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# **Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary Constitution & By-Laws**

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# **The Constitution and By-Laws of Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary**

## **Preamble: A Biblical Philosophy of Theological Education**

### **I. The Material Substance of Theological Education**

The first thing to be considered in a biblical philosophy of theological education is the question, “What is it that theological education seeks to teach?” This question has to do, then, with the material substance of theological education. In what does the subject-matter of theological education consist? That is, “Into what intellectual material does theological education intend to introduce its students?”

#### **A. The Supreme Importance of Christian Truth (John 8:32; 14:6; 17:17, 19; 18:37-38)**

Here we must surely remind ourselves of the premium which the religion of the Bible places upon “truth.” As the passages cited above from John’s Gospel make clear, it is the truth which liberates men from the dominion of sin. The Scriptures make clear that this truth is the truth centered in the Mediator who said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” Those liberated by this truth centered in the one Mediator between God men are further sanctified in their life and conduct by this truth. Finally, it is this truth, as the passages also make clear, which a fallen world either completely denies or deeply doubts can be known.

#### **B. Christian Theology as Christian Truth**

Clearly, theological education has as its goal to acquaint its students with the science of theology. An extended examination of the definition of theology is out of place here. Suffice to say that this essay assumes that theology is the science of God. When properly expanded and analyzed, this definition of theology means that “the science of God and His relations to the universe as He has revealed himself and them for our knowledge and worship unto His glory and our salvation.” If this expanded definition is correct, then, theology is substantially identical to (what we have called) Christian truth. The *science* of theology is simply the systematic or scientific study of Christian truth. Theological Education is, then, the task of educating men in what is the supremely important area of human knowledge, Christian truth.

Thus, the assumption of this attempt to provide a biblical philosophy of theological education is that Christian theology—properly so called and properly understood—is just Christian truth carefully, systematically, comprehensively understood. The

science of theology, in other words, is just the science of Christian truth. It is the science of the truth as it is in Jesus (Eph. 4:21).

## **II. The General Authority for Theological Education**

### **A. This Authority Identified**

The Apostle Paul leaves no doubt as to what agency is responsible for the maintenance and promotion of Christian truth in the world. It is clearly the church of Jesus Christ that is charged with this responsibility. 1 Timothy 3:15 is plain: "... but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth."

### **B. This Authority Specified**

The question may be raised, however, as to what Paul means exactly by the term, church, in 1 Timothy 3:15. To be specific, the question is whether Paul is thinking of what theologians have called the universal church or whether he is instead thinking of the local church. This is not a distinction which ought to be too sharply drawn in 1 Timothy 3:15. This is so because it really appears that Paul (in this passage and some others) understands the local church to be a particular expression of the universal church and speaks of it in terms which assume this relationship. It is clear, for instance, in this passage that Paul is writing to Timothy with regard to his particular responsibilities to guide the church in Ephesus and that this is prominent in his thought in this passage. It also seems clear, however, that he regards this church at Ephesus in light of its connection with the universal church. Paul could hardly mean to describe the local church at Ephesus—in itself and by itself—as the house of God, the church of the living God, or the pillar and support of the truth.

Here, then, we must fall back on a broader scriptural understanding of the church and see that each particular church is seen as a local expression of the universal church. Though recognizing their spiritual unity as part of the universal church, Reformed Baptist ecclesiology sees each particular church as governmentally independent and in that sense autonomous. Cf. the 1689 Baptist Confession, chapter 26, paragraphs 5-7. At the same time, it recognizes that it is vital for these churches to cooperate for the better achievement of their tasks in the world. Such cooperation may take many scriptural forms, and in Reformed Baptist life it has taken many forms. According to the Confession it may involve formal associations of churches

where this is providentially possible—as long as such associations do not infringe on the independence of the local church. Cf. the 1689 Baptist Confession, chapter 26, paragraphs 14-15. It has often been thought that such tasks as missions (church-planting) and theological education (the training of ministers of the Word or pastor-teachers) especially require, or at least are more easily and better accomplished by means of, such cooperation. It is the assumption of this preamble that this thinking is correct.

