical model of the family increasingly is undermined by a divorce culture that sees marriage as a temporary social arrangement; and

WHEREAS, The biblical vision of the family is obscured further by current attempts to redefine the family itself and to marginalize the importance of the nuclear family; and

WHEREAS, The biblical vision of the family is eclipsed even more scandalously by marital infidelity, abandonment, and divorce within our own churches; and

WHEREAS, A disproportionately large number of children reared in evangelical churches are growing up to leave the "faith of their fathers"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, June 17–18, 2003, renew our commitment to building Kingdom families, by the recovery of the biblical understanding of the family and the acknowledgment of the permanence and responsibilities of the marriage covenant; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we call on Southern Baptist parents to assume their responsibility as the primary protectors and instructors of their children and to devote themselves to inculcate godly disciplines in their own lives and the lives of their children; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we call on Southern Baptists to proclaim the witness of Scripture to the

biblical pattern of the family and its responsibilities and permanence; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we encourage every Southern Baptist church to be intentionally involved in strengthening marriages and families through such activities as faithful preaching and teaching, biblical premarital and family counseling, and restorative church discipline; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we encourage Southern Baptist churches to pursue intentional ministry to single parent families as a non-negotiable biblical mandate, affirming that God Himself is the Father to the fatherless (Psalm 68:5) and that the church is God's spiritual family (Matthew 12:47–50); and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we call on our churches to model before our culture family structures that reflect the biblical vision of the Kingdom of God and the love of Christ for His church.

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# On Protecting The Defense Of Marriage Act (doma)

Phoenix, AZ - 2011

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WHEREAS, The Defense of Marriage Act of 1996 was passed with overwhelming majorities in the 104th Congress (House: 342-67; Senate: 85-14); and

WHEREAS, The Defense of Marriage Act was signed into law by President William J. Clinton on September 21, 1996; and

WHEREAS, The Defense of Marriage Act defines the words marriage, spouse, husband and wife for the purpose of application to United States law; and

WHEREAS, The Defense of Marriage Act defines marriage as “only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife”; and

WHEREAS, The Defense of Marriage Act defends individual states from having a redefinition of marriage forced upon them by another state; and

WHEREAS, Southern Baptists have on multiple occasions (1996, 2003, 2008) affirmed through resolutions the truth and principles the Defense of Marriage Act seeks to defend; and

WHEREAS, The current administration, under the leadership of President Barack Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder, has refused to fulfill its constitutional responsibility to defend the Defense of Marriage Act against legal challenges currently before numerous federal courts; and

WHEREAS, The Defense of Marriage Act is under attack by legislation introduced in the 112th Congress seeking to repeal it; and

WHEREAS, The federal government has an appropriate role in preserving the foundations of a healthy society; and

WHEREAS, Redefining the concept and legality of marriage to mean anything other than the union between one man and one woman would fundamentally undermine the historic and

biblical foundation of a healthy society (Genesis 1:28; 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6); and

WHEREAS, Equating same-sex relationships with heterosexual marriage would create a host of religious liberty and freedom of conscience conflicts; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, June 14-15, 2011, call on President Obama to direct the United States Department of Justice to follow through on its constitutional responsibility to defend vigorously the Defense of Marriage Act against all legal challenges with the full power of its office; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we commend the United States House of Representatives, under the leadership of Speaker John Boehner, for ensuring the rule of law by accepting the duty rejected by the United States Department of Justice to defend the Defense of Marriage Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we once again call on the United States Congress to pass and the states to ratify a constitutional amendment defining marriage as exclusively between one man and one woman; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we reaffirm our historic and consistent support of the biblical definition of marriage as the exclusive union between one man and one woman; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we encourage pastors to speak strongly, prophetically, and redemptively concerning the sinful nature of homosexual behavior, the urgent need to protect biblical marriage, and the certainty that the blood of Christ can atone for any sin.

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# On “Same-Sex Marriage” And Civil Rights Rhetoric

New Orleans - 2012

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WHEREAS, Marriage is a covenant relationship and an institution established by God rather than simply a human social construct (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4–6; Ephesians 5:22–33); and

WHEREAS, Southern Baptists have consistently affirmed our support of the biblical definition of marriage as the exclusive union of one man and one woman; and

WHEREAS, The Scriptures indicate that all sexual behavior outside of marriage is sinful; and

WHEREAS, All people, regardless of race or sexual orientation, are created in the image of God and thus are due respect and love (Genesis 1:26–27); and

WHEREAS, The Department of Justice has argued (Perry v. Schwarzenegger) that the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is unconstitutional claiming that DOMA unfairly discriminates against homosexuals; and

WHEREAS, For the first time in history the President of the United States has publicly voiced his personal support of “same-sex marriage”; and

