

Divine and Human Authority

WHEREAS there is an alarming breakdown of respect for authority in the life of modern society, this fact being especially noticeable among the young people who will someday assume places of leadership in our society; and

WHEREAS this disrespect for authority has been manifested recently in large scale rebellions of students on college campuses across our nation, and in other lands, in which school property has been damaged or destroyed, school buildings have been unlawfully occupied by dissidents, school administrators have been publicly intimidated, and general havoc has been wreaked and the orderly process of education disrupted; and

WHEREAS a general spirit of rebellion has been seen in many other areas of society under the guise of academic freedom, true democracy, the right of free speech, and other high-sounding phrases, often fostered and encouraged by religious leaders, and, in some cases, instigated by Communists or Communist-sympathizers; and

WHEREAS many men and women in places of responsibility have either sought to compromise with radical and rebellious elements or have completely capitulated to their demands so as to jeopardize the future stability of our society if such a trend of compromise continues;

BE IT RESOLVED that we, the messengers of the churches in fellowship with the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, in annual session at Fort Wayne, Indiana, June 23–27, 1969, express our convictions that God is the final authority over men and that He has instituted human government and other forms of authority in human society with the requirement that these be obeyed even though we may not always agree with the actions they take and that the principle that some must have authority over others and that this authority is to be respected is taught in God's Word where the Apostle Paul enjoins, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers" (Romans 13:1); and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that we call upon the leaders of our day, in all areas of our society, to recognize the divine principle of authority, to stand fast in the face of the threats of rebels who wish by force to obtain their demands, and by lawful and proper means to seek the conviction and punishment of those who persist in such actions.

June 23–27, 1969

Fort Wayne, Indiana