



Southern Baptists of Texas Convention

→ sbtexas.com/terlc

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A large, light blue, semi-transparent graphic of the state of Texas is overlaid on the right side of the page. Inside this graphic, there is a blurred, high-angle photograph of a crowd of people walking, possibly at a public event or protest. The overall background of the page is a deep red color.

TEXAS ETHICS

& RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMITTEE



THE TEXAS ETHICS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMITTEE

Representing the 2,500 Southern Baptist Churches of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention

What is the SBTC?

We are a fellowship of self-governing Southern Baptist churches in Texas united for the purpose of making disciples in Texas and around the world. Our convention formed in 1998 and is sister to 42 Southern Baptist state conventions made up of over 44,000 local congregations.

HOW IS SBTC DISTINCT FROM OTHER BAPTIST GROUPS?

- 1) We are a confessional fellowship committed to the inerrancy of the Bible.** The Bible is true in everything it claims in history, science, anthropology and theology. While the Bible doesn't speak in detail to every aspect of every discipline, we believe where it speaks, God has spoken.
- 2) We are committed to the priority of missions and evangelism.** Although people need the basics of physical life, including the order that government can provide, our basic need is spiritual, a reconciled relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
- 3) We are joined at the heart with Southern Baptist churches beyond Texas for the sake of world evangelism.** While the Southern Baptist Convention has no authority over our state fellowship, we work in cooperation with our national denomination knowing that we can do more together.

HOW DOES THE TERLC REPRESENT OUR CHURCHES?

Southern Baptist churches speak for themselves but where they have corporately spoken on timely issues, we represent that voice. Our churches have agreed on:

Our confession of faith

The Baptist Faith and Message refers to several timely issues according to our best understanding of biblical truth. (sbc.net/bfm2000)

Resolutions

Our convention's messengers each year express opinions on the issues of the day. These are not binding on the convention or its ministries but instructive on the consensus of our churches. (sbtexas.com/about-sbtc/resolutions)

The plain reading of Scripture

Much of what the Bible says is very clear on matters of morality, human relationships and even the place of government in the lives of citizens.

PRIORITY ISSUES

LIFE

God is the author and sustainer of life. Human life bears his image (Gen. 1:27). Our statement of faith says, "We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death."

THE NATURE OF MANKIND

People are a special creation of God. This means we are spiritual beings as well as physical ones. All people come from the same parents and all possess full dignity. Thus, we condemn racism and any attitude or action that denies human dignity. People are all equally sinful and in need of redemption that only God can provide (Rom. 3:23). Our statement of faith says, "Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation."

FAMILY

The first human institution is foundational for all that followed. God has defined both marriage and family from the beginning (Gen. 2:24). Our statement of faith says, "Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime."

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Just as the family is the first basic human institution, religious liberty is the first human right. Men and women, created in God's image, worship him with all their minds, souls and strength. That means people have the right and responsibility before God to live according to their beliefs. Our statement of faith says, "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it."

EDUCATION

Realizing that professional education has a role in building strong communities, the primary right and responsibility for the education of our children are with the parents (Deut. 6:5-7). It is they who will answer to God for their stewardship of this responsibility.