

March 4, 2014

To the Trustees of Louisiana College:

I am writing to attempt to correct a number of false statements that have been made against me by Dr. Aguillard, his attorneys, and several trustees as part of their attempt to exonerate the President in response to the Whistleblower Complaint that I filed in December 2012 as required by college policy. I do not intend to recite the grounds for my complaint or the evidence supporting it in this letter. I trusted that I would have the opportunity to speak in the March Board Meeting, then before the Trustee Investigative Committee, and then in the April Board Meeting. When the March meeting adjourned without hearing even a word of testimony from me, Dr. Tim Johnson, or the donors for the Divinity School, I knew my years of service at Louisiana College were coming to a tragic end. I can only hope and pray that you will grant me the courtesy of hearing a brief defense in response to Dr. Aguillard's most recent attempt to discredit me.

The procedure employed by the Board in the decision regarding my complaint was clearly unjust and betrayed the commitment of the majority of the Board to a Sanhedrin-style condemnation. Like Nicodemus, I protest: "Our law doesn't judge a man before it hears from him and knows what he's doing, does it?" (John 7:51). Please do not forget the Golden Rule. If you were in my place, you would expect an opportunity to speak in your defense. I humbly ask that you extend that same privilege to me.

I begin with a brief explanation of the background of the Calvinism controversy at LC. In the years immediately following the conservative resurgence at LC, a few pastors began to complain of problems with Calvinism on campus. The administration investigated every single complaint. Each time the administration concluded that any pressures upon students to adopt Calvinism were coming from other students, not from faculty and particularly not from faculty in the Christian Studies Division. Dr. Aguillard frequently insisted that the criticisms from the pastors were unfair and based on misinformation. Dr. Hankins, however, was convinced that some faculty were indoctrinating students in Calvinism. His first intervention was to seek to influence the hiring of faculty at LC. In 2011, Dr. Aguillard told me that Dr. Hankins had insisted that no one with "Calvinist leanings" could be hired at the College. When I asked what was meant by "Calvinist leanings," Dr. Aguillard told me that we would no longer be permitted to hire faculty who were graduates of Southern Seminary or Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. I objected that a moratorium on the hiring of these graduates was unfair. I pointed out that our only doctrinal parameters were the Baptist Faith and Message and the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy and stated that we should attempt to hire the best and brightest scholars within those parameters, many of whom are graduates of the outstanding PhD programs at those institutions. Soon, Dr. Hankins resorted to more serious intervention.

### **The Plan to Adopt Hankin's Statement as the New Confession for Louisiana College**

In the December 2011 meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees, the committee appointed a subcommittee to make a recommendation for a

policy regarding Calvinism at Louisiana College. The actual history behind this committee meeting is difficult to exhume. Dr. Aguillard and the former Board Chairman Marc Taylor claim that Dr. Hankins demanded that he be placed on the Academic Affairs Committee so he could address the perceived problem of Calvinism among the faculty. Dr. Hankins has insisted that he was asked by the administration to serve in that capacity and that he did so only against his better judgment. I do not know whom to believe. The appointed members of the subcommittee were Dr. David Hankins, Dr. Tim Searcy, and myself. The subcommittee was supposed to meet and recommend a solution to the alleged problem of Calvinism at LC before the March meeting.

No meeting was ever called. In early February I approached Dr. Searcy and asked when a meeting would be called. He replied that he was not sure. He added that he and Dr. Hankins had already had some preliminary discussions about the matter. The two had agreed that the basis for LC's new policy should be the "paper" by Dr. Hankins' son, Eric Hankins. At this point, I had not been given a copy of the Hankins "paper." However, I was alarmed that such an agreement had already been reached by the majority of the subcommittee members without a meeting of all members of the subcommittee. Dr. Aguillard supplied me with a copy of the Hankin's paper which was later published as "A Statement of the Traditional Southern Baptist Understanding of God's Plan of Salvation." I had and still have strong disagreements with this paper and believe that it would be inappropriate for Louisiana College or the Caskey School of Divinity to adopt the paper as a confessional standard. I personally believe that it stands in serious tension with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 at several points. I asked Dr. Searcy if this new policy would be used merely as a guide for hiring new personnel or as a litmus test to determine whether current faculty could keep their jobs. He replied, "Both!" Perhaps you will recall that I gave extensive testimony about these events in the September 2012 meeting of the Louisiana College Board of Trustees.

This conversation deeply concerned me. I do not identify myself as a Calvinist. I heartily affirm the lost sinner's inherent and radical depravity, eternal gracious election, and the perseverance of the saints. However, so many different definitions of Calvinism abound that I have not felt comfortable completely accepting or rejecting the label lest I appear to deny what I truly affirm or appear to affirm what I adamantly deny. I have concluded that the most honest approach is to avoid the labels since everyone seems to define them so differently and simply articulate the details of my position when asked. I attempted to articulate clearly my understanding of Scripture and the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 in the document "What Southern Baptists Believe about Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility." This document is attached. Although some of you may disagree with some statements of this paper, I believe you will all agree that it is fully consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

### **Dr. Smith's Warning about Termination of Faculty**

Since Dr. Hankins and Dr. Searcy had already decided that Eric Hankins' paper would form the basis for the new policy and since they composed a majority of the subcommittee, I foresaw serious trouble on the horizon. My concern became alarm a few

days later during a meeting of the administration of the Caskey School of Divinity when Dr. Smith announced that some faculty in Christian Studies and the Caskey School of Divinity were about to be removed in order to appease Dr. David Hankins in his battle against Calvinism. Please see the attached testimonies from Dr. Jason Hiles, Mrs. Ada Moore, and myself. Note the date on the three testimonies as well.

At that point, I considered asking to be relieved of my duties as Dean of the Caskey School of Divinity or accepting another position at another institution. However, I was very encouraged by the progress of the Caskey School of Divinity, by the hundreds who had been saved through the witness of our students, and believed that it had enormous potential to strengthen churches and help win the lost in Louisiana. I was steadfastly committed to its mission and did not want to abandon it. I also felt responsibility for the young faculty members that I had recommended for employment at LC and hoped that by staying I might be able to offer some protection to them and their families from unjust treatment.

I concluded that I should consult with the donors for the Caskey School of Divinity. I would explain to them my personal convictions. If they were uncomfortable with my views, I would quietly leave Louisiana College. I met with the donor in his home in late February. I normally met with the donors once or twice each semester. On about half of these occasions, Dr. Aguiard and I met with them together. However, on about half of the occasions, I met with the donor alone. Although Dr. Aguiard is now claiming that these meetings were a violation of my contract, the meetings occurred with his knowledge and approval and sometimes at his specific request. He never objected to me meeting with the donors until January 4, 2013, nearly a month after I filed the Whistleblower Complaint. I adamantly disagree with his claim that my meetings in any way violated the terms of my contract.

