



## **Resolutions Committee Report 2020**

**Barry Calhoun, Chairman**

### **Resolution One: On Appreciation for Hyde Park Baptist Church**

WHEREAS, the messengers to the 2020 meeting of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention have enjoyed a time of worship, encouragement, and fellowship; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge God's providence for all of these blessings; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge the kind hospitality and generosity of the staff and leadership of Hyde Park Baptist Church to host this convention; and

WHEREAS, we gratefully acknowledge the extensive labor and excellent leadership of the pastor and our president, Kie Bowman, and his staff; and

WHEREAS, we gratefully acknowledge that other churches have also extended hospitality and provided volunteer assistance; and

WHEREAS, we also acknowledge the Lord's work in enabling all our officers, various committees, convention speakers, musicians, convention staff, volunteers, and messengers to conduct the affairs of this convention with dignity and a Christ-like spirit; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, meeting in Austin, Texas, November 9-10, 2020, hereby express our profound gratitude to the Lord, and to all those he used to bring about a meeting characterized by evangelism, worship, and true Christian fellowship.

### **Resolution Two: On the Affirmation of Life**

WHEREAS, all of humanity descended from a single pair, for the triune God chose to create humanity in his image and according to his likeness, such that "God created man in His own image; He created Him in the image of God; He created them male and female" (Genesis 1:26–28; 3:20); and

WHEREAS, God's precious likeness and image was passed down from Adam to his posterity, the human race, through generations (Genesis 5:3); and

WHEREAS, God judged his creation of humanity to be very good indeed (Genesis 1:31), crowned humanity with honor and glory, making them rulers over the works of his hands (Psalm 8:5–6), and put eternity in all human hearts so we might seek after him (Ecclesiastes 3:11); and

WHEREAS, significant challenges threaten the dignity and worthiness of human beings who do not possess power or advantage, including but not limited to: the heinous murder of the unborn child in the womb, the enforced withdrawal of life-sustaining medical care from the ill or infirm, the prejudices and discriminations of racism and ethnocentrism, various abuses of other human persons, the denigration of opposing political groups, and persecutions of religious minorities; and

WHEREAS, Article III of The Baptist Faith and Message clearly affirms that human dignity is an inviolable status, stating, "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 and every age possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love”; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention meeting in Austin, Texas, November 9-10, 2020, reaffirm the sacredness and full dignity and worthiness of respect and Christian love for every single human being, without any reservation whatsoever; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we affirm the full dignity of every unborn child (Psalm 139:13-14; 51:5); and be it further

RESOLVED, that we affirm the full dignity of every human being, whether or not any political, legal, or medical authority considers a human being possessive of “viable” life regardless of cognitive or physical disability, and/or ethnicity, denounce every act that would wrongly limit the life of any human at any stage or state of life; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we affirm the full dignity of every human being, from the womb to the grave, and commit to model God’s saving love by sharing the eternal hope found in the gospel, to call all people to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19–20; 2 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Peter 3:14–17), and to love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:39; Romans 12:10, 15; Philippians 2:4–7).

### **Resolution Three: On Civil Authority**

WHEREAS, we agree that Scripture is the Word of God, and as such has authority over our lives; and

WHEREAS, Scripture clearly asserts that there is no authority except from God, and that all authority that exists is appointed by God (Romans 13:1-5); and

WHEREAS, we recognize that government and laws are essential to create and maintain an ordered society, and the state is ordained and duly appointed by God to uphold law and order, and to administer justice; and

WHEREAS, the dissemination of justice and the enforcement of law and order are also under the authority of God, who appointed the institution of government, and established laws by which we are to live; and

WHEREAS, God is the author, creator, and sustainer of every human being and cherishes and values every person equally; and

WHEREAS, the Christian response to authority and the Christian responsibility to love our brothers as ourselves reflects on our witness before the watching world; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, meeting in Austin, Texas, November 9-10, 2020, commit to pray for all who are in authority over us (1 Timothy 2:1-2); and be it further

RESOLVED, that we will be subject to the governing authorities, so long as they do not require disobedience to God; and be it further

RESOLVED, that, in accordance with our democratic form of government, we will insist upon, and support, fair and equitable administration of justice and enforcement of law and order, and that every race, every socio-economic group, every religious affiliate, and all persons regardless of status or position be treated equally and fairly by the justice system as well as those who uphold and enforce the law of the land; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we will encourage and affirm those who have been unfairly treated by those in authority, recognizing the right to peacefully protest, and denounce the incorporation of violence and any other criminal activity by any organization, group, or individual, as a form of protest where the justice system fails; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we will seek ways to inspire those in authority to aspire to be led by the highest ideals and the deepest wisdom that can be discovered (James 3:17-18).

