

[REDACTED]

7: ON CHRIST'S SOLE LORDSHIP OVER EVERY HUMAN CONSCIENCE

WHEREAS, The Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God who came in human flesh, died on the cross and rose from the dead, was given all authority in heaven and on earth, is the only mediator between God and man, reigns as the only head over the church and the world, and will return personally to judge the living and the dead (Matthew 28: 18; John 5:22; Ephesians 1:22, 5:23; Colossians 1: 18; 1Timothy 2:5-6; 2 Timothy 4:1; Revelation 19:11-13); and

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WHEREAS, Human beings remain personally responsible (Ezekiel 18:1–4), and conversion occurs in the heart and conscience through personal conviction of sin (Acts 2:37; Romans 2:14–16; Titus 3:11), personal repentance (Acts 2:38; 8:22; 17:30), and personal faith (Romans 10:9–10), and all people shall give an account for their own actions to God before his throne of final judgment (Romans 14:10; Revelation 20:11–15); and

WHEREAS, The act of believer’s baptism requires personal commitment to Christ, inwardly through the “conscience” (1 Peter 3:21) exercising personal repentance and personal faith (Acts 2:38, 8:34–36, 16:30–31; Romans 10:9–10), while outwardly making personal confession (Romans 10:9–10; 1 John 1:9) and joining the church’s covenant with God (Matthew 18:18–20); and

WHEREAS, The first English Baptists rejected any extra-biblical magisterium, instead holding that the personal conscience is held captive to the Word of God alone, demanding for the first time in the English language that religion be left “free to every man’s conscience,” “for Christ only is the king, and lawgiver of the church and conscience” (Propositions and Conclusions, 1612); and

WHEREAS, Early American Baptists advocated liberty of conscience against state authority over the church, John Leland declaring, “Every man must give an account of himself to God, and therefore every man ought to be at liberty to serve God in that way that he can best reconcile it to his conscience” (Right of Conscience Inalienable, 1791); and

WHEREAS, The Baptist Faith and Message states that God the Son “now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord” (Article II), that “each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes” wherein “each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord” (Article VI), and that “God alone is Lord of the conscience” (Article XVII); now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13-14, 2023, affirm the unqualified, undiminished, and unshared lordship of Jesus Christ over every human conscience; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we declare that all believers, both as individuals and as churches, are obligated to obey Christ alone as Lord, recalling our Southern Baptist belief that “Christian morality is grounded upon the moral nature of God, the moral responsibility of persons, the moral quality of spiritual salvation, and the moral demands of Christ’s lordship” (“Resolution on Christian Social Concerns,” 1955); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we affirm again the biblical, evangelical, and Baptist doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, convicted by Scripture that every believer has been called to obey both the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we as Southern Baptists state unequivocally our commitment to 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” (Baptist Faith and Message, Article XVII); and be it further

RESOLVED, That we decry any effort which seeks to supplant the sole lordship of Christ over consciences through confusing the separate covenants and responsibilities of the church and the state; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we reaffirm that Christian authority may “never be exercised apart from Christ’s lordship and must be exercised only for God’s glory as revealed in the Word interpreted by the congregation led by the Holy Spirit” (“On Local Church Autonomy And Accountability,” 2019); and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we reaffirm our commitment to the total and absolute lordship of Jesus Christ in every area of life and seek to boldly proclaim to every person the good news that Jesus Christ is the only Savior whose Spirit invites the consciences of men and women to be renewed through faith in Him as Lord.

8: ON OPPOSING "GENDER TRANSITIONS"

WHEREAS, The Bible declares that God created humans in His own image as distinctly male and female (Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:4); and

WHEREAS, The Bible teaches that the differences between men and women are complementary, determined at conception, immutable, rooted in God’s design, and most clearly revealed in bodily differences (Genesis 1:28; Psalm 100:3), not in self-defined and ultimately false notions of “gender identity”; and

WHEREAS, The Baptist Faith and Message declares that “[t]he 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” and that God created “male and female as the crowning work of His creation....The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God’s creation” (Article III); and

WHEREAS, God’s holy and good design for two distinct and complementary sexes is rooted in the created order, and it serves as the foundation for all societal cooperation and structures; and

WHEREAS, Scripture teaches that the body should be honored as the temple of the Holy Spirit and affirms the unity of body and soul (1 Corinthians 6:19); and