During my meeting with the donor, he read my paper "What Southern Baptists Believe about Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility" (then titled "What Baptists Believe about Election"). He enthusiastically affirmed the positions articulated in the document and added "This is what I want the Caskey School to stand for." I told the donor that I was currently under a lot of pressure due to my convictions. I told him of my sermon on election which I had preached at a church near Denham Springs. I explained that a portion of the sermon (without the conclusion which defended compatibility of divine sovereignty and human choice) had been mass-produced and sent to pastors throughout the state. I explained that in the words of "one prominent Baptist leader" that I had now become the "epicenter of the Calvinism debate in Louisiana." I told him that I did not want to bring any embarrassment to the Caskey name. In the interest of full disclosure, I sent a CD of the sermon to the donor. I asked him to listen to the sermon carefully and told him that if he had problems with any of the convictions I expressed in the sermon, I would quietly resign. The donor urged me to continue serving as Dean. He asked me to promise that I would not resign or leave without first consulting with him. He also told me that if I had to leave LC over problems with my theological views, they had no intention of continuing to support the Caskey School. He offered to contact the college and various Baptist leaders to express that commitment. I asked him not to do so. I

explained that I had not told the donor of my situation because I wanted him to lend me his support. I merely wanted to know where they stood in order to help me decide whether or not to remain at the Caskey School. Since they funded the entirety of the Divinity School endeavor, I would not have felt comfortable remaining as the Dean if my theological position had any serious disagreements with their own. In no discussions did I ever use the donor's support to manipulate administrators. My discussion with the donors was demanded by personal integrity, not driven by a political strategy.

I voluntarily told Dr. Aguiard about my discussion with the donor a few days later. He did not object in any way. I also told him of the warning that we had received from Dr. Smith. He denied having any knowledge of what Dr. Smith was talking about. He asked, "Why would Dr. Smith try to scare you all like that?" He said that he was grieved that Dr. Smith had succeeded in convincing some of Dr. Aguiard's "precious faculty" that he would allow anyone to harm them. After much discussion, we concluded that Dr. Smith must be attempting to frighten Dr. Hiles or me (or both) into leaving. Dr. Smith had made reference to private discussions with Dr. Hankins. It appeared, for the moment, that the two were part of a joint effort to purge Louisiana College of its perceived Calvinism. Dr. Smith had mentioned before that he thought that Dr. Hiles should be removed as Associate Dean of the Caskey School and he should take Hiles' position. After my conversation with Dr. Aguiard, I suspected that Dr. Smith was building alliances that he thought would result in his own advancement.

Dr. Aguiard apologized for Dr. Hankins' actions on the Academic Affairs Committee. He told me that he and the Chairman of the Board Marc Taylor had encouraged Dr. Hankins to serve on another committee, but that Dr. Hankins had demanded that he be placed on that committee instead. Dr. Aguiard claimed that he did not have the courage to oppose Dr. Hankins. But he claimed that he had a strategy to thwart Dr. Hankins' effort. I told Dr. Aguiard that I planned to meet with Dr. Smith and inform him of my discussion with the donors. Dr. Aguiard said, "I love that idea."

### **Quarles' Meeting with Argile Smith and Philip Caples**

You have already read accounts of that meeting from the hand of Dr. Argile Smith and Dr. Philip Caples. Reference to these testimonies was recently published on the Louisiana College website. At some critical points, however, these testimonies are patently false. Fortunately, I can prove this claim. By this time I recognized that I was in a situation in which few could be trusted. Dr. Smith and Dr. Aguiard were making contradictory statements. Dr. Hankins and Dr. Aguiard were making contradictory statements. Someone was obviously lying. I felt that I needed to take steps to protect myself.

I consulted with an attorney who informed me that Louisiana is a "one-party consent" state. Thus I had the legal right to record any conversation in which I was a participant without permission of other parties. Initially, I had some ethical qualms about this approach. I finally concluded that if I chose to stay at LC, recording certain conversations was my only recourse. I decided that I would record conversations but only with individuals that I suspected were capable of bearing false testimony against me.

Furthermore, I would only use the recordings to defend myself against false accusations, not to expose anyone.

The Chairman of the Board will testify that I only handed audio over to him during the investigation with the greatest reluctance. Each time I did so the audio was my only recourse to prove my innocence against false accusations. The audio of the meeting between Dr. Aguillard, Dr. Johnson, and myself was necessary to show that I did not “threaten” the President as he claimed. I called him to repentance by urging him to “come clean” with the Board of Trustees. The audio of the meeting between Dr. Smith, Dr. Caples, and myself was necessary to show that their testimony against me was likewise false.

### **False Statements in the Testimony of Argile Smith and Philip Caples**

**Dr. Smith claims that I reported to the Foundation member that “David Hankins had set out to have Chuck removed as dean of the Caskey School of Divinity.”** I did not make this claim to the Foundation member and the audio recording shows that I did not report having made such a statement. On the contrary, *Dr. Smith* had reported *to me* what David Hankins’ intentions were. This is clear from the written testimonies from me, Mrs. Ada Moore, and Dr. Jason Hiles and from the audio recording of a later meeting. The following transcriptions are from the recording labeled March 2, 2012.

Argile Smith: In my conversation with David Hankins at lunch after Chapel - I got the distinct impression that ahh - it was just a passing comment - and I didn't - I didn't ask for clarification - because ahh - I didn't - kind of like you've heard me do this before - there's some things I don't want to know -

Chuck Quarles: Yeah

Argile Smith: But he said something like - 'if this comes to the convention in the Fall and we have to bring it up for an issue - I would be glad to do it

Chuck Quarles: Oh no - gosh

Argile Smith: My point is - David Hankins will not mind shutting down the Caskey school

Chuck Quarles: Well, that's what I'm afraid of

Argile Smith: Yeah

**Later in the discussion:**

Chuck Quarles: And I'm hopeful that when Dr. Hankins recognizes what's really at stake - that reason will kick in and he will back off. Ahh - I'm afraid you are right

Argile Smith: Uh huh

Chuck Quarles: I think he's willing to sacrifice a lot to win the battle.

Argile Smith: Yeah - and he - he - This is not a doctrinal issue for him as much as it is a political issue - my hunch is he is after a win - and I think I shared with you - with you this before that he is at the end of his work and I think he is after one more win - I think he is ah probably getting heckled from a lot of people at the state convention.