### **III. The Specific Responsibility for Theological Education**

The work of theological education is assigned throughout the Bible as the specific responsibility of a specified class of men or office in the church. More than one reason for this arrangement may be mentioned. It would certainly be true to say that the supreme importance of Christian truth might warrant that its study and teaching should be made the solemn responsibility of certain men. It is also true that the vast extent of Christian Theology seems to require such an arrangement. Whatever the reason may be for this arrangement, it is the fact of this assignment of the task to a specific class of men which will be particularly emphasized here.

#### **A. The Arrangements in the Old Testament Church**

Even in the Old Testament times and within the Old Covenant the extent of this truth was such (and the complications of its application to the corporate life of the people of God was so extensive) that a special class of men or office was appointed which had for a major aspect of its responsibility the study, preservation, and application of this truth. The Levitical priesthood was charged with this responsibility. One of the clearest emphases of the Old Testament Scriptures is that the priest in Israel was to be the reservoir and dispenser of instruction with reference to the holy law of God. Cf. 1 Sam. 2:12, 13; 2 Kings 12:2; 17:27; 2 Chr. 15:3; Ezra 7:6, 10, 11; Neh. 8:1-9; Jer. 2:8; 18:18; Ezek. 7:26; 22:26; Micah 3:11; Mal. 2:1-9. These passages make plain that it was one of the great duties of the priests in Israel to instruct men in the precepts of the law.

#### **B. The Arrangements in the New Testament Church**

##### **1. The Necessity of These Arrangements**

One might argue that it was the complications introduced by the detailed, ceremonial laws into the life of the people of God which made such a class of teaching priests necessary. Thus, it might be concluded that such a class of men is no longer

necessary in regard to the less ceremonial and complicated revelation of the New Covenant. This argument, however, forgets a number of factors unique to the New Covenant.

- First, in the Old Testament period there was a relatively primitive and limited revelation of truth. This is the necessary implication of the doctrine of progressive revelation. Now in the New Covenant we have the final and more extensive revelation of God's truth (a revelation made "in (His) Son") in which the radiance of the Word shines more clearly and extensively (Heb. 1:3). While, certainly, some of the difficulties and complications of the ceremonial law have passed away, this greater revelation creates its own more extensive field of study.
- Second, this revelation of truth took place within the relatively insulated and limited context of the Jewish theocracy in the promised land. The application of this primitive revelation in this insulated and limited context was, therefore, much simpler than in the universal context of the New Covenant revelation. The revelation in the New Covenant is not meant to function in the confined context of one nation in a small part of the earth. It is rather meant to function among all nations and to the ends of the earth. This vast field in which the truth is to be applied creates its own complications, especially when we take into account the twisted and depraved character of so many fallen cultures.
- Third, this revelation was given to a people of God who spoke the language (Hebrew) in which God had revealed His truth. In the New Covenant the added difficulty of translating the divine revelation originally made in Hebrew and Greek into the multiplied languages of the world must be considered. This complication may be reflected even in the Old Testament period. We are told in Ezra 7:6 and 10 that Ezra was a skilled scribe in the law who had set his heart to study, practice, and teach the law of God. Later we are told that in teaching the people of Israel this law it was necessary for Ezra after the Exile to translate the law (originally given in Hebrew) into the (Aramaic) dialect now spoken by God's people. Nehemiah 8:8 says: "They read from the book, from the law of God, *translating* to give the sense so that they understood the reading." Now if such translation (or explanation) was necessary because of a slight change of dialect, it is certainly so now when God's people speak many very different languages. A truly adequate theological education will require, then, a careful study of the original languages in which God gave divine revelation and the proper way of bringing that revelation into the languages of the many peoples to which it was intended to be taken.
- Fourth, and finally, adding to the extensiveness of theological education in the New Covenant age is the way in which the implications of divine revelation have been displayed over the almost 2000 years of church history. Theological

education which did not acquaint the student with these controversies and the way in which they have served to bring out more explicitly the meaning of Scripture would certainly have to be judged defective. On the other hand, acquainting the theological student with those controversies clearly and necessarily adds the department of historical theology to the study of the science of theology.

## **2. The Identity of These Arrangements**

It is not at all surprising, then, to discover that in the New Testament a permanent class of men occupying an ecclesiastical office described variously as elders, overseers, and pastor-teachers are appointed who have as their distinctive responsibility the teaching of the Word of God (Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9-11). Nor is it surprising that certain men in the office were to be financially supported so that they might give themselves by way of vocation to the study and teaching of this revelation (1 Cor. 9:13-14; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17-18).