WHEREAS, While homosexuality does not present the distinguishing features of classes entitled to special protections, like the classes of race and gender, we acknowledge the unique struggles experienced by homosexuals in some parts of society; and

WHEREAS, It is regrettable that homosexual rights activists and those who are promoting the recognition of “same-sex marriage” have misappropriated the rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 19–20, 2012, oppose any attempt to frame “same-sex marriage” as a civil rights issue; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we deny that the effort to legalize “same-sex marriage” qualifies as a civil

rights issue since homosexuality does not qualify as a class meriting special protections, like race and gender; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we encourage Southern Baptists everywhere to fight for the civil rights of all people where such rights are consistent with the righteousness of God; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we express our love to those who struggle with same-sex attraction and who are engaged in the homosexual lifestyle; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we stand against any form of gay-bashing, whether disrespectful attitudes, hateful rhetoric, or hate-incited actions toward persons who engage in acts of homosexuality; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we affirm that pastors should preach the truth of God’s word on human sexuality, marriage, purity, and love with all boldness and without fear of reprisal; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we encourage our fellow Southern Baptists to consider how they and their churches might engage in compassionate, redemptive ministry to those who struggle with homosexuality; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we proclaim that Christ offers forgiveness of sin for those who turn from their sins and believe on Christ for the forgiveness of sin.

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# Resolution On Persecution Of Christians

## San Antonio, Texas - 1988

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WHEREAS, The publisher of the Dayton Daily News in Dayton, Ohio, is a committed Christian and an active Southern Baptist; and

WHEREAS, The publisher, Dennis Shere, recently made a decision to refuse advertising by gay and lesbian groups due to their detrimental effects on the family and society; and

WHEREAS, The president of Cox Newspapers, Atlanta, Georgia, parent company of the Dayton Daily News, fired the publisher of the Dayton Daily News solely on the basis of the publisher's decision as a Christian not to legitimize homosexuality by accepting advertisement from gay and lesbian organizations; and

WHEREAS, Cox Newspapaers is national in scope, owning newspapers in many cities where Southern Baptists live, such as Austin, Waco, Longview, and Lufkin, Texas; Atlanta, Georgia; Miami and West Palm Beach, Florida; and numerous other communities across the country; and

WHEREAS, The action taken against the Christian publisher by Cox Newspapers has national ramifications since it sets a precedent for other newspapers to prohibit Christians from bringing their values to bear upon their profession.

Be it therefore, RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in San Antonio, Texas, June 14-16, 1988, express to Cox Newspapers, Inc., our outrage over the firing of a competent, highly professional Christian solely on the basis of the employee's commitment to defend traditional moral and family values; and

Be it finally RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention call upon all media to refuse advertising that promotes homosexuality or any other lifestyle that is destructive to the family.

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# On Violations Of Religious Freedom And Assembly In The United States

Houston, TX - 2013

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WHEREAS, God has granted religious freedom to humanity, even in matters of eternal significance (Genesis 2:16–17; Luke 13:34; Acts 4:19–21; 5:29; 17:16–34); and

WHEREAS, Religious freedom is an indispensable human right and an essential component of a free society; and

WHEREAS, Religious freedom by definition includes the freedom of the individual to live in accordance with his or her religiously-informed values and beliefs as illustrated by Article 18 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights: “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance”; and

WHEREAS, The First Amendment of the United States Constitution guarantees religious freedom for everyone under its jurisdiction, declaring that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof”; and

WHEREAS, Religious freedom must include the freedom of assembly based on religiously-informed beliefs and is guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, In deciding *NAACP v. Alabama*, 357 U.S. 449 (1958) the United States Supreme Court declared, “It is beyond debate that freedom to engage in association for the advancement of beliefs and ideas is an inseparable aspect of the ‘liberty’ assured by the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, which embraces freedom of speech”; and

WHEREAS, In order to retain their official standing as a campus organization, Christian and other religious groups on some prominent college and university campuses are being required to allow into membership and leadership individuals who do not affirm the moral and religious convictions of the organizations; and

WHEREAS, Some people of faith are being denied the right to operate their businesses in a manner consistent with their religiously-informed beliefs, especially with regard to their convictions about homosexuality, resulting in loss of status, income, and livelihood; and

WHEREAS, Some officials and municipalities have discriminated against constitutionally-protected religious activities in public housing, public schools, and other tax-supported spaces; and

WHEREAS, Despite the long and honorable tradition of respect for religious freedom within the ranks of the United States armed services, many members of the United States military are experiencing heightened levels of animosity and hostility because of their faith; and

WHEREAS, Chaplains in the United States military are growing increasingly concerned about their freedom to minister to America's servicemen and women according to the dictates of their faith without fear of reprisal or intimidation; and