**Dr. Smith also indicated that Dr. Hankins had implied that he (Dr. Smith as Chairman of the Christian Studies Division) should act to rid the Christian Studies area of Calvinists:**

Argile Smith: Yeah - that's the place where I think we need to begin thinking about the fall out - Caskey may be - may get off the hook because of the - of the - it will be up to the Trustees as to whether or not they will want to continue on. But Christian Studies - that could be the place where - because I sensed in the conversation just a little bit of a nudge - you know - that I am in charge of Christian Studies - that I should be able to do something about that you know- again I just let it pass - I think probably I will feel the pressure as time goes on - ahh - not yet - I mean the only thing I get from these conversations with DOM's about Caskey - it's almost like a foregone conclusion that they know that Christian Studies is Calvinist - is Caskey going to be the same way. And ahh - so all that is out there to be reckoned with. So, ahh -

**Dr. Smith claims that I added that “the Foundation member also wanted the divinity school professors to teach in conformity with moderate Calvinism” and that “Chuck did not elaborate on what he meant by the term ‘moderate Calvinism.’”**  
Once again, the audio refutes his testimony.

Argile Smith: Let me go back to an even more basic issue - if they intend for Caskey School of Divinity to be a Calvinist school - I can't be here.

Chuck Quarles: Yeah - That is not what they said - no

Argile Smith: Oh ok

Chuck Quarles: What they want it to be is a school that stands on the Baptist Faith & Message

Argile Smith: Oh Sure, Sure

Chuck Quarles: as interpreted in the 'What Baptists Believe About Election' document.

Argile Smith: Uh huh

Chuck Quarles: Which I don't think is a Calvinist statement - I think it is just a Baptist statement.

Argile: Well no, you said they were moderate Calvinists - I thought - Oh no - what have I gotten myself into

Chuck Quarles: No, they are not going to do that - but their stand is - If Dr. Hankins forces us to choose between his view and the Baptist Faith & Message - it's over

Argile Smith: Uh huh

Philip Caples: Well - I thought about this...

Chuck Quarles: But no, it's not a situation where you guys are going to be expected to affirm Calvinism -

Argile Smith: Yeah

Chuck Quarles: You affirm the Baptist Faith & Message and that's adequate - it's always been - the four corners of that document and the Chicago Statement have always been the parameters - no litmus test beyond that - It is Dr. Hankins who wants to impose greater restrictions.

During the conversation, Dr. Smith referred to a presentation that I had given to the Administrative Council and others on what the BFM taught about election. He then summarized my presentation by saying:

Argile Smith: Ok - but it wasn't your position - you were trying to say that and it was helpful. This is what I got from it and I am going to have to go in just a little while. Ahh - you were helpful because you said that this thing came out of the North Hampton (sic) Confession - there is room for people who are out of the Southern and Southeastern end of the house to generate books and there is room - this is what I got from it - there is room in the BFM for LifeWay to publish the Gospel Project - to churches. I mean there's room for that - but there's also room for a person like me - who is a little less inclined to ahh - agree with some of the extreme statements that I get from some of those other places. There's room for all of us. So I got that from that statement. I think that is what you were trying to say. As I processed it I said well - politics will determine how much room is actually going to be given.

I had sent a copy of the “What Baptists Believe about Election” document to the Christian Studies faculty, Dr. Hiles, Dr. Shepherd, and Dr. Smith and had invited their feedback. I had told them that I wanted to ensure before I published the document that all on our faculty affirmed its interpretation of the BFM 2000. I explained that I was willing to revise the statement as necessary to ensure that we were all comfortable with it before publication. During this meeting, Dr. Smith stated: “All of us agree with what you wrote and there is nothing in there other than a good robust Baptist theology.”

The testimony of Philip Caples also contains several false accusations (compare Caples’ signed and written testimony to audio files titled Mar 2 Meeting and Caples 4-3-2012)

**Dr. Caples claims that Quarles “shared that the donors agreed with him that the Caskey School of Divinity needed to hold a moderate Calvinist position in its teaching.”**

On the contrary, I explicitly denied that. I argued that the school’s current confessional statements, the BFM and the Chicago Statement, were the ONLY parameters.

**Dr. Caples claims that Quarles said: Philip, with the Caskey School of Divinity holding a moderate Calvinist position you may need to start looking for another job.** The punctuation seems to imply that the statement is a direct quote.

The recording shows that I made no such statement. Dr. Caples’ statement implies that I was forcing Dr. Caples out because he did not hold to a moderate Calvinist position. On the contrary, I suggested that *everyone* in the Caskey School would be wise to begin job searches and that *all* our positions were insecure. I explained that if Dr. Hankins succeeded in imposing a confessional standard on the Caskey School of Divinity that I could not personally affirm, the donors might withdraw funding. Dr. Caples’ statement has been interpreted by most who read it as a threat from me. The audio recording shows clearly that this was not my intention.

Dr. Caples’ false testimony is especially puzzling to me. I heard that Dr. Caples was spreading false testimony about my conversation with him and Dr. Smith to various faculty members at NOBTS and I expressed concern about that in a meeting with him in his office on April 3, 2012 (audio titled Caples4-3-12). In the meeting (c. 9:00 min. mark), Dr. Caples admitted that he had told faculty at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary that I had stated that “the Caskey School would probably be in a moderate Calvinistic position which is pretty much where I [Caples] place myself.” I replied, “I did not say that Philip.” I reminded him that I had always said that the Caskey School was committed to the parameters of the BFM and the Chicago Statement and only those parameters. I insisted, “I have never said that the Caskey School of Divinity is going to be moderately Calvinist.” I added, “Let me clarify again where the Caskey School of Divinity stands in regard to the soteriological debate. And this has been true of the Caskey School of Divinity and the Christian Studies Division under my leadership. Our parameters are the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 and the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy. Period.” He later said, “I may have misunderstood you and I



apologize if I did.” He said that he interpreted my meeting with him on March 3 (in which I advised him of the possible demise of the Caskey School) as an expression of my care for him. He added (c. 30:00), “I know that you said something about Calvinism that morning. I don’t remember the context.” In the meeting, I explained again my position: “I want to assure you I’m not pushing a Calvinist agenda. I have no intention of making the Caskey School or Louisiana College a Calvinist school” (36:30).

Toward the end of the meeting, he repeated again, “If I misunderstood, then again, I apologize for that. I am not two-faced and I am not gonna run around behind your back and try to trip your feet out from under you. . . If I do become concerned enough about something, I am gonna come and sit down and talk to you” (42:00). I was baffled to discover that, after apologizing and promising to discuss any concerns with me, Dr. Caples offered the false testimony months later on January 6, 2013.