WHEREAS, Driven by cultural change, the promotion of gender ideology, and social pressures, unprecedented numbers of adolescents and young adults are experiencing identity or body-related distress or asserting an identity at odds with their birth sex; and

WHEREAS, The number of medical interventions for purposes of “gender transition” has also risen significantly, including the use of puberty blockers, unnaturally high doses of hormones, and surgical interventions; and

WHEREAS, These so-called medical interventions are not only spiritually destructive but also render otherwise healthy children sterile for life, impairing or destroying their fertility, reproductive organs, capacity for sexual pleasure, and at times causing lifelong medical dependency as well as unknown long-term consequences; and

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WHEREAS, Vulnerable children and teens are targets for psychosocial messaging and claims from the medical community that induce and even coerce their participation in escalating, increasingly harmful “transition” interventions; and

WHEREAS, The Lord has ordained government for the purpose of executing justice, praising that which is good, and punishing those who do evil (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:14); and

WHEREAS, Some state governments have taken action to prohibit the promotion of gender ideology and “transition” interventions for children; and

WHEREAS, Tragically, other governments and municipalities throughout the United States have taken egregious action to promote “gender transition” for children, enabling minors to bypass parental consent and obtain these life-altering procedures, often through so-called sanctuary cities that provide confidential services to out-of-state children; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13-14, 2023, condemn and oppose “gender-affirming care” and all forms of “gender transition” interventions; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we oppose “gender transition” interventions as a futile quest to change one’s sex and as a direct assault on God’s created order; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we condemn corporate medical services that promote harmful and often irreversible “gender transition” experiments on vulnerable minors and young adults, exploiting them for the sake of profit; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we call on legislatures to reverse any law or policy that supports “gender transition” interventions, undermines parental rights, or creates supposed sanctuary jurisdictions that facilitate these harmful interventions for minors; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we commend the legislatures who have undertaken just and praiseworthy action to protect children from “gender transition” interventions, have re-affirmed the rights of parents to direct the upbringing of their children, and have defended the free speech and conscience rights of religious believers from governmental efforts to coerce them into endorsing gender ideology; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Southern Baptists call on any members of the Southern Baptist Convention who are performing or actively supporting “gender transition” interventions to immediately repent and refrain; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we extend the love of Christ, who can save anyone who would call on His name, as well as compassionate care and tender mercy to those experiencing identity or body-related distress and/or are currently undergoing or have undergone “gender transition” interventions.

9: ON APPRECIATION FOR THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

WHEREAS, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13–14, 2023, have gathered to cooperate, fellowship, and worship together for the Great Commission; and

WHEREAS, The city of Charlotte was eager and willing to host the 2023 SBC Annual Meeting yet was constrained by inadequate meeting space due to the exponential increase in annual meeting attendance in recent years; and

WHEREAS, We acknowledge the gracious hospitality of the city of New Orleans for accommodating this large group of messengers; and

WHEREAS, We express our debt of gratitude to our local associations, state convention, and hundreds of volunteers to make our annual gathering possible; and

WHEREAS, We especially commend the servant-like commitment and work of our Southern Baptist Convention president, officers, various committees, musicians, and other platform personnel to conduct the affairs of this convention; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13–14, 2023, express our profound gratitude to the Lord and to all those through whom he is working to bring about an annual meeting characterized by prayer, grace, evangelism, worship, encouragement, unity, and purpose.

DISPOSITION OF RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TO THE 2023 SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

1. Adoption Is the Hope and Future of Children Saved from Abortion - Michael Haines, Stroud, OK
Declined. The Committee did not bring forward any resolutions related to abortion this year. The Convention has adopted 21 pro-life resolutions in the past 41 years. The Committee believes the Convention’s pro-life convictions are clear and unequivocal.
2. Resolution on Corporations Funding Travel for Abortions - Johnathan Gray, Dacula, GA
Declined. The Committee did not bring forward any resolutions related to abortion this year. The Convention has adopted 21 pro-life resolutions in the past 41 years. The Committee believes the Convention’s pro-life convictions are clear and unequivocal.
3. On Upholding a Biblical, Pro-Children Stance - Ryan Marks, Bloomsdale, MO
Declined. The Committee did not bring forward any resolutions related to abortion this year. The Convention has adopted 21 pro-life resolutions in the past 41 years. The Committee believes the Convention’s pro-life convictions are clear and unequivocal.
4. On the Benefits and Dangers of Artificial Intelligence - Keith Meyer, Salisbury, MD
See Resolution #3

