

Resolution on Sexual Abuse of Children

Proposed to the 2013 Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Houston, Texas

By

Peter Lumpkins,

Carrollton, Georgia

Whereas the Bible is clear in its affirmation that every good and perfect gift is from above, children being a gift from the Lord (James 1:17; Psalm 127:3); and

Whereas the Lord Jesus Himself demonstrated His infinite love for children when He walked this earth, encouraging the little children to follow Him, correcting those who hindered them, and condemning those who harmed them (Mark 10:13-14; Matthew 18:3-6); and

Whereas the Southern Baptist Convention is a convention of New Testament churches which unequivocally stand upon the Holy Scriptures as "the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried" (Baptist Faith and Message 2000, Article 1); and

Whereas the sexual abuse of children remains an ever increasing criminal menace in the United States as well as other countries with over 800,000 child abuse perpetrators identified in the United States alone, perpetrators who have at times tragically invaded our Southern Baptist churches; and

Whereas, some evangelical organizations, fellowship of ministers, and celebrity leaders have lately come under the closest moral and legal scrutiny, many facing criminal and/or civil litigation for neglect of civic duty in reporting probable criminal activity against little children, harboring and protecting probable sexual perpetrators against helpless children, and other heinous neglect of moral and civil responsibility toward the ones Jesus said suffer to follow Him; and

Whereas some of our entities and/or entity heads supported by the Cooperative Program have established close relational ties with some of the evangelical organizations, fellowship of ministers, and/or celebrity leaders who, presently or in the past, are facing criminal and/or civil litigation for neglect of moral and legal obligations, thus indirectly tarnishing the name of Southern Baptists everywhere and branding Southern Baptists as morally complicit in protecting probable sexual perpetrators against helpless children, the children Jesus said suffer to follow Him; **therefore, be it**

RESOLVED that the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Houston, Texas, June 11-12, 2013, urge Southern Baptists to renew our allegiance to our Lord Jesus to love children as He loves children and suffer them to come unto Him for of such is the Kingdom of God (Mark 10:14); **and be it further**

RESOLVED that Southern Baptists pledge our commitment to work and fully cooperate with duly appointed God-ordained government officials in exposing and bringing to justice all probable perpetrators, sexual or otherwise, who morally and criminally do harm to the children placed in our trust, and not in any perceivable way display reluctance in fully cooperating with lawful authorities by attempting to handle the issue "amongst ourselves" by subjecting either the supposed victim or alleged criminal perpetrator to private "church discipline" or relational "restoration" apart from full revelation to God-ordained government authorities; **and be it further**

RESOLVED that we plead with pastors and church leaders to lead their churches to study, develop, and implement sound procedural policies pertaining to our spiritual, moral and legal obligations in nurturing loving care for our children and protecting their rightful interests as members of the human family made in God's image from the inhumane, immoral treatment of probable sinful renegades in the church; **and be it further**

RESOLVED that we strongly urge denominational servants, entity leaders and our trustee boards to sever all ties, whether official or unofficial, with any evangelical organization, fellowship of ministers, and/or celebrity leader who, presently or in the past, is facing criminal and/or civil litigation for neglecting moral or legal obligations to protect the little children whom Jesus said suffer to follow Him, ties including but not limited to speaking engagements at conferences, entities, and/or agencies supported, whether full or in part, by Cooperative Program monies; **and be it finally**

RESOLVED that the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Houston, Texas, June 11-12, 2013, urge all Southern Baptists to pray for and financially support healthy children's ministries throughout our beloved convention of churches so that we may partially fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord to suffer the little ones to come to Him for of such is the Kingdom of God (Mark 10:14).

Peter Lumpkins,

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