## **3. The Specificity of These Arrangements**

There is a specific passage which addresses with particular relevance the duty of the Christian ministry with regard to theological education. The Christian Ministry as the particular agency for the preservation and communication of Christian Truth to its future teachers is the theme of 2 Timothy 2:1-2.

The Bible reveals that the task of maintaining and promoting Christian truth in the world is not simply or generally the task of the church as a whole. Indisputably, every Christian ought to feel a responsibility in the context of his local church, within the compass of his own gifts, and as suggested by his own complex of duties to promote the truth in the world (Matt. 12:30; 1 Cor. 10:31-11:1). Similarly, each local church as a local manifestation of the universal church must endeavor according to the strength and gifts God has given it to be a pillar and support of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). Indeed, this work is essential to its very identity.

The New Testament makes clear, however, that it is the Christian ministry in particular that is charged with this responsibility. Key here is the Apostle Paul's instruction to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:1-2: "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." So key is this passage to a proper understanding of theological education that a brief explanation of its importance must be given here.

***First, notice the spiritual commodity which this passage specifies.***

The Apostle calls Timothy to be strong in “the grace” that is in Christ Jesus. It has been asserted that the grace mentioned in verse one refers to the doctrines of grace. It is true that one of the clearest and strongest statements of the sovereignty of God’s grace in Paul’s writings is found in the previous chapter at 2 Timothy 1:8-10. The doctrines of sovereign grace are definitely involved in this grace of which Paul speaks here. Thus, Paul when he speaks of the grace that is in Christ Jesus is thinking of the entire system of grace and truth contained in the Scriptures. Grace here, then, refers partly or wholly to the system of the doctrines of grace which Paul taught.

This seems to be confirmed by verse two which immediately refers to Christian doctrine in the words, *the things which you have heard from me*. These words clearly designate Christian doctrine. Paul refers to such doctrine frequently in the surrounding context (2 Tim. 2:8-9; 1:12-14; and 1:8-11). The spiritual commodity which forms the subject and burden of Paul in this passage is the doctrine of grace which he preached. This was the heart of Paul’s message. It was for this grace and in this grace that Timothy was to be strong. Further, it seems to be clearly implied that the way—at least one way—in which he was to be strong in this grace was by communicating it to other faithful men.

An implication of the duty to communicate “the things which you have heard from me” is the careful preservation of the original deposit of truth imparted by Paul to Timothy. It is this Christian truth whole, unimpaired, and unpolluted which must be imparted by Timothy to a new generation of Christian teachers. This means that there must be agreement on the content of those doctrinal “things” which Paul mentions. This means in turn that there must be an agreed upon doctrinal basis for such instruction. Where there is no such agreed doctrinal basis, coherent theological education conducted by more than one man is not possible. Reformed Baptists adopt the 1689 Baptist Confession as the best summary of “the things” which Timothy heard from the Apostle Paul and the best available creedal summary of Apostolic Christianity. Confessional integrity is especially necessary in the theological education of men in the truths of Apostolic Christianity. For Reformed Baptists such confessional integrity means that such instruction will conform in its teaching to the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith.

***Second, the spiritual genealogy which this passage envisions.***

Four generations of truth are specified by Paul here in verse 2.

- *From **Me** in the presence of many witnesses*
- *The things which **you** have heard*
- *Entrust these to **faithful men***
- *Who will be able to teach **others also***

Thus, the spiritual genealogy found in this passage runs like this:

- Paul
- Timothy
- Faithful Men
- Others Also

To rightly estimate the importance of this spiritual genealogy for Paul we must remember the poignant circumstances in which these words of 2 Timothy 2:1-2 are written. Paul faces his imminent martyrdom for the sake of Christ (2 Timothy 4:1-8). One of the things most important to the Apostle Paul as he writes Timothy shortly before his death—one of the things of greatest significance to the Apostle with his death clearly on his mind—is the preservation and communication of the truths of the gospel of grace. It is not, however, simply or generally the communication of these truths to all the members of the church which burdens his heart. It is most especially and significantly the communication of these truths to faithful church leaders who will continue the genealogy of truth. That is, it is the instruction of men with the ability to hand down the tradition of truth faithfully to the next generation. Myths and false doctrines will arise and assail the truth of the gospel. Timothy is to combat this, not only through his own ministry to the whole church, but through passing the deposit of truth down particularly to faithful men who will maintain unbroken the genealogy of truth.

