

8. Homosexuality and Hate Crimes

WHEREAS, Christians have a responsibility to bring the gospel to bear on every aspect of culture by applying biblical values and truths to social and political issues; and

WHEREAS, Christians must also use our freedoms to defend traditional marriage, protect the sanctity of human life, and combat the propagation of immoral behavior and deviant lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, These authoritative biblical guidelines are now under persistent and concerted attack by a culture of moral relativism, even within the religious community; and

WHEREAS, Some persons and groups have asserted recently that efforts by Christians to evangelize others are inappropriate in a religiously diverse culture, even describing evangelism as a hate crime; and

WHEREAS, These persons contend that evangelism undermines a peaceful, pluralistic society and may lead to intolerance, bigotry, and violence; and

WHEREAS, Scripture condemns any abuse of sexuality, including premarital sex, adultery, rape, incest, pornography, promiscuity, prostitution, and homosexuality; and

WHEREAS, Southern Baptists and other evangelical Christians have been portrayed by the media as intolerant or dangerous because of our commitment to Christ and our belief in Biblical precepts; and

WHEREAS, God established the family as the primary and most influential social institution of mankind and ordained that each family begin only with the marriage of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-8); and

WHEREAS, The viability, strength, and stability of the social order within any nation is more dependent upon the wellbeing of this traditional family structure than any other social institution or agency; and

WHEREAS, Although God has disclosed himself genuinely in all cultures through the created order and the human conscience, this general revelation has been so perverted by sin as to leave all persons utterly destitute of any hope of salvation outside of personal repentance and faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 1—2); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we, the messengers of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting in Florence, South Carolina on November 13—14, 2007, call upon Christians to uphold the biblical standard of human sexuality against all onslaughts, celebrating sexuality as a divine gift to be exercised for the marital relationship and for procreation, but wholly within the command and law of the Lord, under whose holy love, redemptive justice, and righteous judgment all humans stand; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we humble ourselves and seek the face of the Lord, that He would become preeminent in our lives, and that the world would see a clear demonstration of His presence in our lives and in our churches; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we encourage South Carolina Baptist leaders to deal honestly and forthrightly with the Word of God teaching the subject of homosexuality in its intended context of sin; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we encourage all believers to love and show compassion toward homosexuals and transgendered persons, sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who is able to bring true freedom from error and to set free all captives of sin (John 8:34—36).