



CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE



## THE NATURE OF OUR FELLOWSHIP

### *STATEMENT*

To include as brothers and sisters those with greatly diverse convictions in certain theological areas is not a weakness but a strength and in harmony with Biblical truths. The architects of the Congregational Way labored for the freedom to be ruled by God. This means that Jesus Christ alone is Head of the Church and Lord of the conscience. He directs His Church through Scripture, speaking in this manner to officers and individual members.

This freedom requires an environment of unity and liberty, cultivated in the context of honestly differing theological viewpoints. We must seek continually to maintain a true balance. We recognize that as Congregational Christians we do not have to agree on everything to achieve Biblical respect and spiritual health. In the spirit of Acts 15, we seek to promote maximum freedom for the rule of God in our churches. This is the merit of the Congregational conscience.

We do not claim that the theological breadth of our Conference today is a precise extension of all the doctrines of the Savoy Declaration of 1658. We do consider it significant that Browne's "Statement of Congregational Principles" antedates Savoy by 76 years and that the latter was itself a modification of the Westminster Confession including a more flexible view of the role of creeds. According to these historic Congregational principles, each church is complete in itself and independent from every other. Thus, there is no appeal from the decisions of the local church.

Consequently, we believe that the Biblical fellowship offered by us today meets a need for fellowship among congregationally governed churches and is the outgrowth of the Congregational principles of 300 years ago. If those principles are seen as Biblical, then our current relationships deserve the name Congregational, for they appeal to the same ecclesiology. We offer real freedom at a time when it is being lost almost everywhere else.

There is freedom in the CCCC today to believe and practice the strictest Reformed theology of our early fathers, as well as other essentially Christian theology which differs in certain ways from the Reformation perspective. Should either be denied in a forced unity, contrary to the ecclesiology of the original founders, we would no longer be fully Congregational.

### *CONCLUSION*

Today we are faced with lawlessness and legalism not only in our society but in many Christian churches. To maintain both freedom and unity is difficult, but worthwhile. The task of being a true Congregationalist was never easy but always a source of blessing.