

Major Virginia SBC Church to Hold Vote to Leave Denomination Over Law Amendment

disntr.com/2024/05/02/major-virginia-sbc-church-to-hold-vote-to-leave-denomination-over-law-amendment

Publisher

May 2, 2024



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In Richmond, Virginia, a local Southern Baptist church makes headlines not for its doctrinal integrity, service to the community, or even its centuries of history, but for its decision to hold a vote to sever ties with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). But let's be clear, this is not a tragic parting of ways. Instead, it's a necessary purification.

According to a special announcement on the church's website, the special business meeting will be held on May 19, 2024:

The Board of Deacons recommends that Richmond's First Baptist Church withdraw as a cooperating church in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in response to the SBC's proposed constitutional amendment requiring pastors and elders of its cooperating churches to be men. The Board of Deacons invites the congregation to a church-wide conversation and vote on this decision. This special called business meeting will be held in Flamming Hall from 9:45-10:30 a.m. on May 19, 2024, in lieu of normally scheduled adult Sunday School classes. The Deacon Chair will provide members of the congregation with background information to enable an informed conversation on the

decision. That information will be disseminated through the church's Communications office starting on or around May 5.

Richmond's First Baptist Church, with several women on pastoral staff and by advocating for the ordination of women to pastoral roles, has clearly positioned itself outside the biblical doctrinal boundaries that the SBC seems to be attempting to uphold. This church's departure is not a loss but a reaffirmation of a commitment to scriptural truths that a surprising majority in the SBC still seem to support—at least on this front. The so-called "Law Amendment," which stands to be reaffirmed by the SBC in June, affirms the fundamental biblical principle that pastoral leadership is reserved for men, as ordained by Scripture. This isn't about intolerance or divisiveness, it's about fidelity to God's non-negotiable Word. First Baptist, as seen in the video below, has made its choice, prioritizing emotions and contemporary cultural mores over God's mandates and their departure, therefore, is timely and, indeed, appropriate.

While First Baptist boasts a long and storied connection with the SBC, historical ties do not supersede theological ones. The church's decision to entertain the ordination of women as pastors is a clear act of rebellion from the biblical qualifications for church leaders as outlined in the pastoral epistles, notably [1 Timothy 2:12-14](#) and [Titus 1:5-9](#). It's not as though these biblical commands are nuanced or up for debate—disobedience to them is rooted in pride and arrogance and a desire to overrule God Himself mirroring the fall of Adam and Eve: "Did God really say...?"

Their impending exit from the SBC is not a moment for sorrow but one for sober reflection and resolve for remaining Southern Baptists and it serves as a call to other churches within the denomination: the path of biblical integrity may not be easy, but it is necessary. The SBC's stance is not about exclusion but about upholding the undefiled truth of the Scriptures as it was intended.

Richmond's First Baptist Church's decision to align more closely with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a body known for its lax standards on doctrinal issues like women's ordination, homosexuality, and abortion—three ideologies that always seem to accompany each other—is indicative of its trajectory: away from biblical orthodoxy towards a more relativistic approach to Scripture.

But the SBC's surprising stand against the ordination of women as pastors is not a stand against women. It is a stand for God's Word, respecting the distinct roles He has created for men and women within His church.

As Richmond's First Baptist prepares to cast its votes, let us not lament their departure but rather focus on the purification it represents. This is not about losing a battle but about winning a war for the soul of the church in America. In the grand scheme of church history, schisms have often revitalized churches, pruning the branches that bear no fruit and strengthening those that do. In truth, we do not simply bid this church goodbye—we bid them to reflect on the clarity and conviction that God's unerring Word provides, repent, and obey it.

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