

The Gathering

of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina

Bringing Baptists of North Carolina Together for Christ-Centered Ministry

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Four Fragile Freedoms by Larry Hovis

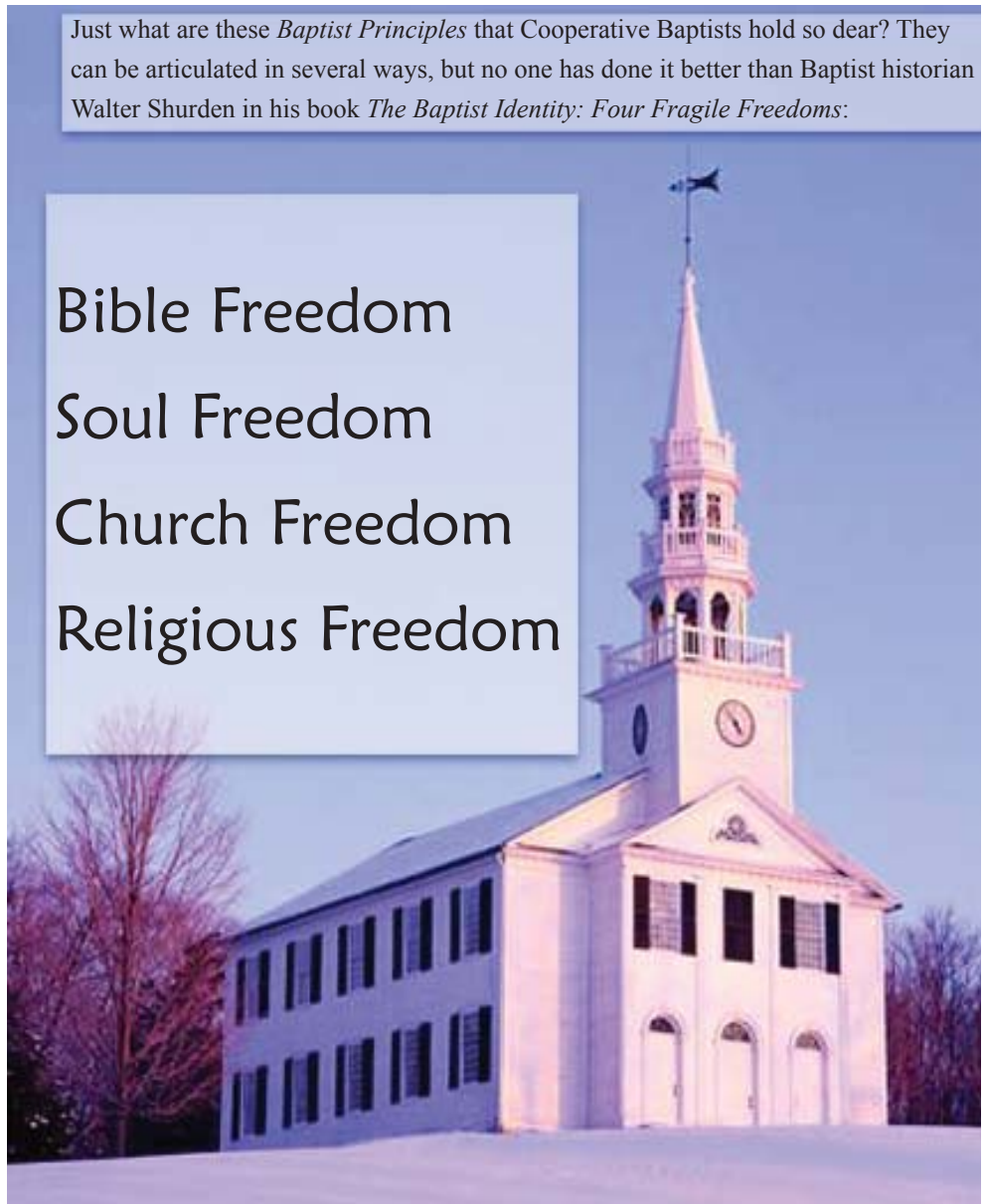
Why was the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship movement started in Atlanta over fifteen years ago? Because “moderates” were tired of losing elections at the SBC? Because “free and faithful” Baptists wanted to develop a new way of supporting missions around the world? Because those same Baptists saw the need to support new avenues to produce the kind of theological education we valued and to which we were accustomed? Because we needed ways to connect and support one another in the face of losing our place in the denominational family we held so dear?

CBF was started for all of these reasons and more. But the common denominator at the base of all these reasons can be summed up in two words: *Baptist Principles*. The Baptists who started CBF shared a common understanding of what it means to be a Baptist Christian, and they believed that the only way to preserve these principles for themselves, for their children, for the larger Christian Church, and for the world, was to start a new network of Baptist Christians, churches, schools and ministry agencies that we now call Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

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Just what are these *Baptist Principles* that Cooperative Baptists hold so dear? They can be articulated in several ways, but no one has done it better than Baptist historian Walter Shurden in his book *The Baptist Identity: Four Fragile Freedoms*:

Bible Freedom
Soul Freedom
Church Freedom
Religious Freedom



Inside Out: *From Spiritual Formation to Missional Engagement*

CBFNC General Assembly **March 16 - 17, 2007** FBC Hickory
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