These false testimonies were used by Dr. Aguillard to coerce my untimely resignation. The President commissioned the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Travis Wright, to warn me that I should accept any job offer I had if I wanted to “leave Louisiana College with any dignity.” His first warning was delivered by telephone on January 4, 2013. Later, Dr. Aguillard sent Dr. Wright to my office to inform me of the testimonies that he had secured from Dr. Smith and Dr. Caples and to advise me to leave Louisiana College at the earliest opportunity (R0002 35). It was clear that Dr. Wright had been sent by the President to attempt to intimidate me. Initially, I was not intimidated. I knew that I could prove that their testimonies were false. I did not anticipate at all the refusal of the Board to hear my testimony or my defense.

When the Board refused to hear my testimony during the March meeting, I telephoned North Carolina that evening and expressed my willingness to more seriously consider a position that they have previously discussed with me. Your refusal to examine the evidence left me no choice.

### **Dr. Aguillard’s Denials of Any Problem Regarding Calvinism at LC**

I can prove that many other charges against me detailed in Dr. Aguillard’s defense are false. Dr. Aguillard now claims that I was under investigation for Calvinism long before I filed my Whistleblower Complaint. I was never informed of any investigation. He claims that the fifth step of this so-called investigation was a telephone conversation with Dr. Fred Malone. Dr. Aguillard claims now that Malone asked if Dr. Hankins were attempting to remove me (Quarles) and that if this were so, it was a violation of SACS policies. This is a very different version of the story than the one that Dr. Aguillard told me. He told me that Fred Malone informed him that Dr. Hankins was attempting to fire *him* (Dr. Aguillard) and that Dr. Malone vowed to protect *him*.

In recording R00004 12 (beginning at the 50:00 mark), Dr. Aguillard claimed that Dr. Hankins was telling an “out-out lie” regarding Calvinism at LC. He claimed that in all of his investigations, he had not discovered a single instance in which professors were pushing Calvinism: “We have no case where it is professors . . .” (in context clearly a

reference to stirring Calvinism). During a discussion of attempts at entrapment, he claimed, “Everything that I can track is him (Hankins). That’s why this is serious. But if we can get him caught in his own lies, he’s got a problem.” He added (1:00 mark), “His perception is not normal. It’s bizarre. It’s an infatuation with his son’s future. And I heard yesterday, was it yesterday? No I heard Saturday from a source that, uh, Yeah Saturday from somebody that’s connected in the convention that he wanted his son to be President of the college.” Dr. Aguillard then made reference to his conversation with Fred Malone in which Fred Malone allegedly said that Dr. Hankins was attempting to remove him from the Presidency. Dr. Aguillard concluded, “He really wants his son in Louisiana. And there is no job that would be high enough profile except mine.” Dr. Aguillard added that he wished Eric Hankin’s “church would split on him.” Dr. Aguillard later added, ““If the rumor got out that he wanted me gone so he could hire Eric . . . that would hurt him” and “I wouldn’t mind that rumor getting out.” Dr. Aguillard also instructed Dr. Tim Johnson (who rightly protested) to contact a woman named “Pinky” who worked for a judge in Louisiana and to prompt her to create problems for Dr. Hankins that would distract him from his focus on Louisiana College. He mentioned that Pinky would like to have Dr. Hankins fired because of his mistreatment of Randy Turner, a former employee of the LBC. I spoke in Dr. Hankin’s defense. I warned that we could not “out-politic” David Hankins and that our best strategy was prayer.

Dr. Hankins developed a strong animosity toward me after he was incorrectly informed that I had told the Divinity School donor that Dr. Hankins was attempting to remove me so that his son could have my job. I repeatedly insisted to Dr. Hankins that I never made such a statement. I explained that I had been told that several times by other individuals but that I had never made that statement to others. In one confrontation I repeatedly offered to dial the donor’s number and hand the phone to Dr. Hankins so he could directly question the donor about my comments. I said that I did not want Dr. Hankins to walk away from our conversation with any doubt about my truthfulness. Dr. Hankins refused to question the donor. However, Dr. Aguillard told me afterwards that Dr. Hankins suggested that I was lying and that he was still convinced that I had made these remarks. This audio recording shows that Dr. Aguillard was the person responsible for spreading such rumors as part of a strategy to thwart Dr. Hankins’ intrusion into the affairs of Louisiana College. At the conclusion of the meeting, Dr. Aguillard remarked again that Dr. Hankins wanted to remove him from the presidency so Eric Hankins could have his job.

### **Pressures from Dr. Hankins to Adopt His View as the Confessional Standard and Dr. Aguillard’s Resistance**

In the recording titled “September 10 re Resolution,” Dr. Aguillard discussed a forthcoming resolution to the Board related to the Calvinism issue. He asked the Chair, “Do you think that will appease Dr. Hankins?” He commented, “His (Hankins) mind is made up and it doesn’t matter what the truth is.” Referring to an upcoming meeting with Dr. Hankins, he quipped, “Watch and see if he doesn’t slip in a reference to withdrawing funding.” He added, “I want to get Mike Holloway good and aggravated at Dr. Hankins because he knows a lot of people.” Similarly, in the recording titled “September 11,” Dr.

Aguillard discussed a strategy for embarrassing Dr. Hankins publicly. Dr. Hankins had supposedly widely reported that a graduate of LC, Cory Chandler, was indoctrinated in neoCalvinism at LC and then split a church by his aggressive promotion of Calvinism. Dr. Aguillard had met with Cory and two deacons from the church who insisted that Dr. Hankin's report was deceptive and defamatory. Dr. Aguillard wanted to use that testimony to embarrass and silence Dr. Hankins but in a sneaky manner that would prevent Dr. Hankins from realizing Dr. Aguillard was responsible. He referred to an upcoming meeting with Dr. Hankins and said, "I almost feel like I am stepping into the Devil's den."

The audio recordings make it perfectly clear that Dr. Aguillard knew that no problem with Calvinism existed among the faculty of the Christian Studies Division or the Caskey School of Divinity and believed strongly that Dr. Hankins' actions were inappropriate. They also make it clear that Dr. Aguillard was opposing Dr. Hankins' actions, but that he lacked the courage to confront him directly. Dr. Aguillard was behind the resolution of the Executive Committee that affirmed the sufficiency of the Baptist Faith and Message as part of an effort to preempt the imposition of the Traditional Statement on the College. The Board knows well that Dr. Hankins succeeded in having the Executive Committee withdraw its resolution after it had been distributed to the entire Board and despite the fact that it had been unanimously approved by the Executive Committee. This appears to be a clear example of the Board being controlled by a minority of its members, an approach to governance that clearly defies SACS policies. The audio strongly suggests that Dr. Aguillard initiated his campaign against "hyper-Calvinism" at LC as part of a ploy to build an alliance with Dr. Hankins that he believed would ensure his survival.

