

Church and State

WHEREAS the Savior issued the dictum "render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things which are God's"; and

WHEREAS Baptists have championed the doctrine of soul liberty, which holds among other beliefs, that (1) Adam was created in the image of God, (2) individual human beings are responsible to God in a personal sense and will be required to give an accounting to Him, (3) in matters of faith, conscience and personal liberty the individual possesses unalienable rights bestowed by his Creator, and (4) these rights include not only life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness but also specifically freedom of worship, freedom of speech, freedom to propagate religious beliefs, and freedom of peaceful assembly; and

WHEREAS historically the alliance of spiritual and temporal powers has perpetrated the gravest injustices and serious violations of these God-given rights; and

WHEREAS in our own nation religion was separated from the state in some of the original colonies only after a struggle which lasted more than a generation; and

WHEREAS in recent years and in seeming disregard of the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and of the plain instruction of history, many religious and political leaders have espoused views which represent a radical shift in attitude toward church and state; and

WHEREAS this alteration in attitude is witnessed by state subsidies of various sorts extended to church-related institutions as well as recognizable religious lobbies functioning in national and state capitols;

BE IT RESOLVED that the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, meeting in Annual Conference at the Civic Auditorium in Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 20-24, 1966, urge Bible-believing people everywhere in our land to take cognizance of the peril to freedom which is represented in the widening breach in the wall of separation between church and state as well as in the tendency toward the alliance of spiritual and temporal powers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as an Association, we reaffirm unequivocally our belief in soul liberty and its corollary, the separation of church and state.

June 20–24, 1966
Grand Rapids, Michigan