

The Resolutions Committee Report, 2021

The Resolutions Committee hereby presents three proposed resolutions for adoption by the body:

Resolution 1. (From the Commission for Theological Integrity)

Whereas Free Will Baptists believe that God has created humanity in His own image as male and female, and this gender binary is part of God's good and purposeful design in creation; and

Whereas attempts to minimize, redefine, or distort this doctrine are harmful to individuals, families, churches, and civilizations; and

Whereas sin has manifested itself in outright rebellion to this good design, as well as emotional, psychological, and intellectual confusion in some individuals concerning their true gender or sex, sometimes described by mental health professionals as "gender dysphoria"; and

Whereas tremendous political, legal, and social pressure is being wielded against Christians and Christian institutions that refuse to endorse LGBTQ+ identities as legitimate and healthy expressions of human sexuality and gender;

Therefore, be it resolved that Free Will Baptists recommit themselves to teach and model a biblical understanding of sexuality and gender in their families and churches, seeking to equip church members and leaders to help them remain faithful to this teaching; and

Be it further resolved that we seek to minister with compassion to those sincerely struggling with confusion in the areas of sexuality and gender, recognizing them to be image-bearers with inherent worth and dignity; and

Be it further resolved that we oppose legislative efforts to normalize or legitimize LGBTQ+ identities, seeing this as contrary to the divine vision for human flourishing; and

Be it further resolved that we discourage those identifying as "transgendered" from seeking surgical or medical interventions that will seek to "reassign" or "affirm" their perceived gender identity; and

Be it further resolved that Free Will Baptist congregations hold their church members, ministers, and institutions accountable to maintain fidelity to a biblical understanding of gender and sexuality.

Resolution 2.

Whereas the 2020 Annual Session of the National Association of Free Will Baptists resolved to “reaffirm and remain resolute in the established stance of this body” regarding racism; and

Whereas that reaffirmation and resolution cited a resolution from the 1965 Annual Session of the National Association of Free Will Baptists affirming that “all persons should equally enjoy those freedoms and privileges intended by God from creation, taught in the Bible, and provided by the Constitution of the United States of America”; that the “church of Jesus Christ must recognize the dignity of every person as a creation of God and must actively seek ways to bring that person into a right relationship with God, regardless of race or national origin”; and that “the transformation of mankind through faith in Jesus Christ is the greatest instrument available to break down prejudices and cause justice to prevail”; and

Whereas that reaffirmation and resolution cited a resolution from the 1995 Annual Session of the National Association of Free Will Baptists affirming that because “all people are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26),” “all people have descended through ‘one blood’ from Adam (Acts 17:26),” and “God desires for all people to be saved (2 Peter 3:9),” the body resolved to “condemn racism in any form and do pledge to proclaim the Gospel freely to all men,”

Therefore, be it resolved that this body maintain these commitments and root its proclamation, witness, and efforts toward racial equality in language, thought forms, and understandings of justice that emerge from Holy Scripture rather than language, thought forms, and understandings of justice that emerge from secular philosophical and sociological theory, such as critical race theory and intersectionality.

Be it further resolved that this body reaffirm that Scripture clearly defines every human being as created in the image and likeness of God, guilty of sin as a departure from God by all humanity, and called to salvation as the only deliverance from sin through the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and

Be it further resolved that this body reaffirm the value of every human being as an image-bearer of God and that repentance from and remission of sin is available through the atoning work of Christ alone; and

Be it further resolved that Free Will Baptists recommit themselves to the task of carrying this gospel to all men and women everywhere.

Resolution 3.

Whereas Executive Secretary Eddie Moody and his staff have carefully planned and executed this eighty-fifth Annual Session; and

Whereas the Tennessee State Association, its promotional director Chris Dotson, and its numerous volunteers have been gracious hosts to this Annual Session;

Therefore, be it resolved that this body show its appreciation with a rising vote of thanks.

Respectfully submitted by the Resolutions Committee:

Matt Pinson (TN), Chairman

Nate Ange (NC)

Bob Brown (FL)

Tim Powell (CA)

Bob Thompson (OK)