



RESOLUTION ON A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Submitted by Brad Whitt, Messenger from Abilene Baptist Church, Martinez, GA

WHEREAS, the crisis of illegal immigration in the United States impacts tens of millions of people in many different ways; and

WHEREAS, Christians have responsibilities in two realms: as citizens of the nation (Romans 13:1; Matthew 22:21) and as citizens of the heavenly Kingdom (Philippians 3:20; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9); and

WHEREAS, as citizens of the heavenly Kingdom and members of local congregations of that Kingdom, we also have both Old and New Testament mandates to follow: do not mistreat the alien living among you (Leviticus 19:33); act compassionately toward those who are in need (Matthew 25:34-40); love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:39); and do unto others as we would have them do unto us (Matthew 7:12); and

WHEREAS, as citizens of the nation, Christians are under biblical mandate to respect the divine institution of government and its just laws, and Christians have a right to expect the government to fulfill its ordained mandate to enforce those laws (Romans 13:1-7); and

WHEREAS, the federal government's failure to fulfill its responsibility in the area of illegal immigration, during both Democratic and Republican administrations, has caused severe consternation among a sizable constituency of Americans and has led to the crisis we now face; and

WHEREAS, it is a violation of federal law to bring in, harbor, shield from detection, transport, employ or encourage an unauthorized immigrant to remain in these United States or to engage in any conspiracy to commit any of the preceding acts (8 U.S. Code § 1324); and

WHEREAS, the federal government has not only failed to control the borders but failed in its responsibility to enforce the current immigration laws; and

WHEREAS, there are reportedly 12 million illegal immigrants and counting who are living and working in America; and

WHEREAS, many of these illegal immigrants have been exploited by employers and by others in society, contrary to James 5:4; now,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the messengers to the Georgia Baptist Convention meeting in Savannah, Georgia, urge the federal government to provide for the security of our nation by controlling and securing our borders, and efficiently and humanely enforcing our immigration and employment laws; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge the United States Congress to address seriously and swiftly the question of how to deal realistically and compassionately with the illegal immigration crisis in a way that will restore trust among the citizenry; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge the federal and state government to enforce all existing immigration laws; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge citizen Christians to follow the biblical principle of caring for the foreigners among us (Deuteronomy 24:17-22) and the command of Christ to be a neighbor to those in need of assistance (Luke 10:30-37), regardless of their racial or ethnic background, country of origin, or legal status; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we encourage Christian churches to act redemptively and reach out to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of all immigrants and within the law, to offer English As a Second Language and Citizenship classes; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that we encourage all Georgia Baptists to make the most of the tremendous opportunity for evangelism, ministry and discipleship and join our Master on His mission to seek and save those who are lost (Luke 19:10), no matter what their status.