

Tuesday Afternoon

RESOLUTIONS

MBC ANNUAL MEETING • OCTOBER 22-23, 2018

Resolutions submitted for consideration

Resolutions

The Committee on Resolutions of the 184th annual session (2018) of the Missouri Baptist Convention submits this report to the Convention.

Resolutions recommended for adoption:

The Committee on Resolutions recommends that the Convention adopt the following resolutions:

Resolution No. 1

Courtesy Resolution to Express Appreciation

WHEREAS, the officers, committees, and staff of the Executive Board of the Missouri Baptist Convention have, through their preparation, labor, and spirit, contributed to a successful convention; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Local Arrangement Committee along with Director of Missions and staff of the Greene County Baptist Association, have made every effort to make our stay in this area comfortable; and

WHEREAS, Crossway Baptist Church, Double Tree Hotel and Fairfield Inn have assisted with preparations and have made their excellent facilities and competent staff available in hosting this meeting; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 184th Annual Session of the Missouri Baptist Convention meeting in Springfield, Missouri, October 23, 2018, express our grateful appreciation to the staff of the Executive Board and to the officers and committees of the Missouri Baptist Convention for an excellent and orderly program and for their leadership in these convention sessions; be it further

RESOLVED, that we express our sincere appreciation to the members of the Local Arrangements Committee; and to the Director of Missions and staff of the Greene County Baptist Association, whose thorough preparation and hospitality have contributed greatly to the comfort and convenience of the messengers and visitors of the convention; be it finally

RESOLVED, that we thank Crossway Baptist Church, Double Tree Hotel, Fairfield Inn and the city

of Springfield for their hospitality during this session of the Missouri Baptist Convention.

Resolution No. 2

On the Holiness and Integrity of Christian Leaders

WHEREAS, pastors and Christian leaders are held to a high standard for their doctrine, speech, and conduct, the standard being the very character and example of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 11:1; 1 Tim. 4:16); and

WHEREAS, Scripture is clear on the imperative of sexual purity among believers (Eph. 5:3) and especially among pastors and Christian leaders (1 Tim. 3:1-13) as a part of a testimony to God's holiness; and

WHEREAS, Christian leaders are to be salt and light, examples by their faith in Christ (Mat. 5:13) and their ongoing repentance of sin (Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 5:1-3); and

WHEREAS, sexual infidelity and other violations of ministerial integrity egregiously pervert and demean the image of God and always have tragic consequences for the Christian leader, for those who are victimized, and for others impacted by those transgressions; and

WHEREAS, to ignore or minimize the presence of sin and thereby excuse or deny the presence of that sin is antithetical and disobedient to the corporate call to holiness among the people of God (Eph. 1:4; 1 Thes. 4:7; 1 Pet. 1:15-16); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the messengers to the Missouri Baptist Convention meeting in Springfield, Missouri, October 23, 2018, repudiate in the strongest terms any behavior that would compromise the New Testament standard of a Christian leader's absolute holiness and requirement to be above reproach (1 Tim. 3:2, 9-10); and be it further

RESOLVED, that we call upon pastors, ministry leaders, entity leaders, denominational representatives, and Christians in public service to pursue moral and sexual purity in all relationships before God and with others, to guard their life and doctrine scrupulously, and to maintain biblical standards of honesty, fidelity, and integrity, even as all believers

(continued on page 2)

(Resolutions continued from page 1)

should seek the same standards for themselves; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we appeal to Matthew 18:6-17 in exhorting churches to exercise appropriate redemptive church discipline for addressing the sin of Christian leaders, seeking to extend restorative grace (Gal. 6:1), knowing that we are all equally susceptible to the pull of sin (1 Cor. 10:12); and be it further

RESOLVED, that we covenant one with another to recommit ourselves to confession, repentance, and contrition, and to mortify sin in our own hearts and in our churches; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that having humbled ourselves before the Lord and the watching world, with full consciousness of the judgment of God (2 Cor. 5:10), we return to the Great Commission work before us with newfound fervor and purpose, and will not become part of any growing pessimism or allow ourselves, our ministries, or our Convention to lose sight of the great and glorious task before us: the fulfillment of the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Resolution No. 3

On the Normative Sized Church

WHEREAS, God measures success in ministry by faithfulness, and not by size (Mat. 25:14-30); and

WHEREAS, Scripture instructs us not to despise those things that are small by man's standards (Zech. 4:9); and

WHEREAS, man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart (1 Sam. 16:7); and

WHEREAS, Matthew 18:20 proclaims "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them;" and