#### **Resolution Four: On the Family**

WHEREAS, cases, such as *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which promote sexual immorality and harm the family and children have been affirmed by federal courts; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court recently ruled in *Bostock v. Clayton County* that the 1964 Civil Rights Act protects and promotes alternative lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, some states and courts are allowing children to determine their sexual and gender identity, regardless of the parent's beliefs, as ordered in the 2020 *Younger* case in Texas (Genesis 1:27); and

WHEREAS, the anti-Christian culture is attacking and redefining the institution of the nuclear family, which was created and ordained by God; and

WHEREAS, the roles of the husband and wife were ordained by God in Genesis 2:24 for the protection and success of the family, and the family is the bedrock of society; and

WHEREAS, all women are created in the image of God to be a blessing to all humanity and women who become mothers fulfill an equal and unique role in the family structure; and

WHEREAS, all children are created in the image of God and perfectly designed by him as they are born into world; and

WHEREAS, the institution of the family as modeled by Christ and explained in Scripture (Ephesians 5:22-32) can show his truth in love to people regardless of all backgrounds, race, and gender; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, meeting in Austin, Texas, November 9-10, 2020, stand for the biblical family as the foundation of civilization regardless of the government's actions and society's attempts to redefine the family and the roles of husbands, wives, and children.

#### **Resolution Five: On Asylum Seekers**

WHEREAS, our mission as the church, as Jesus stated in the Great Commission, includes making disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8); and

WHEREAS, we as the church are called to show hospitality to strangers and help "the least of these" when they are in need of assistance (Hebrews 13:2, Matthew 25:35-40); and

WHEREAS, the messengers to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, meeting in Houston on November 12-13, 2018, passed a resolution to "repudiate any and all assaults on the dignity and humanity of God's image bearers, regardless of refugee status..." and to "commit to share the gospel..." with those claiming refugee status; and

WHEREAS, asylum seekers are a similar but slightly different group of immigrants from those recognized by the U.S. government as refugees, because they are often already in the United States while applying for refugee status, and are trying to live and work here while their asylum case is processed; and

WHEREAS, an asylum seeker is a man, woman, or child who has fled their home country because of persecution they faced at the hands of government or non-government actors, based on the asylum seeker's race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group; and

WHEREAS, asylum seekers include many persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ in need of discipleship, as well as persecuted minorities of other faiths in need of the gospel, both of which are in need of support from the local church as they seek to integrate into American society; and

WHEREAS, while waiting to gain asylum and receive a work permit through the legal process in the United States, these asylum seekers are not eligible for many government benefits which other immigrants are eligible to receive, and some become homeless unless they find support from others; and

WHEREAS, the Bible teaches us about the dignity of work and the importance of individuals providing for themselves (Ephesians 4:28, II Thessalonians 3:8), and asylum seekers must receive work permits to earn income and become self-sufficient; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, meeting in Austin, Texas, November 9-10, 2020, affirm the value of asylum seekers and other immigrants as people created in the image of God, regardless of race, religion, or national origin; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we pray for persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ, and others abroad who are fleeing hostility to seek asylum, that God would guide them to safety, provide for their needs, improve conditions in their home countries, and protect their family members who remain in those nations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we encourage churches and ministries to reach out to asylum seekers in their communities, and to help them with their spiritual, relational, educational, housing, and material needs, and with their efforts to adjust and integrate into American society; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we commit to disciple asylum seekers while they are in our communities, and train them to live by the teachings of Scripture in the midst of the challenges that American culture presents to those seeking to live a godly life in Christ.

### **Resolution Six: On Religious Liberty and Worship as Essential**

WHEREAS, we, as Southern Baptists believe Scripture is the inspired and inerrant Word of God and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried; and

WHEREAS, we join millions of other evangelicals in affirming the exclusive claims of Jesus Christ as God and the only Savior, and in affirming the necessity of personal faith in him, truths which are at the heart of the Christian faith (John 14:6); and

WHEREAS, God has granted religious liberty to humanity, even in matters of eternal significance (Genesis 2:16-17; Luke 13:34; Acts 1:19-21; 5:29; 17:16-34); and

WHEREAS, religious liberty is an indispensable human right discerned from Scripture and an essential component of a free society as affirmed by the founders of our nation; and

WHEREAS, religious liberty 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 of 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 liberty 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, few are aware of the long history of Baptists as determined advocates of religious liberty; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing tendency to label the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the assembling of the church as non-essential and the expression of the Christian mind as a “hate crime”; and

WHEREAS, some local and state governmental officials across our nation have discriminated against constitutionally protected religious activities such as the right to assemble for worship; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, meeting in Austin, Texas, November 9-10, 2020, express our gratitude for our God-granted religious liberty to gather for worship and the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ and declare that Baptists have been and will continue to be ardent advocates of religious liberty for all; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we express our deep appreciation for Governor Greg Abbott, who, by executive order, affirmed that religious gatherings are essential; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we call on all governments professing a desire for the well-being of their citizens to embrace religious liberty as a basic and essential human right; and be it further

RESOLVED, that holding religious beliefs and exercising one’s religion are rights that supersede popular culture’s perception or governmental shutdowns even in a pandemic; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we will stand with our fellow pastors and churches that have fallen victim to the silent enemy of the coronavirus (COVID-19), as well as the crippling impact placed upon them by government mandates and restrictions that have hindered their ability to gather for worship causing a great financial burden upon many of our smaller churches; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we call on every branch of government, whether local, state or national, to uphold the constitutional protections accorded people of faith and to defend the religious liberty guaranteed to all under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution to gather in assembly for worship in accordance with his or her religious conscience.