Paul’s poignant emphasis on this spiritual genealogy brings to light three special characteristics of the spiritual instruction (or theological education) required in this passage.

- First, and very clearly, the spiritual instruction in view has a special class of men in view as its recipients. Though it is certainly true that the Great Commission requires every disciple of Christ to be taught to observe all things that Christ commanded (Matt. 28:18-20), here it is plainly not every disciple of Christ which is to be taught in the way which Paul requires in this passage. Those to be taught must be especially “faithful” men who possess a special aptitude to “teach”



others. To put it plainly, those to be taught are not the next generation of Christians, but the next generation of Christian pastors and teachers.

- Second, consequently, and clearly, the instruction in view is not the general instruction of all Christians, but the special instruction necessary for Christian leadership. Of course, the subjects of study are generally the same, but the depth of truth into which these men were to be taken was much greater than that into which the ordinary Christian could or should or needed to be taken. What was true even in Paul's day is, of course, even more true for us as we apply Paul's words to our generation. Of course, the greater depth of understanding into Christian doctrine and Apostolic tradition given to those Paul has in mind in 2 Timothy 2:1-2 must continue. Yet, as noted above, the exigencies of the history of the church in which the precise implications of the deposit of truth Paul gave to Timothy by means of great theological controversies will require that the instruction given include a knowledge of the accumulated church history and historical theology of 20 centuries. Also as noted above, the spread of the gospel and the church into nations whose native languages are not Hebrew and Greek will require that Christian teachers be instructed in the original languages of the Bible. Associated with such studies, the geography, history, and culture associated with these languages will have to be considered in such instruction.
- Third, those specifically charged with the work of theological education in the passage are Paul, Timothy, Faithful Men, and Those Able To Teach Others Also. It is clear that it is a special class of Christians to whom the work of theological education is committed. It is those men who have been spiritually gifted by Christ to be faithful teachers of the Word of truth. This means that, while the authority of the church must be respected in this work, the role of faithful teachers in this church must be emphasized. It is the specific responsibility of the Christian ministry to engage in this work of theological education. There is something more, however, that may be reasonably deduced in regard to this matter. The work of theological education is not equally the responsibility of every pastor-teacher. Just as Christians have different gifts, so Christian pastors have different gifts. It stands to reason that the work of theological education may fall more heavily and squarely on the shoulders of some pastors particularly gifted for this work and their churches than on others.

### **III. The Practical Implementation of Theological Education**

From this overview of the material substance of theological education, the general authority over theological education, and the specific responsibility for theological education a number of guiding principles for the ministry of Covenant Baptist

Theological Seminary may be derived. Three such overarching or guiding principles may be identified, and their significance elaborated.

### **A. Submission to the General Authority of the Church over Theological Education**

The principles delineated above manifest that the actual authority of the church over a seminary must be respected. It is also clear that it may be recognized and submission offered to the authority of the church in two forms. It may be recognized, first, in the ecclesiastical authority of a local church or, second, in the ecclesiastical authority of a formal association of churches who have formally united for the purpose of forming and operating a theological Seminary. While such an association may not exercise actual ecclesiastical authority over its member churches, the churches together associated may exercise authority over an associational ministry like an associational Seminary.

One of the stated purposes of Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary is to conduct theological education in a way that represents the whole range of various churches that seriously subscribe to the 1689 Baptist Confession. It is a fact that no formal association unites all such churches. It is, therefore, necessary for CBTS to seek to recognize and submit to ecclesiastical authority in a different way than through being operated as an associational ministry by a formal association of churches. While the value of such an association is recognized, it is not a viable possibility or a practical reality for the churches we serve.

The respect for and submission to ecclesiastical authority required of the ministry called Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary will, therefore, be embodied in the following, several, specific ways.