WHEREAS, The federal government is denying the right of its citizens to exercise their religious freedom by its insistence that they provide in their employee healthcare plans for contraceptives and abortion-causing drugs and devices; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Houston, Texas, June 11–12, 2013, express our gratitude for our God-granted religious freedom; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we call on college administrators to respect the right of students to freedom of association and stop requiring religious student groups to accept as members or select as leaders those who do not share their core religiously-informed beliefs; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we call upon the federal, state, and local governing authorities to hold any college or university accountable that discriminates on the basis of religion, violating students' constitutionally-guaranteed freedom of religion and association; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we implore the United States Department of Defense and each branch of the military to reaffirm their commitment to the freedom of all servicemen and women to conduct themselves in accordance with the dictates of their faith; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we call on these same military organizations to respect and continue to uphold the right of their chaplains to minister freely according to the dictates of their faith; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we ask these military entities to communicate consistently throughout every

branch of the armed forces and to every person who provides instruction or guidance to our servicemen and women the right of all servicemen and women, and the chaplains who serve them, to conduct themselves in accordance with the dictates of their faith; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we call on every branch of government to investigate all claims of First Amendment violations and to educate, discipline, or prosecute any who are involved in these violations; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we call on the current administration to uphold the constitutional protections accorded people of faith to provide healthcare for their employees that is consistent with their core religious beliefs; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge those who engage in defending the legal rights of people of faith to come to the aid of those who are facing discrimination for their faith by federal, state, and local governments, institutions, or individuals; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention to continue its faithful defense and advocacy of the God-given and constitutionally-guaranteed rights of freedom of religion and assembly; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we commit to stand with and pray for those in our nation and around the world who are persecuted for their faith.

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# On Protecting Religious Liberty

## New Orleans - 2012

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WHEREAS, God has made the human conscience inviolable (Romans 2:14–15; 1 Corinthians 4:3–5; 8:12; 10:29); and

WHEREAS, God has granted to all human beings the freedom to worship or not to worship according to the dictates of their consciences (Matthew 23:37; Revelation 3:20); and

WHEREAS, History is replete with examples of the disastrous results of governmental efforts to interfere with individual conscience and religious belief; and

WHEREAS, Our Baptist forebears suffered great persecution from civil authorities, including beatings, imprisonment, and death because of their commitment to the inviolable nature of conscience and faith; and

WHEREAS, The First Amendment to the United States Constitution protects United States citizens from any interference by the Federal Government in their “free exercise” of religion; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Health and Human Services has determined that all health care plans under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) must provide free of charge contraceptives and abortion causing drugs and devices, even if such provisions violate the faith convictions of religious employers, health plan providers, and participants; and

WHEREAS, President Obama and his administration is requiring health plans under PPACA to maintain a separate abortion fund supported by a premium surcharge on health plan participants regardless of their religiously-informed convictions about abortion; and

WHEREAS, The Justice Department (*Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. EEOC*, 2012) has asserted that government has the authority to determine which ministries of a church qualify for First Amendment staffing protections, in clear violation of the biblical teaching that churches are unique institutions by virtue of their divine origin (Matthew 16:18); and

WHEREAS, The United States military is currently engaged in efforts to normalize homosexual



behavior in the armed services, threatening the ability of chaplains to perform ministry according to the dictates of their consciences and the teachings of their faith; and

WHEREAS, The Justice Department has argued that the federal definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman is unconstitutional, threatening the ability of religious business owners and religious organizations to offer their services to those only who share their faith convictions about marriage; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 19–20, 2012, steadfastly object to the administration's efforts to undermine the religious liberty of American citizens; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we call on President Obama to instruct the Department of Health and Human Services to withdraw its insistence that health care plans provide contraceptives and abortion causing drugs and devices and instead exempt from this requirement all religious organizations and people of faith, whether in their private capacity or as employers, who declare a religious objection to such coverage; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we deplore the provision in the PPACA that sets up a separate abortion fund in health care plans as well as the administration's efforts to require United States citizens to pay for abortion through their health care premiums contrary to the dictates of their faith; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we declare our support for the Constitution's recognition of the unique nature of the church and insist that the Justice Department retract its offensive, unconstitutional attitude toward the church; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we wholeheartedly support the ministry of chaplains in the United States military and call on the Obama administration to instruct our military leaders to ensure the freedom of chaplains to minister to members of the armed services according to the dictates of the chaplains' consciences without fear or coercion; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we express our deepest appreciation for every person who serves in the armed services of our nation and call on the Obama administration to guarantee the right of those who have volunteered to serve to express their religious convictions about homosexual behavior without fear of reprisal; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we call on the Justice Department to cease its efforts to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act and instead engage in a vigorous effort to defend this law of the land from every challenge; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we pledge to defend the God-given and constitutionally guaranteed right of every American citizen to worship God freely in thought, word, and action, according to the dictates of his or her conscience.

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