WHEREAS, the median attendance for a Missouri Baptist church is 50 in gathered worship each week (2017 ACP); and

WHEREAS, 89% of Missouri Baptist churches consist of 200 or less in gathered worship each week; and

WHEREAS, these 89% of Missouri Baptist churches are located in every context in our state: urban, suburban, towns and open country; and

WHEREAS, these 89% of Missouri Baptist churches provide tremendous opportunity for the development of disciples, pastors and missionaries; and

WHEREAS, these 89% of Missouri Baptist churches are among some of the most faithful in giving to all mission efforts including the Cooperative Program; and

WHEREAS, by comprising 89% of all churches they are only small when compared to the minority of churches that experience more than 200 in gath-

ered worship each week; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that this convention recognizes these churches as not small but as normative sized churches; be it further

RESOLVED that this convention encourages normative sized churches and their pastors to not grow weary in doing good (Gal. 6:9); and be it further

RESOLVED that this convention acknowledges and gives thanks to our Lord for the tremendous contribution that the vast number of normative sized churches and those who lead those churches have upon our convention, its missions endeavors and the kingdom of God; and be it finally

RESOLVED that we celebrate, and thank God for, faithful churches of every size, including those larger than 200 in gathered worship each week.

Resolution No. 4

On Pornography Being a Public Health Crisis

WHEREAS, pornography is creating a public health crisis (1 Cor. 6:18; 1 Pet. 2:11; Ps. 119:37); and

WHEREAS, pornography perpetuates a sexually toxic environment (Job 31:1); and

WHEREAS, efforts to prevent pornography exposure and addiction, to educate individuals and families concerning its harms, and to develop recovery programs must be addressed systemically in ways that hold broader influences accountable; and

WHEREAS, pornography is contributing to the hypersexualization of teens, and even prepubescent children, in our society (2 Tim. 2:22); and

WHEREAS, due to advances in technology and the universal availability of the internet, young children are frequently exposed to what used to be referred to as hardcore, but is now considered mainstream pornography; and

WHEREAS, a study of university students found that 93% of boys and 62% of girls had seen internet pornography during adolescence; and

WHEREAS, this early exposure is leading to low self-esteem and body image disorders, an increase in problematic sexual activity at younger ages, and greater likelihood of engaging in risky sexual behavior such as sending sexually explicit images, engaging in hookups, multiple sex partners, group sex, and using substances during sex as young adolescents; and

WHEREAS, exposure to pornography often serves as sex education for children and youth and shapes their sexual templates (Luke 17:2); and

WHEREAS, pornography treats people as objects and commodities for the viewer's use; and

WHEREAS, pornography normalizes violence and

(Resolutions continued from page 2)

abuse, and depicts rape as if harmless; and

WHEREAS, pornography increases the demand for sex trafficking, prostitution, child sexual abuse images, and child pornography; and

WHEREAS, potential detrimental effects on pornography's users can impact brain development and functioning, contribute to emotional and medical illnesses, shape deviant sexual arousal, and lead to difficulty in forming or maintaining intimate relationships, as well as problematic or harmful sexual behaviors and addiction (Jam. 1:14-15); and

WHEREAS, recent research indicates that pornography is potentially biologically addictive, which means the user requires more novelty, often in the form of more shocking material, in order to be satisfied; and

WHEREAS, this biological addiction leads to increasing themes of risky sexual behaviors, extreme degradation, violence, and child sexual abuse images and child pornography; and

WHEREAS, pornography use is linked to lessening desire in young people to marry, dissatisfaction in marriage, and infidelity (Mat. 5:28); and

WHEREAS, this link demonstrates that pornography has a detrimental effect on the family unit;

WHEREAS, the obscenity industry considers the line of legality to be drawn by prosecutors, not by legislators, and pornographers in many parts of the country have responded with claims of self-regulating when federal obscenity laws were enforced; and

WHEREAS, overcoming pornography's harms is beyond the capability of the afflicted individual to address alone; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Missouri Baptist Convention recognizes that pornography is a public health hazard leading to a broad spectrum of individual and public health impacts and societal harms; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the Missouri Baptist Convention calls for education, prevention, research, strict enforcement of obscenity laws, and policy considerations where needed at the church, community and societal level in order to address the pornography epidemic that is harming the people of our state and nation.