- First of all, and most importantly, this will be embodied by way of a connection with a host, local church. This Host-Church will provide the Seminary with its commendation and its recognition as a stated ministry of that church. CBTS will operate as a stated ministry of such a Host-Church and at the discretion of that church and its elders. Its Chief Executive Officer (President or Dean) will be a member of that church and under its formal pastoral oversight. In this way CBTS will be a ministry under the oversight of a local church. It will also provide the Seminary with its primary, physical facilities including classroom, library, and office facilities. The authority of this local church will also be real and substantial in that it may withdraw if necessary not only its commendation and oversight, but also the use of its facilities from the Seminary. While such a withdrawal of

support ought not, of course, to be lightly concluded or precipitously implemented, its possibility is, nevertheless, a clear exhibition of the authority of the Host-Church over the Seminary.

- Second, the ecclesiastical authority of the church will be honored by the Seminary seeking the commendation of individual churches besides its Host-Church and of associations of churches. These commendations will be sought as an essential requirement of its credibility before the Christian community at large. The list of such churches and associations will be prominently displayed by the Seminary. Other local churches will also be encouraged to cooperate with and participate in the seminary by financial support, sharing facilities, and encouraging their pastors as appropriate to serve on the Board, teach, or mentor students.
- Third, the ecclesiastical authority of the church will be recognized in that no regular student will continue to attend classes who is not a member of a local church. Students in transition between local churches will be placed on a provisional status. Students who fail in a timely fashion to join a local church will be dismissed from the Seminary.
- Finally, and fourthly, the governing Board of the Seminary will consist only of the members of churches holding the 1689 Baptist Confession. This Board will be mainly composed of the pastors of such churches.

## **B. Recognition of the Specific Responsibility of the Christian Ministry for Theological Education**

As explained above the specific responsibility for theological education belongs scripturally to the Christian ministry and especially those members of the Christian ministry particularly gifted for this work. This is of great practical importance. Since the work of the Seminary could easily become a distraction to the elders of the local church which hosts it, the regular operation of the Seminary will be placed under the Seminary Board and a Chief Executive Officer (President or Dean). As noted already, since the work of theological education is the responsibility of the Christian ministry (the pastor-teachers of local churches), the Board of Directors will consist mainly of such pastors. Deacons and members of such churches, since they are charged to support the work of their pastors, may also be appointed to this Board.

This Board of Directors has authority over all the operations of the Seminary. This includes overseeing the Seminary in the furtherance of its stated mission; assuring that the mission is being fulfilled; providing for the election and dismissal of Board members; supervising its financial operations including the approval of the annual budget and the compensation of its paid employees. It will, therefore, meet regularly

to give leadership to the Seminary. This authority will be exercised through the Chief Executive Officer (also called the Dean or President) of the Seminary who is appointed by the Board and is responsible to it.

Experience has shown that individual, local churches who have endeavored to provide theological education may experience internal issues or problems which may destabilize the work of the Seminary or bring its work completely to a halt. This is especially true if a Seminary is considered as solely a ministry of one local church. The Board of Directors of CBTS provides a broader and more stable basis for the Seminary. The Board may, therefore, authorize the Seminary in the event of such instability in the Host-Church or for other good reasons to seek the oversight of another Host-Church and transfer the work of the Seminary to such a church.

Therefore, while the Seminary and its CEO are under the general oversight of the Host-Church in terms of the facilities provided to the Seminary and the spiritual oversight of the CEO, the specific operations of the Seminary and the CEO are under the authority of the Board. Christian cooperation and good communication between the Board of the Seminary and the Host-Church and its elders are, thus, essential. Since the Seminary is overseen by these interlocking authorities, questions may sometimes arise over whether an issue comes under the elders of the Host-Church's authority or that of the Seminary Board. Such issues will need to be negotiated by the Board of the Seminary and the elders of the Host-Church and a solution satisfactory to both entities reached.

### **C. Subscription to the Creedal Basis for Theological Education**

Since the purpose of the Seminary is to communicate the things which Paul taught Timothy, this assumes and requires agreement with regard to the identity of those things on the part of the church hosting the Seminary, the Board of the Seminary, and the teachers teaching in the Seminary. This necessary, doctrinal agreement is provided for Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary by means of the most historic and influential of Reformed and Baptist Confessions of Faith, the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. The Host-Church must subscribe to this confession; each member of the Board must be a member of a church which subscribes to this Confession and himself hold this Confession; and the President (Dean or CEO) must subscribe to this confession. The instruction in the classes provided by the Seminary must also be doctrinally consistent with this Confession. Though the Seminary may occasionally employ instructors who do not fully subscribe to it, the content of their class instruction must conform to the doctrinal teaching of the Confession.