### **Conclusion**

I have far more evidence to vindicate myself and support the claims of my Whistleblower Complaint than the Board has been privileged to see. I have written and signed testimonies from every student enrolled in the Biblical and Theological Studies program of the Caskey School of Divinity. Their testimony is significant since I taught each of them in multiple classes in both their undergraduate and graduate work. I also have testimonies from every other professor that I interviewed and recommended for employment in the Caskey School of Divinity. They likewise testify that I never gave the slightest hint of any agenda to make Louisiana College or the Caskey School of Divinity a Calvinist or moderate Calvinist school. However, I suspect that if the evidence supplied here is not sufficient to cause you to rethink your approach to the "investigation" of Dr. Aguillard, nothing else will.

Dr. Aguillard cleverly used trumped up charges of a "Calvinist takeover plot" to demonize me and to deflect attention from the evidence for his misappropriation, misrepresentation, and fraud. I am a bit surprised that the Trustees fell for that. I am even more surprised that he succeeded in convincing you that the other whistleblower, Dr. Tim Johnson, was part of such a plot. Although I believe that it is unfair to label me a "Calvinist" given the gross caricatures of Calvinism that seem to prevail in the LBC, I can at least understand why he succeeded in deceiving you regarding me. However, I am

baffled that anyone who knows Dr. Tim Johnson and his theology would have any suspicion that he is a Calvinist of any sort. Simply put, if Tim Johnson is a Calvinist, by any definition, President Obama is a Tea Party Republican! I think that it is fair to say that if Dr. Johnson had not been concerned about the potential repercussions for the College, he could have happily affirmed the so-called Traditional Statement composed by Dr. Eric Hankins et al.

Ask yourself why two Vice Presidents, both of whom you previously respected, and who share vastly different theological perspectives would both charge President Aguillard with unethical conduct. We did so because we had no choice. To remain silent would have made us complicit with the President's unethical behavior.

Even after unjust treatment by President Aguillard and by you, the Board of Trustees of Louisiana College, I left Louisiana College quietly. Unfortunately, you have allowed Dr. Aguillard to defame me repeatedly. He is doing so before larger and larger audiences and in increasingly more important forums. I strongly urge you to silence him. The Scripture says that a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. I cannot sit back quietly and allow my name to be ruined by the lies of another.

I am aware that some members of the Board are already berating me for my "surreptitious recording" of these and many other conversations. I believe that the false testimony against me, which these recordings now refute, confirms the wisdom and necessity of my actions. I further believe that it is utterly hypocritical to judge the recordings that expose these lies and to ignore the lies that the recordings expose.

I am also aware that at least one member of the Board repeatedly contacted personnel at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and called for my removal from the faculty. It appears that some are so fiercely loyal to Dr. Aguillard that my forced resignation from Louisiana College was not sufficient. They wish instead to see that I never serve any Southern Baptist institution again. Although College policy assures whistleblowers of protection from retaliation, the Board (1) has chosen to hear and believe false testimony against me without granting me any opportunity to speak in my own defense, (2) permitted the President to utilize this false testimony to coerce my resignation, and (3) permitted its members to attempt to sabotage my current ministry as well.

When the Trustee meeting adjourned and I realized that no action was taken in response to my complaint and that critical testimony was dismissed, Isaiah 5:20 came to mind:

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness, who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

Meetings may go into 'executive session' and shut out the scrutinizing eyes of the public, the inquiring minds of the media, and the attentive ears of the alumni. But God will not be banished from the room. He hears every word. He sees every hidden agenda. He knows every motive of the heart. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the

evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3). He will not call evil good and He pronounces "woe" on those who do.

It is still not too late to act. I urge you to publish immediately a retraction of the remarks published in the Louisiana College website. Dr. Aguiard appears to believe that he can only restore his credibility by attempting to destroy mine. However, any attempt that I make to defend my personal integrity against his defamatory statements may expose the College and members of the Board to further embarrassment. Only you can prevent this. Please publish a retraction and apology immediately.

I also urge you to publish an apology to Dr. Jason Hiles, Dr. Ryan Lister, Dr. Kevin McFadden, and their families. If you were to investigate that sad story carefully, I believe you would discover that the refusal to renew their contracts was completely unjust and was motivated merely by the administration's desire to support the fabricated claims of a Calvinist coup. The treatment of these young men was, in my opinion, simply unconscionable.

One of the saddest episodes of my life occurred when I watched one dear Christian brother after another lose his job. I was helpless to protect them because their most serious offense was their association with me. For far too long I assured them that their jobs would be restored. I know the Trustees, I said, and despite their political alliances and theological persuasions they can be trusted to do the right thing. The majority of the Board failed them. You failed us. You failed Louisiana College. And you failed our Lord. Yet I still desperately want to believe that my original opinion of you was correct. I still hope that, however late, you will at last do what Christian principles demand.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles L. Quarles". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Charles L. Quarles

Former Vice President for the Integration of Faith and Learning  
Former Dean of the Caskey School of Divinity  
Former Carter Research Professor of New Testament and Greek

Caskey School of Divinity Administrative Council Meeting  
February 9, 2012

Below is an account of a conversation that took place between myself, Dr. Argile Smith, Dr. Jason Hiles, and Mrs. Ada Moore at the conclusion of our council meeting. As our meeting was coming to a close, Dr. Smith asked Mrs. Moore, who keeps minutes of our meetings, to stop taking notes so that he could speak off the record.

Dr. Smith suggested that the administration of Louisiana College had conspired with Dr. David Hankins, Executive Director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, to purge the faculty of alleged Calvinists. He peppered me with a series of rapid-fire questions such as "Who had to approve Dr. Hankins becoming a member of the Board?" "Who had to approve Dr. Hankins' placement on the Academic Affairs committee of the Board?" "What written document has been proposed as the basis for screening new faculty applicants and deciding who gets to keep their job?" (Despite the quotation marks, I cannot be sure at this time of the exact wording of each question. These are close approximations and faithfully express of gist of his questions.) The questions seemed intended to suggest that Dr. Aguiard, Dr. Johnson, and Dr. Searcy had plotted with Dr. Hankins to work through the Academic Affairs committee of the Board of Trustees to require faculty to affirm a new soteriological statement that much more specific than the Baptist Faith and Message in order to keep their jobs.

