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Bmaa Doctrinal Statement: 2016 Edition

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On May 25-26, 1950, representatives from 465 churches met in Little Rock, Arkansas, to set in order an association of churches for missionary, education, and benevolent ministries. Those representatives (messengers) of the churches elected a committee of twenty-one to produce a Statement of Principles, including a Doctrinal Statement, in order to provide guidelines of cooperation for the new association, now known as the Baptist Missionary Association of America.

Primarily because of time restrictions, that committee formulated a brief statement of each doctrine rather than a broader explanation of Bible truths. Through the following years, the messengers in annual sessions expanded some articles for clarification, resulting in some articles being expressed in full sentences while others were only brief phrases. Many came to believe that the Statement would become a more effective document through a balanced restatement of the truths it contained.

In the April, 1987, annual session of the Baptist Missionary Association of America, the messengers adopted a resolution to elect a committee of eleven members "to revise our present Doctrinal Statement by completing, rewording, adding, or joining its present articles, after the pattern common in Baptist confessions of faith through the centuries."

The committee worked throughout the following year and presented the proposed Doctrinal Statement to the messenger body during the April, 1988, annual session. After some changes in wording by the action of the committee and the messengers, the messengers expressed appreciation to the committee and the presiding officers of the Association and referred the proposed Doctrinal Statement to the churches for their consideration and vote during the year. At the 1989 annual session, the clerks reported that a majority of the churches had approved the proposed Doctrinal Statement.

This Doctrinal Statement provides an effective teaching opportunity for our churches. Yet, it is only an incomplete and imperfect instrument because fallible human beings wrote it and authorized it. Our ultimate source of truth is only in God and His inerrant Word, the Bible. In Article II, Section B, we confess, "The Scriptures provide the standard for the believer's faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:16, 17), reveal the principles by which God will judge all (Heb. 4:12; John 12:48), and express the true basis of Christian fellowship (Gal. 1:8, 9; 2 John 9-11)."

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