## **The Articles of Constitution:**

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## **Preface: The Historical Adoption of This Preamble, These Articles, and These By-laws**

This Preamble, Articles, and By-laws were adopted in March of 2017 by the Board of Directors of Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary. They replace all previous such documents adopted by the Board of Directors of Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary or prior to 2015 by the Seminary under its previous name from 2005 to 2015: The Midwest Center for Theological Studies.

### **Article 1: The Name of the Seminary**

The name of the Seminary is Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary. This name was adopted in 2015 by the Board of Directors instead of the previous name (The Midwest Center for Theological Studies). The change was made in order more clearly to indicate both the mission of the Seminary and its theological viewpoint.

### **Article 2: The Confession of the Seminary**

Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary adheres to and affirms the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. The Seminary undertakes to insure that its Board Members and President both subscribe this Confession and are members of churches which subscribe to it. It also undertakes to insure that all of its courses are taught in a manner consistent with it.

### **Article 3: The Vision of the Seminary**

Our vision is to see the church of the Lord Jesus Christ strengthened and expanded worldwide, to the end that Christ would be known, loved, and exalted.

### **Article 4: The Mission of the Seminary**

Our mission therefore is to prepare men to undertake the full range of pastoral responsibilities they will face in serving Christ and His kingdom, and to equip Christians for effective service in the church. We do this work by providing rigorous academic training and by facilitating extensive pastoral mentoring.

### **Article 5: The Values of the Seminary**

Our mission will be carried out in a manner that adheres to the following core values:

(1) The church worldwide ought to embrace its God-given duty to prepare its own future leaders (2 Tim. 2:2). Followers of Christ should all see this as a privilege for perpetuating, purifying, and extending the gospel to all nations and generations.

(2) Each local church ought to involve itself in the equipping of men for pastoral ministry. The local church is best positioned to recognize, develop, assess, and confirm the spiritual giftedness of men aspiring to that office.

(3) Men being considered for pastoral ministry preparation must exhibit, at least in emerging form, the character, gifts, and graces prescribed in passages such as 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1, Acts 20, 1 Peter 5, etc.

(4) The pastoral ministry requires thorough, comprehensive, and balanced training. Preparation should not be shallow, nor should it be skewed either towards exclusive pastoral experience or exclusive academic studies.

(5) Theological instruction must be Bible-saturated, Gospel-centered, confessionally grounded, and led by godly, experienced, Reformed pastors and scholars. We are committed to the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith as the best and most wholesome summary of the truth of God's Word.

(6) The Lord Jesus Christ gives a variety of gifts to His church and providentially opens a diversity of opportunities for the exercise of those gifts. We ought to recognize and accommodate differences in giftedness and possible futures for those being trained.

(7) The desire and appropriateness to pursue theological training may not match an individual's financial and practical ability to undertake that training. To the extent possible we ought to assist each individual and adapt the training program in order to encourage participation by needy brethren.

(8) All that the Seminary undertakes must be performed with the highest regard to biblical standards of righteousness, integrity, faithfulness, compassion, and total dependence on the grace of God. We are stewards of the gifts of God's people, and we are servants of the great Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **Article 6: The Host-Church of the Seminary**

We believe in the centrality of the local church in God's redemptive purpose. Thus, we also affirm the general authority of the local church for the fulfillment of that

purpose including its authority over the theological education of its future teachers. For this reason, the Seminary will seek the oversight and assistance of a church subscribing to its Confession (which is Grace Reformed Baptist Church of Owensboro, Kentucky at the time of the adoption of this Constitution and By-laws). Its President shall be a member of this church and, thus, under its oversight. This church will assist the Seminary by providing the primary facilities necessary for its operation. If at any time this arrangement shall become detrimental to the interests of the Host-Church or the Seminary, the Board of Directors of the Seminary is empowered to seek out a new Host-Church for the oversight and assistance of the Seminary. Such a transfer of the Seminary to another Host-Church shall be undertaken with due care and concern for both the interests of the former Host-Church and the Seminary.

