



# Southern Baptist Convention to Debate Critical Race Theory

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), the annual meeting of the nation's largest Christian denomination after the Roman Catholic Church, will convene next week in Nashville. The convention is expected to address the highly contentious issue of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and how the denomination should view what is actually a branch of Marxist Critical Theory — the belief that American society and all non-communist societies are marred by a class struggle between oppressors and the oppressed.



AP Images

Many are predicting that the controversy could tear the denomination apart, which is, one could argue, exactly what atheistic Marxists would like to see.

The Southern Baptist Convention is the name both of the denomination and the annual meeting. The SBC was formed in 1845, when the Triennial Convention of Baptists (formed mainly for missionary efforts) divided into a Northern Baptist Convention, and a Southern Baptist Convention. The Northern Baptists eventually renamed themselves the American Baptist Convention and drifted leftward, theologically and politically, while the Southern Baptist Convention thrived during the last part of the 19th century and into the 20th century, at one time growing faster than the population of the United States.

Each congregation within the SBC elects its own officers and makes its own decisions on how to carry out the Great Commission of sharing the gospel message. While each congregation is independent, with no hierarchical structure as is found in many other denominations, SBC churches cooperate within the SBC in mission efforts, both nationally and internationally. In addition, the SBC publishes Sunday School literature, runs six theological seminaries, and conducts relief efforts. Most of the food provided by the Red Cross comes from the Baptist Kitchens ministry.

The annual convention is made up of messengers — not delegates — who elect convention officers, primarily a president, for a one-year term. Along with the Executive Committee and other boards and commissions, the president oversees denominational agencies.

One agency, the Ethics and Religious Liberty Committee, headed until recently by its president, Russell Moore, has been a major source of controversy. Most of this controversy has been generated by Moore, who has used his position to push the denomination into a less-conservative stance. When Moore denounced President Donald Trump, for example, many in the media, and even in the general public, have taken Moore's personal opinions as somehow the opinion of the SBC itself.

Moore's public airing of his views have led to much division within the denomination. For example, in



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2019, Moore spearheaded an effort for the convention to adopt a resolution in favor of CRT. The resolution called CRT “a set of analytical tools that explain how race has and continues to function in society, and intersectionality is the study of how different personal characteristics overlap and inform one’s experience.” The resolution did not denounce CRT, but rather blamed “individuals” who “appropriated” it to promote worldviews that are “contrary to the Christian faith.”

Still, the resolution asserted that CRT was an analytical tool that can “aid in evaluating a variety of human experiences.” While certainly not a blanket endorsement of CRT, the resolution did not reject it for what it is — a derivative of atheistic Marxism.

Mike Stone, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Blackshear, Georgia, is a leading, if not the leading, candidate for the post of president of the SBC. He is an ardent opponent of interjecting CRT into the Southern Baptist Convention. Stone is a past president of the Executive Committee of the SBC, and once led the Georgia Baptist Convention.

It was no surprise then that Russell Moore not only left his job heading the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission to join the increasingly liberal magazine *Christianity Today* and took a ministerial position with a non-SBC congregation in Nashville. A letter of his denouncing the Executive Committee’s leadership was somehow “leaked” to the media.

The Executive Committee was scrutinizing the ERLC and Moore’s controversial public stands, and many congregations were protesting his continued tenure by withholding contributions to the Cooperative Program — which funds the various SBC agencies, including ERLC.

In his “leaked” letter, Moore insinuated that many — without naming names — were protecting sexual abusers within churches, and that many SBC leaders were opposed to racial reconciliation. Ronnie Floyd, a former president of the SBC, has said that he has seen the letter to current SBC President J.D. Greear, and although he was present when some of the matters Moore mentions were discussed, “I do not have the same recollection of these occurrences as stated.”

Stone said the letter was a “back-door press release” that “is clearly an attempt to influence the upcoming presidential election in the SBC.” Stone added, “I think Southern Baptists can see this letter for exactly what it is. His letter contains numerous misrepresentations of me and of the leadership of our beloved Convention. More broadly, it illustrates that he holds a markedly different view of the Southern Baptist Convention than the one held by the overwhelming majority of our 14 million members who have generously paid his salary.”

Stone said, “His view is apparently of an SBC filled with ‘white nationalists and white supremacists’ ... That is not the SBC that I know.”

Others running for SBC president this year include Southern Baptist Seminary President Al Mohler (a mentor of Moore) and Alabama Pastor Ed Litton.

In addition to Moore, others who have tried to push the SBC to the left include women’s Bible teacher Beth Moore and California mega-church pastor Rick Warren, a member of the globalist Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Beth Moore left the SBC, parroting the political left’s insistence that there is a huge national problem with “white supremacists.”

In the 1980s, the Southern Baptist Convention endured a decade-long battle over theological liberalism, which ended with total victory by theological conservatives. However, it now appears that, like their fellows in secular politics, those who seek to use the SBC to advance progressive politics have latched



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onto charges of racism and sexism against anyone who opposes their agenda.

If the Left can split the SBC and turn it into simply another vehicle for the Marxist Critical Race Theory, it would be a huge victory for them, and a tragic defeat for Bible believers in America .



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