

## **CBM's Beliefs and Practices**

### **Our Purpose**

The supreme business of the church is to make known the gospel of Jesus Christ to all people, in response to the commission of our Lord (Matthew 28:16-20.) No believer is exempt from this service, wherever he or she may live.

The purpose of Canadian Baptist Ministries is "to unite, encourage and enable Canadian Baptist churches in their national and international endeavours to fulfill the commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, proclaiming the gospel and showing the love of God to all peoples."

### **Our Message**

CBM accepts the Bible as its authority in all matters of faith and practice. At the heart of our message is the affirmation of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, fully God and fully human, the complete revelation of the truth about God and the only mediator between God and humankind.

We affirm that Jesus Christ, through his death and resurrection, saves us from eternal separation with God, the inevitable consequence of human disobedience; that he gives us the gift of new and eternal life; that he restores us to full fellowship with God and creates the potential for healed relationships with other persons and with all of God's creation; and that he calls us to a life of obedience to him.

Jesus' declaration that "no one comes to the Father but by me" (John 14:6) underlines the urgency of making him known wherever he is unknown and where people are consequently without hope.

### **Our Approach**

As followers of Jesus Christ, we see ourselves as those who are sent by him into the world in the same way that he was sent by his Father (John 17:18). As Jesus took on flesh and came to live among us, so we are called to live in intimate relationship with our fellow human beings in different cultures and different lands. We seek to experience their needs at every level of human life and to respond to those needs, even as Jesus experienced and responded to ours.

In doing so, we seek to be faithful to scripture, aware of all its commands, principles, and examples which, through the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit, can make us spiritually wise and alert. For we are convinced that "all scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the man [men and women] of God may be fully equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:15-17).

We seek to be led by the Spirit and equipped by him with spiritual gifts for the Lord's service. Men and women will put their faith in Jesus Christ and grow as followers of him only as their living and teaching are under the control of the Spirit of God.

We seek to be dependent on prayer to equip us with the necessary strength, wisdom and perception to undertake mission for Jesus Christ.

We seek to be faithful in witness, able to give evidence of our new life in Christ through our words, our relationships and a life-style which lends credibility to our declared loyalty to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Finally, we acknowledge in our work that we are instruments in his hands and that what is accomplished is done so by his power and his alone.

### **Our Ministries**

We affirm that, since the root of humankind's suffering is estrangement from God, the call to reconciliation with him through Jesus Christ must be at the centre of all our ministries (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). We further affirm that, since our work must be patterned on the ministry of Jesus Christ, it will reflect a concern for physical and social needs as well as spiritual ones (1 John 3:17).

At CBM, we embrace the concept of holistic transformation as the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel. As affirmed by the Micah Declaration, "...in integral mission, our proclamation has social consequences as we call people to love and repentance in all areas of life. Our social involvement has evangelistic consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ." Our commitment to peace building and reconciliation between people(s), to relief and development and ministries to the poor are as important as our endeavours involving evangelism, disciple making, leadership development and church planting.

In every setting we strive for full integration of these ministries, believing that the example of our Lord and the teaching of scripture gives us a mandate and a responsibility to minister to every kind of human need, so that the love of God may be expressed in its fullness.

### **Our Relationship to the Churches**

Canadian Baptist Ministries was conceived as a means for Canadian Baptist churches to join hands and reach out around the world for Christ. We see ourselves as the servants of the local churches and their conventions and unions in accomplishing that purpose.

There are four conventions and unions through which linkage takes place between the churches and Canadian Baptist Ministries. They are: the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada; the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec; the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches; and L'Union D'Eglises Baptistes Françaises au Canada.

As people come to faith and churches are planted in other cultures, CBM is also the agency by which Canadian Baptists join hands with these new churches in the spirit of partnership. We affirm that as the latter reach maturity, they share with us the responsibility to carry out Christ's mission, and we seek to engage them as full partners in this task. We strengthen each other through mutual service and seek to challenge each other to greater levels of obedience to Christian discipleship and mission.

### **Our Base of Support**

We acknowledge that we are totally dependent on our Lord as we engage in what is essentially a spiritual battle (Ephesians 6:12). At the same time, we also acknowledge our roots in local Baptist churches and the fact that the Lord provides resources for our task by means of these churches through the four conventions and unions, while at the same time informing and accepting gifts from other legitimate sources (individuals, other church groups, foundations, etc.).

We therefore believe that it is our role in Canada to help our supporting churches coordinate their spiritual, material, and human resources in order to carry out through us, that task of mission to which God has called us all.