In order to facilitate good communication between the Host-Church and the Board of the Seminary and to represent the interests of the Host-Church on the Board one member of the Board shall be a member (and ordinarily an elder) of the Host-Church.

## **Article 7: The Board of the Seminary**

### **Section 1: The Authority of the Board**

Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary recognizes the authority of the local church in the theological education of its future ministers and will seek to honor this authority both by laboring in cooperation with a Host-Church and by seeking the commendation of individual, local churches and associations of local churches. It also recognizes, however, that the operation of the Seminary is both a specialized work and a time-consuming labor. Finally, it also recognizes that the specific responsibility for such education lies upon the Christian ministry (pastor-teachers) appointed in the church of Christ. CBTS is, therefore, governed by a Board of Directors. Its Board of Directors works in conjunction with the Host-Church to fulfill the stated purposes of CBTS, cultivate the development of students, provide theological accountability, as well as other matters of shared importance. The Board is established to provide strategic guidance, priority clarification, fiduciary oversight, objective evaluations, administrative consultation, facility development, and policy review and approval. Although the Board is independent regarding the policies and operations of CBTS, it is recognized that the is accountable first to God for proper stewardship of His resources and secondly to the students, donors, supporting churches, and staff of CBTS. The Board of Directors of CBTS shall also act as its Board of Trustees for any purpose requiring a Board of Trustees.



## **Section 2: The Membership of the Board**

### **I. The Number of Board Members**

The CBTS Board shall consist of not less than 8 nor more than 15 voting members. In addition both the President (Chief Executive or Dean) and the Administrator of the Seminary shall be non-voting members of the Board. Should the membership of the Board fall below eight members, the Board will take immediate action to provide for the necessary Board members.

### **II. The Qualifications of Board Members**

The Board of Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary exists because the specific responsibility for theological education is assigned by the Scriptures to the Christian ministry. Therefore, qualifications for Board members shall include the following things: (1.) All Board members must subscribe to the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. (2.) All Board members must go through the CBTS Board Interviewing/Appointing/Hiring process. (3.) At least two-thirds of the Board members must be elders of churches subscribing the 1689 Baptist Confession. Up to one-third, but not more than one-third, of the Board members may simply be members of such a church.

### **III. The Appointment of Board Members**

The process for the appointment of Board members shall be as follows.

- The Governance Committee of the Board will seek to identify appropriate candidates for the Board.
- It will then bring up these candidates for discussion with the Board at one of the three stated yearly meetings of the Board.
- If the Board concurs with the judgment of the Governance Committee, the Governance Committee will approach such candidates to ascertain their willingness and fitness for service on the Board.
- Having ascertained the willingness and fitness of the candidate, the Governance Committee shall place the candidate in nomination for Board membership.
- The Board shall then vote to approve the candidate.
- Two-thirds of the Board members present and voting are required for the election and appointment of a new Board member.
- The new Board member may begin serving as a Board member immediately.

#### **IV. The Term of Board Members**

Board members are not elected for any specific term of service. They may serve until they choose to resign or are removed for good cause.

#### **V. The Resignation of Board Members**

A Board member may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the Chairman of the CBTS Board. Such resignation will be effective immediately unless a date of resignation is stated in the letter. No approval or acceptance of such a resignation is necessary for the resignation to become effective. If the resignation is to become effective at a specified date, the Board may proceed to the appointment of a new Board member before that date and to become effective at the specified date of resignation.

#### **VI. The Removal of Board Members**

Board members may be removed by a vote of two-thirds of the Board with good cause. Good cause for removal is determined at the discretion of the Board, but must be stated in the minutes of the meeting during which such removal takes place. The Board must remove any Board member who at any time fails to meet the qualifications for Board membership or is permanently disabled from actively serving.

### **Section 3: The Meetings of the Board**

The Board of Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary shall meet three times each year: once during the months of February or March, once during the months of June or July, and once during the months of November or December. The summer meeting of the Board shall be a face to face Board meeting and all Board members are urged to attend. The other meetings will take place via teleconference. CBTS is not responsible for the travel arrangements of Board members to the summer meeting. Board members are expected to make provision for such travel as part of their service to CBTS. CBTS will provide the accommodation and meals of Board members while at the summer meeting.

