

Resolution concerning Universalism

The messengers of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, meeting together in regular conference, June 25–29, 2012, in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania,

Believing that God is perfectly holy, and that He created people to have fellowship with Him (Gen. 3:8–9; 1 John 1:3), desiring them to be holy because He is holy (1 Pet. 1:15, 16),

Recognizing that all people are sinners by both disposition and action (Rom. 3:23; 5:12), and are unrighteous in God's sight and unable to do anything to qualify for salvation (Rom. 3:10; Eph. 2:8, 9),

Affirming that the reception of this salvation is only through conscious belief in Christ and the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1–5; Rom. 10:9, 10),

Convinced that a person's death ends the opportunity for accepting this salvation because one's relationship with Christ is eternally fixed at the moment of death (Luke 16:19–31; Heb. 9:27),

Concurring that all those who believe the gospel of Christ will spend eternity in God's presence (John 3:16; 1 John 5:11), and that all others are condemned to the Lake of Fire, a place of conscious, unending anguish (John 3:18, 36; Rev. 20:15),

Observing that some theologians are teaching a universalist view that all people will ultimately be saved; some saying that after a period of punishment all people will be saved; and others saying that all people are now saved but do not realize it; and even others suggest that God's radical love will pursue men until all are saved,

Noting, also, that a variety of others are promoting views leading toward a more universalist approach, including pluralism, which holds that there are many ways of salvation; inclusivism, which teaches that while the work of Jesus Christ is the way of salvation, more persons may be included than had traditionally been thought, some even being saved without consciously believing in Christ; general revelation only, a form of salvation in which one may come to a right relationship with God through the knowledge of God in general revelation alone; postmortem encounter, in which people who do not have an opportunity during this life to hear the gospel will be given such an opportunity after death; and various views of annihilationism, suggesting that people who do not come to saving faith will not suffer endless punishment but will simply cease to be, we

Reaffirm that people are sinful, and unable to deliver themselves; that Jesus Christ is God's only provision for a righteous standing before God; that salvation comes through belief in the work and person of Jesus Christ; and that without conscious acceptance of the gospel, a person will face eternal punishment,

Urge the churches in fellowship with the GARBC and the GARBC's various ministries to preach, teach, and incorporate a clear gospel message,

Reject teaching and teachers who promote universalism and related errors, and strengthen our stance against the inroads of these errors, fine-tuning doctrinal statements, double-checking teaching curriculum, and encouraging Biblical and critical thinking in faith and practice, and

Increase efforts to promote worldwide missions, encouraging believers to reach all people through a sound proclamation of the gospel that identifies the problem of sin, warns of coming judgment, and offers hope through faith in Jesus Christ.