Mrs. Moore said that it was clear that Dr. Smith knew something and that he should share it with the group. Dr. Smith claimed that while he was at William Carey he lost his innocence with regard to the inner workings of the administration at Christian colleges. Dr. Smith said that he strongly suspected that the administration was planning to bring Eric Hankins in for some role at the College, perhaps Dean of Chapel, perhaps Chair of the Division of Christian Studies. It would be Eric Hankins' charge to perform a bit of "bloodletting," by firing a few of the suspected Calvinists and taking charge of the hiring process so that the constituency would be assured that Calvinism would never again rear its ugly head at LC. Dr. Smith presented these claims as suspicions that he had developed based on information gleaned from conversations with the administration, but throughout the conversation he insinuated that he knew more than he was actually relating.

I objected that there was no way that Louisiana College could possibly afford Eric Hankins (Dr. Hankins pastors a sizeable church that has a history of taking good care of its pastors). Dr. Smith replied that we both knew that colleges could find money to bring on someone if they really wanted to do so. I replied that only the Caskey School had the resources to provide for someone like Dr. Hankins and asked if the intention was to remove me and replace me with Dr. Hankins. Dr. Smith said that I was too valuable to be sacrificed because of my reputation with the constituency and because of my relationship to the donors. He suggested that the college might even create a new vice presidency to provide for Dr. Hankins. He insisted that the college would find the money to provide for Dr. Hankins somehow. (I think that he referred to the possibility of the LBC helping with the funding of Eric Hankins' position through a partnership similar to the BCM position, but I am not completely sure). He added that "we all know that the President has to be the



best paid man in town" and that hiring Eric at a high salary would be an excuse for the President to raise his own pay. He said that every other faculty member in the Christian Studies Division and the Caskey School was vulnerable to termination or non-renewal of their contracts, except for Chip Hardy since the administration could not get away with firing someone whose wife was dying of cancer.

I then instructed Dr. Hiles and Dr. Smith to discontinue faculty searches, until these matters were resolved. I dismissed the meeting, since I was already half an hour late to meet Pastor Bart Walker to drive to Houston to visit Chip and Katie Hardy.

*Charles L. Zula*  
*May 27, 2012*

## **Testimony from Dr. Jason S. Hiles**

*Regarding the Caskey School of Divinity's  
Strategic Planning Committee Meeting on February 9, 2012*

May 23, 2012

To whom it may concern;

On the morning of Thursday, February 9, 2012 I, Jason Hiles, attended a Strategic Planning Meeting of the Caskey School along with the Dean of the Caskey School (Dr. Chuck Quarles), the Associate Dean of Christian Ministry (Dr. Argile Smith), and the Executive Assistant (Ms. Ada Moore) who recorded minutes for the meeting. The meeting took place in Dr. Quarles' office. During the course of the meeting Dr. Quarles, Dr. Smith, and I discussed the distribution of responsibilities at the Caskey School, assignments and responsibilities related to faculty searches, and hiring policies and procedures relating to faculty searches.

After discussing conflicts between a hiring policy employed by Dr. Tim Searcy, the VPAA, and the policy approved by the Trustees of LC, conversation turned to the difficulties and challenges that have plagued the hiring process since Dr. Searcy's arrival. At that point Dr. Smith asked Ms. Moore to stop taking notes and indicated that he wanted to make some remarks that were off the record. In order to shed some light on hiring challenges, Dr. Smith shared that he had what he referred to as a "strong hunch" about what was going on based on his observations and interactions with the leadership of the college.

Dr. Smith proceeded by directing several questions to Dr. Quarles about Trustee affairs, recent committee appointments, and maneuvering by the "administration." In the context of the discussion it was clear that Dr. Smith was referring chiefly to Dr. Joe Aguillard when he used the term "administration" because he was distinguishing carefully between the actions of Dr. Searcy, Dr. Aguillard, and Dr. David Hankins throughout the discussion.

Although I cannot recall Dr. Smith's questions verbatim, he was strongly suggesting that the "administration" had been carefully implementing an agenda by strategically stacking Trustee committees with people who were willing to carry out its plan. He asked, for example, who had been responsible for getting Dr. Hankins onto the Academic Affairs Committee. (Prior to this point Dr. Searcy and Dr. Hankins had informed Dr. Quarles that the Academic Affairs Committee would craft and approve an anti-Calvinistic policy that would serve as a litmus test for hiring new faculty and determining the future of existing faculty). The supposed agenda that Dr. Smith was drawing attention to amounted to a plan to remove certain faculty members in the Caskey School and the Division of Christian Studies who were allegedly Calvinistic.

After Dr. Smith completed this line of questioning Ms. Moore pointedly remarked something like, "Dr. Smith, you know something that you are not saying. What is it that you know?" Dr. Smith was reluctant to say that he knew something, insisting that he only had a "strong hunch" about things based on his observations. Nonetheless, he proceeded to tell us that the way he saw things unfolding it appeared that the "administration," along with Dr. Searcy, Dr. Hankins, and others, had decided to rid the school of allegedly Calvinistic elements on the faculty and to install anti-Calvinistic leadership in order to change the course of the college and the Caskey School. While Dr. Smith attempted to show sympathy by suggesting that he too



would suffer from this sort of maneuvering, he made it very clear that it was actually the biblical and theological studies faculty who were at risk. He said that a couple of men would be removed from the college in order to clear the way for Dr. Eric Hankins, Dr. David Hankins' son, to come to LC and perhaps take over as the Chair of the Christian Studies Division.

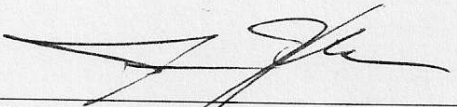
At this point Dr. Quarles objected that it is financially unfeasible for Eric Hankins, who is a pastor in Mississippi, to come to LC as the Chair of Christian Studies since the position pays less than half of what the pastor of a large church such as Eric's normally makes. Dr. Smith seemed unconcerned about the objection, remarking that if the administration wants to bring Eric Hankins to LC badly enough it will find the money somewhere. He went on to observe that the President of the college has to be the highest paid person on campus, from which he concluded that Dr. Aguillard stood to gain financially from working with men like David Hankins to bring Eric Hankins on faculty.

Dr. Quarles responded by noting that the only positions on campus that pay anywhere near what a pastor like Eric Hankins currently makes are vice presidents' positions. Given Eric Hankins' theological training, Dr. Quarles asked if Dr. Smith had any suspicions that there was a plan to remove him (Dr. Quarles) so that Eric Hankins could be named Dean of the Caskey School and Vice President for the Integration of Faith and Learning.