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DISPOSITION OF RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TO THE 2023 SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION - *continued from page 12*

5. On Rejecting Pedophilia - Jared Moore, Crossville, TN
Declined. While the Committee deplores pedophilia and is confident this represents the consensus of Southern Baptists, this issue was addressed in the 2022 resolution "On the Imago Dei and the Helpful Content Submitted in Several Resolutions."
6. On Opposing Gender Transitions - Andrew Walker, Louisville, KY, & Denny Burk, Louisville, KY
See Resolution #8
7. On Social Media - Andrew Standley, Cincinnati, OH
Declined. While the Committee agrees this is an important topic, the Convention has addressed social media in four different resolutions since 2016.
8. Resolution Concerning Anti-Semitism - John Killian, Fayette, AL
Declined. While the Committee deplores anti-semitism, racism was addressed in the 2021 resolution "On The Sufficiency Of Scripture For Race And Racial Reconciliation"
9. On Mass Shootings, Mental Health, Orders of Protection - Dwight McKissic, Arlington, TX
Declined. While the Committee agrees this is an important topic, and deeply grieves recent mass shootings, the Convention has addressed gun violence in three different resolutions since 2016. The Committee also believes that there remains a diversity of opinions regarding the most effective policy recommendations to address the issue at this time.
10. On the Faithful Unknown Pastor - Jordan Spray, Fort Worth, TX
Declined. While the Committee agrees with the sentiment of the proposed resolution, and appreciates the strategic work of Southern Baptists pastors who are laboring in relative obscurity, we do not believe this topic merits a resolution this year.
11. On the Gift of the Evangelist - Nicholas Clark, Cadiz, KY
Declined. While the Committee celebrates the work of vocational evangelists, we do not believe we could add to the excellent report of the Evangelism Task Force affirmed by the Convention in 2018. Therefore, we refer the messengers to that report.
12. On the Urgency of Christian Unity - Dan Darling, Fort Worth, TX
Declined. While the committee agrees Christian unity is important, the Convention has addressed this topic in four resolutions since 2010.
13. On the Importance of Revitalization and Replanting - Luke Holmes, Tishomingo, OK
See Resolution #1
14. On Avoiding Religious Hypocrisy in Caring Well for Sexual Abuse Survivors - Allen Nelson, Perryville, AR
Declined. The Committee affirms the Convention's consensus on responding to sexual abuse, reflected in actions approved by messengers at the 2021 and 2022 Annual Meetings.
15. Resolution of Appreciation for Volunteers and Churches of Convention Presidents - Joel Young, Enterprise, AL
Declined. While the Committee deeply appreciates the sacrificial service of volunteers and churches of Convention presidents, we do not believe this topic merits a resolution this year.
16. On the Use of Entity Funds in Convention Elections - Johnny Nix, Dallas, TX
Declined. The Committee believes this proposed resolution too closely resembles a motion.
17. Thanking God for the Life and Ministry of Timothy Keller - Chris Garner, Knoxville, TN
Declined. The Committee acknowledges that many Southern Baptists have been blessed by the ministry of Tim Keller and other pastors who have died in the past year, however, we do not believe a resolution is necessary.
18. On Maintaining a Christian Witness on Social Media - Brandon Porter, Bowling Green, KY
Declined. While the Committee agrees this is an important topic, the Convention has addressed social media in four different resolutions since 2016.
19. The Office of Bishop/Elder/Pastor - Tom Ascol, Cape Coral, FL
See Resolution #6
20. On the Appreciation of Southern Baptist Women - Jared Cornutt, Birmingham, AL
See Resolution #5
21. On the Sacredness of the Southern Baptist Pulpit - Allen Nelson, Perryville, AR
Declined. While the Committee agrees that preaching is a sacred trust from God for which preachers are accountable to Him, we do not believe the Convention enjoys a consensus on the many specific burdens placed upon pastors within the text of this proposed resolution.
22. Resolution on Women in Pastoral Ministry - Todd Stinnett, Powell, TN
Declined. The topic of women in pastoral ministry is addressed in Resolution #5.
23. On the Functions, Office, and Title of Pastor with Respect to Women - Jeff Dyke, Stephenville, TX
Declined. The topic of women in pastoral ministry is addressed in Resolution #5.