

Resolution
Relation of Southern Baptist Convention and Its Entities to Local Churches
and Other Baptist Bodies

Submitted By Grant Arinder

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WHEREAS, in addition to the SBC Constitution and bylaws, the Messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) have in the annual conventions of 1928, 1949, 1956, 1992 affirmed and reaffirmed the autonomous relationships the SBC along with its 12 entities have with autonomous local churches, Baptist Associations, State Baptist Conventions and various Baptist bodies; and

WHEREAS, each local Baptist church, Association, Baptist State Convention is autonomous, each “independent in its own sphere” with full power and authority to conduct its own affairs, and is thus free from any power of coercion by the SBC, the twelve SBC entities, other local churches or any general Baptist body; and

WHEREAS, autonomous Baptist churches and other Baptist bodies (such as Associations and State Baptist Conventions) have voluntarily and freely entered into and can freely exit fellowship with and cooperation with the SBC and their 12 entities; and

WHEREAS, the SBC currently has only twelve entities which are the SBC Executive Committee, the ERLC, Guidestone Financial Resources, the International Mission Board, Lifeway Christian Resources, The North American Mission Board, Gateway Seminary, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; and

WHEREAS, the principle of autonomy is consistent in the governing documents of the SBC and its twelve entities and has been consistent in the historical practice and has been consistent in the legal filings by the Southern Baptist Convention; and

WHEREAS, there has arisen confusion about the relationship between the SBC along with its twelve entities and other Baptist bodies including local churches, Baptist Associations and Baptist State Conventions, therefore be it

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, June 15-16, 2021, affirm the full autonomy of local Baptist churches, Baptist Associations and State Conventions which chose to relate to and/or invest in the SBC and any of its twelve entities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we reject and denounce any claims of absolute or qualified authority or privileges by the SBC and its 12 entities over any local church, Baptist Association, State Baptist Convention or other Baptist bodies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we affirm that no church, Baptist Association or State Convention is a member of the SBC or a member of any of its twelve entities; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that we acknowledge that no State Baptist Convention or Baptist Association or church is an entity of the SBC.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we acknowledge that the SBC nor any its twelve entities are a Supporting Organization for any church, Baptist Association or State Convention; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that we acknowledge that employees of Baptist churches, Baptist Associations, Baptist State Conventions are not employees of the SBC.