

Organizational Policy on Homosexual Behavior Related to Personnel and Funding

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship does not issue “official” positions on homosexuality or other social issues, for to do so lies outside CBF’s stated mission. Rather than issuing proclamations in hierarchical ways that are foreign to historic Baptist principles of faith and practice, CBF seeks to be a resource to help churches deal redemptively with the complex moral and social issues of the day.

As a resource network comprised of individuals and churches, the Fellowship is a new kind of organization in Baptist life. Though denomination-like in some ways, CBF is neither a denomination nor a convention. It does not have delegates who meet annually to vote on social issues through resolutions or other procedures. Instead, CBF’s General Assembly is a combination of fellowship, networking, worship and learning.

A national Coordinating Council of elected representatives from each state or geographic region meets three times a year to give guidance to the work of CBF. In their October 2000 meeting, the Coordinating Council adopted an organizational policy on homosexual behavior related to personnel and funding. While this policy does not presume upon any individual or church, it provides a clear guideline for CBF as an organization. The policy reads:

As Baptist Christians, we believe that the foundation of a Christian sexual ethic is faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman and celibacy in singleness. We also believe in the love and grace of God for all people, both for those who live by this understanding of the biblical standard and those who do not. We treasure the freedom of individual conscience and the autonomy of the local church, and we also believe that congregational leaders should be persons of moral integrity whose lives exemplify the highest standards of Christian conduct and character.

Because of this organizational value, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship does not allow for the expenditure of funds for organizations or causes that condone, advocate or affirm homosexual practice. Neither does this CBF organizational value allow for the purposeful hiring of a staff person or the sending of a missionary who is a practicing homosexual.

God has blessed the Fellowship with a compelling vision for cooperative mission and ministry, and it is this vision that ultimately draws people to partner with this fellowship. CBF’s core values and priorities are clearly spelled out in its mission statement. You, too, will find a home in the Fellowship if you:

- share a commitment to the Great Commission;
- have a heart for historic Baptist principles;
- prefer collaboration over conflict; and
- desire to invest in innovative approaches to meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is committed to basic Baptist principles. As Christians, the tie that binds us is our common faith in Jesus Christ. As Baptist Christians, we also share a commitment to those principles that have shaped our unique Baptist heritage and policy. These include:

- **Soul Freedom** – We believe in the priesthood of all believers. We affirm the freedom and responsibility of every person to relate directly to God without the imposition of creed or the control of clergy or government.

- **Bible Freedom** – We believe in the authority of Scripture. We believe the Bible, under the Lordship of Christ, is central to the life of the individual and the church. We affirm the freedom and right of every Christian to interpret and apply scripture under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
- **Church Freedom** – We believe in the autonomy of every local church. We believe Baptist churches are free, under the Lordship of Christ, to determine their membership and leadership, to order their worship and work, to ordain whomever they perceive as gifted for ministry, and to participate as they deem appropriate in the larger Body of Christ.
- **Religious Freedom** – We believe in freedom *of* religion, freedom *for* religion, and freedom *from* religion. We support the separation of church and state.

– *For a free introductory packet about the mission and ministries of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, call the CBF Resource Link at 1-888-801-4CBF (4223). Or visit our Web site at www.cbfonline.org*



COOPERATIVE BAPTIST
FELLOWSHIP

*Serving Christians
and churches
as they discover
and fulfill their
God-given mission*