Resolution No. 5

On the Prohibition of Legalizing Sports Gambling

WHEREAS, The Supreme Court recently struck down the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act of 1992 thereby allowing states to legalize sports gambling; and

WHEREAS, in the wake of the ruling some states

have already moved to legalize sports gambling, and predictions are that many more states will follow in coming years; and

WHEREAS, gambling appeals to greed and the desire for more and distracts from contentment (Luke 12:15; 1 Tim. 6:6); and

WHEREAS, gambling is based on a principle of getting something for nothing, while God's Word values work (Ps. 128:2; Eccl. 2:24); and

WHEREAS, gambling, by its nature is addictive, often leading to unwise decisions and dangerous behaviors; and

WHEREAS, state-sponsored gambling is a violation of the mandate given to government to seek the good of its citizens (Rom. 13:4) as gambling preys on those most in need; and

WHEREAS, Christians are called to love their neighbor as themselves (Mark 12:31) and to seek the welfare of their community (Jer. 29:7); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Missouri Baptist Convention stands against gambling in every form; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge our leaders at all levels of government to end all forms of gambling in Missouri; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we stand against sports gambling in any form and appeal to leaders in all levels of government to keep sports gambling out of Missouri; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we encourage our fellow Missouri Baptists and all other followers of Christ to refuse to participate in any form of gambling.

Resolution No. 6

On Marijuana Ballot Measures

WHEREAS, there are two constitutional amendments and one proposition on the Missouri Ballot for the November 6, 2018 General Election making legal the production, distribution and use of medical marijuana; and

WHEREAS, the use, sale, and possession of all forms of cannabis in the United States is illegal under federal law; and

WHEREAS, the FDA serves as a consumer watchdog making sure that safe and effective drugs are available to improve the health of patients who need them, and evaluates new drugs before they can be sold to ensure that prescription and over-the-counter drugs work correctly, and these ballot measures circumvent that process; and

WHEREAS, even medication under the purview and regulation of the FDA experiences abuse and addiction such as the Opioid epidemic; and

Resolutions

(Resolutions continued from page 3)

WHEREAS, the legalization of medical marijuana will have less regulation than currently accepted prescription medication; and

WHEREAS, marijuana has long been recognized as the gateway drug leading to stronger illegal drug use and addiction; and

WHEREAS, Colorado marijuana-related traffic deaths increased 92 percent from 2010 -2014, while during the same time period all traffic deaths only increased 8 percent⁽¹⁾; and

WHEREAS, determining if someone is driving under the influence of marijuana requires a toxicology report thru lab testing, making it extremely difficult for police to enforce sobriety driving laws; and

WHEREAS, in the three years after medical marijuana was commercialized in Colorado, compared to the three years prior, there was a 46 percent increase in hospitalizations related to marijuana⁽¹⁾; and

WHEREAS, during 2009 -2012, when medical marijuana was commercialized in Colorado, the yearly average number of interdiction seizures of Colorado marijuana increased 365 percent from 52 to 242 per year⁽¹⁾; and

WHEREAS, Federal taxes collected on alcohol amount to less than 10 percent of the alcohol-related costs incurred⁽²⁾; it is estimated that taxing marijuana would produce the same gap in tax revenue vs. marijuana related costs (health care, criminal justice, workplace, etc.); and

WHEREAS, everything God created is good, yet His creation can be misused by man (Gen. 1); and

WHEREAS, marijuana is categorized as a *psychoactive* drug which alters the brain prohibiting the user from maintaining sobriety, which goes against our scriptural call to be "sober minded" (1 Pet. 5:8; 1 Pet. 1:13; 1 Pet. 4:7; Tit. 2:2); and

WHEREAS, some of the side effects on the body from medical marijuana use include depression, impaired motor control, low blood pressure, lung problems, and some cases of hallucinations, the use of it most certainly effects our bodies negatively, thus harming the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19-20); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the public welfare should take precedence over tax dollars; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the pursuit of medicinal benefits of marijuana should move thru the same process of investigation of use and benefits as any prescription medication does with the oversight of the FDA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we, the Missouri Baptist Convention, protect the people of our great state from the future legalization of recreational marijuana

(through the initial step of legalizing medical marijuana) by urging a vote of "NO" on each of these three ballot issues; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we will commit to bringing hope into the lives of our fellow Missourians thru the sharing of Good News, offering them salvation and the filling of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18).