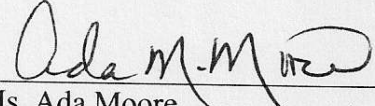
Dr. Smith assured Dr. Quarles that this was not the plan since Dr. Quarles is integral to the Caskey School and has been from the start. Instead, Dr. Smith suggested that it was my role as Associate Dean of the Caskey School that was in jeopardy. (This suggestion came on the heels of a prior meeting in which Dr. Smith expressed strong displeasure about my unwillingness to approve a request for the purchase of a laptop computer and about my involvement in the Pastoral Ministry program). Dr. Smith then proceeded to suggest that, although Dr. Quarles was not in any danger, I and other biblical and theological studies faculty were in danger. This included three recent hires (Dr. Ryan Lister, Dr. Steve Cowan) and two other faculty members (Dr. Kevin McFadden and Dr. Michael Shepherd). He specifically stated that Mr. Chip Hardy is not in any danger because no administration would dare "fire a guy whose wife has cancer."

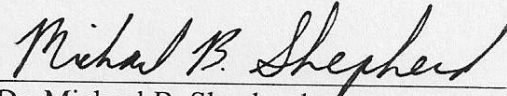
The meeting closed with a few additional questions and some interaction that I cannot recall, but Dr. Quarles and I were noticeably alarmed. As Dr. Smith and I left Dr. Quarles' office, Dr. Smith jokingly looked to me and said, "I guess you and I had better get to work on looking for other opportunities." I smiled politely and went back to work.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge and recollection the information provided in this written testimony is true, accurate, and is offered voluntarily.

  
Dr. Jason S. Hiles

5/23/2012  
Date

  
Ms. Ada Moore

  
Dr. Michael B. Shepherd

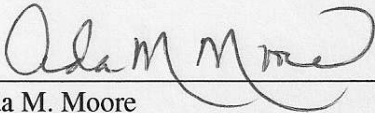
May 23, 2012

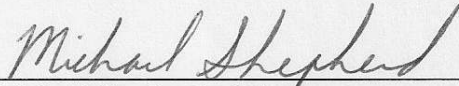
Ada Moore  
Executive Assistant to the Dean  
Caskey School of Divinity  
Administrative Council Meeting, February 9, 2012  
Testimony of Unrecorded Discussion

The following is the testimony of Ada Moore regarding the Caskey School of Divinity Administrative Council Meeting of February 9, 2012.

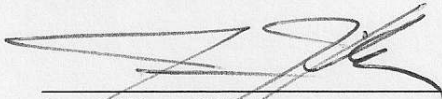
I recorded minutes for the above mentioned meeting. At the end of the minutes which were documented and are attached, I was asked by Dr. Smith to stop typing as he wanted to share some things "off the record." (Before this, the men had begun to discuss how our hiring of new faculty had been bogged down for quite some time and they were trying to understand the reasoning.) Dr. Smith then began to ask questions of Dr. Quarles regarding who had to approve Dr. David Hankins' appointment to the Louisiana College Board of Trustees and the Academic Council, as he is a member of both. Discussion then ensued regarding Eric Hankins' article being used as the litmus test for present and prospective faculty members of LC. It became very clear that Dr. Smith was concealing information regarding an agenda against some of the present faculty of the Caskey School. I then said, "Dr. Smith you know something, what is it?" He began to share, but with great caution and vague comments. He spoke in a speculative tone referring to the possibility of Dr. Hankins having an agenda to bring his son, Eric, here to LC. Dr. Quarles began to inquire as to what position they could be seeking. Dr. Smith said maybe the Chair of Christian Studies, and Dr. Quarles said no that can't be it because it doesn't pay enough. Dr. Quarles reasoned that Eric Hankins is now pastoring a large Baptist church in Oxford, Mississippi that likely pays far more each year than LC would pay. Dr. Smith responded, "If they want him bad enough they will find the funds." Dr. Quarles then said that there is only one position that could get him close to that amount of money and it would be the Dean of the Caskey School. Dr. Smith said he did not feel this was the case, as he told Dr. Quarles that he is too valuable to the LC administration as Dean and he felt his position was secure. He then said that it may be possible that the administration could be getting ready to let go of some of the faculty in both Christian Studies and Caskey to make an example of those whose doctrinal beliefs resemble Calvinists. Dr. Smith said that he felt the only person who was safe was Chip Hardy because the administration would not fire a man whose wife is dying with cancer. Dr. Quarles, Dr. Hiles, and I grew increasingly shocked and awed throughout this discussion while Dr. Smith seemed to be light hearted and as one who had all the answers, but was just throwing out enough information to strike fear and caution in the heart.

After Dr. Smith left the three of us felt as a bomb had been dropped in the room and Dr. Quarles said, "Was he saying what I think he was saying?" It was then decided that we needed to immediately halt the search for new faculty, as our Dean and Associate Dean did not even feel their positions were secure.

  
Ada M. Moore

  
Michael Shepherd - Witness

5-23-12  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jason Hiles - Witness

# What Do Southern Baptists Believe about Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility in Salvation?

Charles L. Quarles

Over the last several years, discussions about divine sovereignty and human responsibility in salvation have intensified in our Southern Baptist context. Labels like “Calvinist,” “Arminian,” and “semi-Pelagian” have been tossed around, often too freely, and this has brought more confusion than clarity to important doctrinal discussions in which we cannot afford to leave room for misunderstanding. I have always resisted these labels. My experience is that people define them in very different ways. My refusal to accept any of the above labels is not prompted by any desire to deceive others or to hide my views. I refuse to accept the labels simply because the issues are too important to leave room for being misunderstood by someone who is using a different “dictionary.”

I do proudly claim a few other monikers. Among them is the name “Baptist.” I am a Baptist both by heritage and by conviction. The label “Baptist” does not risk the misunderstanding generated by other labels because the label has been clearly defined in our great Baptist confessions. These great confessions directly address the thorny issues of divine sovereignty and human responsibility.

I will discuss two of these confessions below. Before I do, I ask three things of every reader. First, do not read this brief essay as a reaction to any recent statements offered by others in the current debate. I actually wrote this document several years ago, but did not publish it because I did not want to be responsible in any way for stirring controversy. Now that the controversy is upon us in full force, I offer this statement with a hope that it may promote unity within the Southern Baptist brotherhood. Second, please forget any label you may have heard applied to me by others that I have not personally affirmed. Otherwise, you may assume that I mean something other than what I actually say. Third, read every statement that I make in this document in light of the document as a whole. Please resist any temptation to pull a statement out of context and interpret it a way that contradicts my other clear statements.

Will you honor these requests? Promise? Are you absolutely sure? O.K., then . . .

