

THE BGCT COMMITMENT TO THE BIBLE

Texas Baptists have always believed the Bible to be authoritative for faith and practice as Christians and churches. In the statement of values contained in the TEXAS 2000 report, officially adopted by the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1994, a strong statement on the authority of Scripture is at the top of the list and the first value stated. Every priority of TEXAS 2000 has a firm biblical basis which is clearly listed. All Baptist beliefs flow from the basic foundation of Holy Scripture, and none of our doctrines is to supersede or contradict God's Word.

In 1980, the BGCT passed a motion that affirmed *The Baptist Faith and Message*, adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963, as the guideline for doctrinal beliefs. The introduction to this confession of faith notes that *"the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over conscience."* This introduction is also carefully and deliberately Christ-centered, further clarifying that *"this faith is rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ. . . . Therefore, the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is Jesus Christ whose will is revealed in the Holy Scriptures."* The introduction also states, *"Baptists emphasize the soul's competency before God, freedom in religion, and the priesthood of the believer."*

Baptists use a number of words to describe the Bible, such as *"authoritative," "true," "inerrant,"* and *"infallible."* Regarding the Bible, *The Baptist Faith and Message* states:

"The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter. It reveals the principles by which God judges us; and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. The criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ."