

Contextualization

WHEREAS the term "contextualization" has appeared on the current religious scene largely from dialogue and discussion of world missions by those who are liberal in theology causing rethinking and debate concerning our current missionary practices; and

WHEREAS Dr. Paul Beals, Seminary Extension Consultant for Baptist Mid-Missions and Professor of Missions at Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary by definition has said that, "For the fundamentalist, contextualization means making the Biblical message meaningful in the given culture by conveying Biblical truth in culturally appropriate forms." But, he further states, "For the liberal, contextualization means discovering how respondents in a given culture have proceeded in their religious development and going with them on a 'quest for the divine'. (In other words, the liberals are still looking for the truth). New evangelicals of various degrees find themselves somewhere between the two;" and

WHEREAS neo-evangelical leaders in missions today would advocate dialogue and cooperation with liberal thinking (Cervin, Russell A., *Missions in Ferment*, Chicago, Illinois: Covenant Press, 1977);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the messengers of the churches at the 50th Annual Conference of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, meeting in Winona Lake, Indiana, June 22–26, 1981, that we recognize the need to communicate the Word of God in terms which the national on the mission field can understand; however

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we affirm that it is not a national culture that is the standard by which we communicate divine truth, but rather it is the standard of the Word of God. Consequently, the fundamental, Bible-believing missionary has the responsibility to communicate the Word of God in a Biblical manner, in his best understanding of the native language; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we view with great caution the use of the term "contextualization" as it is generally understood and used today, realizing it originated in the mind of liberal theologians, and that we support our fundamental, Baptist missionaries whose primary goal is to preach and teach the Word of God as it is, to nationals on the mission fields of the world in the most direct, and Biblically appropriate manner possible.

Winona Lake, Indiana
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