### **Resolution Seven: On Civility in Social Media**

WHEREAS, social media is a great tool that is being used to keep people connected across communities, across continents, and is a useful tool in the exercising the right of free speech; and

WHEREAS, social media has been beneficial in helping missionaries connect more frequently with friends, family, and sponsoring churches, as they continue the work of pushing back darkness in the field, even while on state-side assignment; and

WHEREAS, our convention theme calls us to come “Together for the Unfinished Task” and keep our focus on the fields ready for harvesting (Matthew 28:19-20, 9:37); and

WHEREAS, as members of the body of Christ, part of our responsibility is to ensure that our local churches stay as spiritually healthy as possible, because we are God's witness to the world, for Jesus said, "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35); and

WHEREAS, some using social media use language inconsistent with the fruit of the Spirit such as love, peace, patience, kindness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23), and

WHEREAS, the Bible calls us to civility, to do good to others both inside and outside of the body of Christ, and not compromise our loyalty to Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:15; *Baptist Faith & Message 2000, Article XV*); and

WHEREAS, we know that our social media posts can and will follow us, for we never know who is looking into what we post, and unfortunately, we can write things that may negatively affect future opportunities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, meeting in Austin, Texas, November 9-10, 2020, urge all believers who use social media to use it to foster greater unity, to aid us in spurring one another on for the sake of the gospel and the unfinished task (Ephesians 4:1-3, 11-15; Matthew 28:19-20); and be it further

RESOLVED, in a climate of racial, financial, political, personal unrest, and a pandemic, let us consider how we can "encourage one another and build up one another . . ." in the body of Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:11; Ephesians 4:29); and be it further

RESOLVED, that we believe in the freedom of speech, and will defend the preservation of that right for everyone, yet we will do our very best to represent Christ in our social media postings, recognizing that there are times when we should dialogue with someone who holds an opposing view over the phone or invite them to meet in an effort to get a better understanding of their position rather than attack them via social media and cast a stain on the body of Christ via social media (Matthew 18:15); and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we will renew our efforts to speak the truth in love and equip the saints for the work of the ministry in the bonds of peace and let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth toward other members of the body (Ephesians 4:11-15, 29).

### **Resolution Eight: On Racial Harmony**

WHEREAS, being people of faith in God who hold the Bible to be God's authoritative, inerrant, and sufficient Word, we believe that God created Adam and Eve as the first human beings to reflect his image in this world and fill the whole earth with godly offspring (Genesis 1:26-28); and

WHEREAS, the entire human race originates from the God-ordained marital union of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:20; Acts 17:26) and Scripture does not speak of a variety of races but rather of peoples and tongues and nations who have diverse languages and live in different geographical contexts (Genesis 11; Revelation 7:9-12); and

WHEREAS, God shows no partiality (Acts 10:34-35) and Revelation 5:9-10 tells of one people purchased by the blood of Christ "from every tribe and tongue and people and nation ... a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth"; and

WHEREAS, God reveals that the dignity and equality of every human being is rooted in the image of God, regardless of ethnicity, age, or gender (Genesis 9:6b); and

WHEREAS, the sin of partiality and prejudice against some peoples, tongues, and nations does exist among all peoples in the world, creating disunity and conflict within the human race, and within the kingdom of God; and

WHEREAS, secular responses to prejudice, such as Critical Race Theory\* and Intersectionality, are analytical tools that are divergent from biblical truth and often create disunity, confusion, and conflict; and

WHEREAS, the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention sincerely desires racial harmony; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, we the messengers to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, meeting in Austin, Texas, November 9-10, 2020, will advance biblical language and avoid promotion of Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality, and other secular ideologies; and be it further

RESOLVED, we condemn prejudice as unworthy of the people of God and an offense to God in whose image all people are created; and be it further

RESOLVED, we will advance biblical responses to the problem of human sin and foster harmony among “every tribe and tongue and people and nation”; and be it finally

RESOLVED, we acknowledge that there is only one race, and that is the human race, and seek to bring all peoples into the family of God through repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, thereby producing racial harmony.

\*Although there are various descriptions of Critical Race Theory, convention messengers were operating with this understanding of the term: *Critical Race Theory is the secular view that the law and legal institutions are inherently racist and that race itself, instead of being biologically grounded and natural, is a socially constructed concept that is used by white people to further their economic and political interests at the expense of people of color. It is an unbiblical approach to the problem of sin that brings division among ethnic diversity and, as such, must be rejected.*