⁽¹⁾Rocky Mountain HIDE A 2015

⁽²⁾Project Sam, 2015

Resolution No. 7

On Gun Violence

WHEREAS, The Bible affirms that God is the author of human life and that human life is sacred and worthy of protection (Gen. 9:5-6; Ps. 139:13-16); and

WHEREAS, The shedding of innocent blood is a repugnant and wicked evil that transgresses the moral law of God and does violence to the image of God in every person (Gen. 1:26-27; Ex. 20:13); and

WHEREAS, Gun violence perpetrated against innocent persons is incompatible with the character of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, Gun-related violence results in over thirty thousand deaths annually in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 there already have been a number of horrific mass shootings in the United States, claiming the lives of precious individuals and injuring many others; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that messengers to the Missouri Baptist Convention meeting in Springfield, Missouri, October 23, 2018, do grieve and decry the epidemic of gun violence across America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we express solidarity with all those victimized by gun violence and seek every available opportunity to minister to them in the name of Jesus Christ; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we commend the heroism of police officers, first responders, and bystanders who bravely intervene in violent situations to eliminate additional threats and provide emergency aid to victims (Rom. 13:1-7); and be it further

RESOLVED, that we affirm that gun ownership, in accordance with the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution, carries with it a great responsibility of being aware of the sinfulness of one's own heart; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we affirm that it is the depravity, sinfulness, and wickedness of the human heart that gives birth to gun violence and mass shootings; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we affirm that the greatest

(Resolutions continued from page 4)

antidote to the pandemic of gun violence and mass shootings is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Resolution No. 8

On the Missouri Supreme Court's Dred Scott Decision and Racial Reconciliation

WHEREAS, the Missouri Baptist Convention adopted a resolution in 2007 on the 150th Anniversary of the Dred Scott Decision wholly lamenting and repenting of any active or passive support of this decision; and

WHEREAS, the Scriptures teach that God has made all people in His image (Gen. 1:27) and He made from one man and one woman all peoples to live on the earth (Gen. 3:20; Acts 17:26); and

WHEREAS, God sent Jesus to die for the sins of the world (1 John 2:2), and, in Christ, is reconciling to Himself people from every tribe, tongue, and nation (Rev. 5:9); and

WHEREAS, God desires to reconcile sinners to Himself through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross (Gal. 1:4, 3:13-14), and reconciling sinners to one another (Gal. 5:13-14); and

WHEREAS, the prevailing demonstration of love for neighbor is to show mercy (Luke 10:29-37); and

WHEREAS, racism is a plague on society that has repeatedly caused people to fail to demonstrate love to their neighbors; and

WHEREAS, racism can exist both inside and outside the church; and

WHEREAS, one of the most egregious demonstrations of the plight of racism was the Dred Scott decision by the Missouri Supreme Court on March 22, 1852, which was affirmed by the United States Supreme Court on March 6, 1857; and

WHEREAS, the Dred Scott decision's assertion that people of African ancestry were "unfit to associate with the white race," and that "they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect," was sinfully wrong and a reminder that courts are capable of errors; and

WHEREAS, we are guilty of the same kind of prejudice if we treat a fellow image bearer of God as if they are less than us or have any attitudes toward them that fail to reflect God's redemptive love; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we denounce the Missouri Supreme Court's decision of March 22, 1852 denying personhood to Dred Scott and all attitudes of racism that contributed to the decision then, and can create societal rifts today on the grounds that such attitudes are deeply unscriptural; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Missouri Baptist Convention call on the Missouri Legislature to formally denounce the decision of the Missouri Supreme Court of March 22, 1852, in that it contradicts the principle that "all men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights"; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we commend our churches to continue to reach out to all persons regardless of ethnicity showing mercy to all for whom Christ died, and look forward to the day that we will gather as a diverse assembly in Heaven; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we pray for and work toward the day when the sin of racism is eradicated from the Body of Christ so that our state and world see the love of Christ demonstrated in and through the churches of the Missouri Baptist Convention.

Resolution No. 9

On Sexuality and Christian Identity

WHEREAS, the historic Baptist and evangelical movement teaches that every born-again believer is a new man, has a new name, possesses a new nature, has become a new creation, shares unbroken union with Christ, and has broken decisively with the old man, the old nature, the reign of death in Adam, and the tyranny of Satan (Rom. 6 & 8; Eph. 2; Col. 3); and

WHEREAS, over the centuries countless sinners have left behind sinful identities and practices of all kinds, including homosexuality, and now form a golden chain of spiritual exiles from Egypt, Babylon, and Sodom following Christ the cruciform King to the New Canaan; and

WHEREAS, in recent days the need for renunciation of a sinful identity has come into question through the Revoice conference held in Saint Louis, Missouri, which taught that believers can have both a Christian identity and a "LGBT" or "gay" identity; and