For the last one hundred and seventy-five years, Baptists in the South have primarily relied on two written confessions to express their beliefs about the complicated subject of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. These confessions are the New Hampshire Baptist Confession of 1833 (slightly revised in 1853 and hereafter referred to as NHBC) and the Baptist Faith and Message that was adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1925 and revised in 1963 and again in 2000 (hereafter the BFM; quotations are from the 2000 revision). The NHBC is the mother of the BFM. The 1925 statement recommended that “the New Hampshire Confession of Faith, revised at certain points, and with some additional articles growing out of certain needs” be adopted by the Convention. Much of the wording of the NHBC was copied directly into the BFM. In cases in which questions about the meaning of the BFM arise, the NHBC may serve as a

helpful guide to the correct interpretation. Consequently, when the intent of the BFM is unclear, appeal will be made to the NHBC.

What do these important confessions reveal about the Baptist view of divine sovereignty and human responsibility?

## **First, Baptists believe that the lost sinner is responsible for his condemnation and that only he deserves the blame for it.**

*In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. (BFM Art. III)*

The BFM reiterated its affirmation of man's free choice in article V by insisting that election is consistent "with the free agency of man." The NHBC was even more explicit on this point. It insisted "that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth except his own *voluntary* refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation" (Emphasis added). A view that portrays God as preventing those who want to repent and believe from doing so is clearly beyond the parameters of the BFM and NHBC. Although these confessions affirm divine sovereignty in salvation, they just as strongly affirm human freedom and responsibility.

The BFM and NHBC show that Southern Baptists over the last two centuries have affirmed that in some mysterious way God is completely sovereign and humans are fully responsible creatures. We affirm both divine sovereignty and human responsibility because the Bible clearly teaches both. We may not be able to reconcile logically these two affirmations, but we seek to hold them in a proper biblical balance.

## **Second, Baptists believe that God is the cause of our salvation from beginning to end and that only He deserves glory for it.**

The BFM affirms three important truths about divine election. Let's begin to unpack these.

**A. The BFM insists that divine election is "gracious." This means that election is an undeserved gift. We did nothing to earn it or to qualify for it.**

*Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's*

*sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. (BFM Art. V)*

God chose us for salvation, not because of any good in us, but solely because of His great mercy and grace. This is implied both by the description of election as "gracious" and by the description of election as "unchangeable." If election were dependent on human actions, a person would become elect after he met certain qualifications. The unchangeable nature of election demonstrates that it is grounded in the unchanging will of God rather than the actions of fickle human beings.

The BFM also portrays election as effective and unfailing. Notice that God actually regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners "according to" his gracious purpose in election. The grammar of the confession implies that the purpose of God in election will come to fulfillment. The statement that election "comprehends all the means in connection with the end" shows that God graciously grants to the sinner all that is necessary to fulfill His gracious purpose in election.

#### **B. God granted us repentance from sin and faith in Christ as gracious gifts.**

*Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. (BFM Art. IV)*

Baptists regard repentance and faith as requirements for saving grace. This is clear from the earlier statements in Article IV of the BFM that salvation "is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour" and "There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord." God requires sinners to repent and believe in order to receive His gracious forgiveness. But Baptists also regard repentance and faith as "experiences of God's grace." By describing repentance and faith as "experiences of grace," the BFM clearly teaches that we did not repent and believe because we were better than someone else or smarter than someone else. Repentance and faith were gifts that God graciously granted to us. God expressed his grace by opening our blind eyes, unstopping our deaf ears, softening our hard hearts, and enlightening our darkened minds. The BFM affirmed this earlier in the statement "Through illumination, he [the Holy Spirit] enables men to understand truth" (II.C.). This divine enabling is necessary in order for the sinner to understand and believe the gospel.

The BFM emphasizes that obedience to the gospel is voluntary by defining regeneration as "a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, *to which the sinner responds* in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." Thus repentance and faith are legitimately described as *experiences* of God's grace to the sinner and the sinner's *response* to God's gracious work. According to His eternal gracious purpose, God imparts repentance and faith to the sinner, but He does so in a way that is "consistent with the free agency of man" (BFM Art. V). The NHBC asserts that



God grants "a holy disposition to the mind. . . . by the power of the Holy Spirit, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel." God secures our obedience to the gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit and yet the sinner's obedience to the gospel remains "voluntary." Man's freedom of choice remains intact even as God fulfills His unchangeable purpose.

How God accomplishes this remains "above our comprehension or calculation" (NHBC Art. VII). The confession teaches that God's activity is a mystery and we do not have the capacity to figure it all out. The sooner that we admit that, the better.

**C. Because salvation is God's work for us and in us, we cannot pat ourselves on the back or congratulate ourselves for being saved.** Salvation is to the praise of the glory of His grace.

The BFM insists that election *is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. (BFM Art. V)* Divine election humbles us by reminding us that God is the author of our salvation. *He* accomplished it. We are unworthy and undeserving recipients of God's goodness that is on glorious display in election.

**Third, Baptists believe that this understanding of divine sovereignty and human responsibility encourages rather than thwarts missions and evangelism.**

*It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ. (BFM Art. XI)*

Twice the confession describes evangelism as a duty demanded by Christ's command to his disciples. However, it insists that evangelism is also a privilege, for it is the believer's honor and joy to speak of the Savior. One should not overlook a third motivation for evangelism—Christian love. The confession teaches that the new birth imparts to the believer deep, sincere love for others. Since there is no hope for salvation apart from the gospel, nothing could be more unloving than hiding and hoarding the gospel from the lost. And there can be no greater display of compassion for others than expressing concern for an eternal soul by boldly sharing the gospel.

The NHBC said that a proper understanding of election "encourages the use of means in the highest degree." Although the elect will be regenerated, justified, sanctified, and

glorified, these ends will not be achieved apart from the preaching of the gospel. A view of election that sees missions and evangelism as unnecessary or that dampens missionary passion and evangelistic fervor is inconsistent with the Baptist view of election. Baptist history gives many examples of the consistency of a strong view of election with an equally strong commitment to proclaim the gospel. Our greatest Baptist missionaries and preachers, figures like William Carey, Charles H. Spurgeon, Lottie Moon, and Joseph Willis affirmed the doctrine of election and devoted their lives to proclaiming the glories of God's grace. Would to God that every Baptist joined their ranks!

The views expressed in the Baptist Faith and Message have a strong biblical basis. Unfortunately, the limitations of this article do not permit discussion of this rich biblical foundation. Every reader would profit by getting a copy of the document and looking up the many Bible passages that support each article. The confession is a very accurate expression of many of the important truths of the God-breathed word.

The Baptist Faith and Message provides helpful parameters on this issue for Baptist institutions. However, we should honor and seek to protect the right of those in the Baptist family to hold differences of opinion that may coexist within these parameters. I pray that the same love imparted to the believer through the new birth that compels us to show compassion to the lost would likewise move us to show compassion to those brothers and sisters who differ from us on the intricacies of these mysterious and glorious doctrines.