WHEREAS, the Revoice conference encouraged the church to value numerous aspects of "queer culture" by teaching that "queer treasure" will enter the New Jerusalem, which contravenes Revelation 21:27, which reads "Nothing unclean shall enter there"; and

WHEREAS, a "gay Christian" identity fails to link homosexual orientation to the biblical concepts of original sin and original guilt, and errs in not calling for repentance upon every impulse—fleeting or extended—of same-sex attraction, as with all internal temptation to sinful ends; and

WHEREAS, numerous tragic examples exist of individuals embracing a "gay Christian" identity who thereafter continue to yield to sinful actions

Resolutions

(Resolutions continued from page 5)

(2 Pet. 2:22); and

WHEREAS, in Holy Scripture the Lord speaks in exclusively condemnatory terms toward both homosexual practice and homosexual identity (Gen. 19; Lev. 18:22; Deut. 23:17-18; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:10); and

WHEREAS, the apostle Paul explicitly addressed Christians who formerly embraced a homosexual self-conception and told them “such were some of you” (1 Cor. 6:11); and

WHEREAS, the Scripture gives but one glorious and undeserved name—Christian—to all who trust Christ as Lord and Savior, a name that needs and has no appropriate qualifiers or modifiers; and

WHEREAS, our identity in Christ does not need updated or refurbished, but stands firm upon the Rock of our salvation that gives us our Christian Identity; and

WHEREAS, refusing to teach the newness of Christian identity is a failure of love, a quieting of the gospel’s transformative power, an avoidance of the mortification of sin, and disobedience to Scripture; and

WHEREAS, there is infinite and invincible hope for every sinner, hope flowing from fresh confession, repentance, and faith in the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the messengers to the Missouri Baptist Convention meeting deny the validity of a “gay Christian” identity, recommit themselves to fight all forms of sinful temptation, and affirm the biblical portrait of the believer as one who has decisively broken with all sinful identity and practice and is with all Christ’s church a new creation who is being progressively sanctified by God.

Resolutions Committee affirms the spirit of the following 2018 SBC Resolutions

SBC Resolution on Abuse—condemning all forms of abuse, extending compassion and support to the victims, and working to implement policies of prevention.

SBC Resolution on Christlike Communication and the Use of Social Media—the call of maintaining self-control, expressing love to neighbor, and pursuing unity. Additionally, we are to display light in the darkness through our pursuit of optimism of speech, refusal to engage in anger and personal attacks, and fulfillment of Philippians 4:8, focusing on what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy.

Disposition of Resolutions

The Committee on Resolutions took the following actions respecting disposition of resolutions submitted by messengers to the Convention, the subject matters of which are addressed in the resolutions recommended for adoption:

Resolution submitted by Christian Life Commission on Pornography Being a Public Health Crisis, see Resolution No. 4.

Resolution submitted by Christian Life Commission on Prohibition of Legalizing Sports Gambling, see Resolution No. 5.

Resolution submitted by Christian Life Commission on the Necessity of Christian Integrity was merged with the 2018 SBC resolution on the same topic, see Resolution No. 2.

Resolution submitted by Michael York, messenger from First Baptist Church of Salem, on the Missouri Supreme Court’s Dred Scott Decision and Racial Reconciliation, see Resolution No. 8.

Resolution on the Normative Sized Church was written by Mark Clifton, NAMB at the request of the Committee on Resolutions.

Resolution on Revoice Conference was written by Dr. Owen Strachan, MWBTS at the request of the Committee on Resolutions.

Resolutions Not Reported Out

The Committee on Resolutions does not report out the resolution submitted by Don Rice, messenger from First Baptist Church of Hume, on Abolishing Abortion. While the Committee strongly opposes the practice of abortion and sympathizes with the end goal of this measure, this resolution could be interpreted to criticize the pro-life movement and align the Convention with certain groups that, in the Committee’s view, employ unchristian methods. In short, we believe this resolution would be counterproductive. The Committee stands firmly with this Convention’s 14 previous resolutions on abortion adopted since 1981. We encourage Missouri Baptists not to grow apathetic in our efforts to end abortion.

Respectfully submitted, Committee on Resolutions

Rev. Josh Hall, Selmore Baptist Church,
Ozark—Chair

Dr. Todd Buck, Esther Baptist Church, Park Hills
Dr. William Isaacson, First Baptist Church,
Richmond

Mrs. Jade Jump, First Baptist Church, Clever
Mrs. Diane McGuire, First Baptist Church,
Kearney