Other teleconference meetings may be called by the Chairman of the Board or the President of Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary. At least two weeks advance notice of such meetings must be given.

## **Section 4: The Officers of the Board**

### **I. Their Identity**

The CBTS Board must select at least the two officers of Chairman and Secretary each year at the summer Board meeting to serve for the entire succeeding year. Those two officers are the Chairman and Secretary of the Board. Other officers such as a Vice-Chairman to serve in the absence of the Chairman or an Assistant Secretary to serve in the absence of the Secretary may be selected as necessary. Such officers are to be selected by a vote of the Board. Both the Chairman and Secretary may serve consecutive terms with the yearly approval of the Board.

### **II. Their Duty**

#### **A. The Duty of the Chairman**

The Chairman of the Board is accountable to the entire Board and responsible for the following:

- Serving as a member of the Board
- Developing the agenda for the Board meetings with the assistance of the Dean and Various Committee Chairmen.
- Chairing the Board meetings
- Appointing the Board Secretary at the beginning of each Board meeting with the consent of the Board
- Providing overall leadership to the Board during its meetings and throughout the year
- Cultivating collegial working relationships among the Board that contribute to consensus
- Appointing the chairpersons and membership of the committees, with the consent of the Board
- Encouraging the Board's role in strategic planning
- Helping guide and mediate Board actions with respect to organizational priorities and governance concerns
- Monitoring financial planning and financial reports
- Evaluating annually the performance of the organization in achieving its mission
- Submitting the Chairman's Annual Report at the annual Board meeting

## **B. The Duty of Secretary**

The Board Secretary is responsible for the following:

- Serving on the CBTS Board
- Presenting the minutes to the Board for approval no later than one month after its meetings
- Delivering a copy of the approved Board minutes to the Board no later than six weeks after the Board meetings

## **Section 5: The Voting of the Board**

All actions of the Board require a two-thirds vote of the Board for approval unless otherwise stipulated in the Constitution. Such votes to be valid actions of the Board must meet the quorum requirements here specified. The quorum requirements of the Board shall be met if the vote is taken at a meeting of the Board about which all the members of the Board have been informed with two weeks advance notice. Two-thirds of those present and voting shall approve any action.

Votes of the Board by email may also occasionally be taken. In this case two-thirds of the entire membership of the Board shall be required for approval.

## **Section 6: The Committees of the Board**

### **Introduction:**

The CBTS Board shall appoint and maintain several committees to assist with the fulfillment of its responsibilities. These shall include but not be limited to the following committees: The Governance Committee; Finance Committee; Development Committee; Academic Committee; and Operations Committee. The Board shall also appoint a Chairman for each of these Committees who will be responsible for the fulfillment of that Committee's appointed function. These committees shall each have the power to select non-voting members to assist them with their particular functions. These assistants shall not, however, be members of the Board of CBTS.

## **I. The Governance Committee**

The governance committee is responsible for ongoing review and recommendations to enhance the quality and future viability of the Board of Directors. The work of the committee revolves around the following four major areas:

### **A. Board Role and Responsibilities**

The Governance Committee leads the Board in regularly reviewing and updating the Board's statement of its roles and areas of responsibility, and what is expected of individual Board members. It also assists the Board in periodically updating and clarifying the primary areas of focus for the Board.

### **B. Board Composition**

The Governance Committee leads in assessing current and anticipated needs related to Board composition, determining the knowledge, attributes, skills, abilities, influence, and access to resources the Board will need to consider in order to accomplish future work of the Board. It also identifies potential Board member candidates and explores their interest, availability, and fitness for Board service. It also nominates individuals to be elected as members of the Board. In cooperation with the Board chairman, it contacts as needed each Board member to assess his continuing interest in Board membership and anticipated term of service and works with each Board member to identify the appropriate role he might assume on behalf of the CBTS Board.

### **C. Board Knowledge**

The Governance Committee designs and oversees a process of Board orientation, including gathering information prior to election as Board member and information needed during the early stage of Board service. It also designs and implements an ongoing program of Board information and education.

### **D. Board Effectiveness**

The Governance Committee initiates periodic assessment of the Board's performance. It also proposes, as appropriate, changes in Board structure, operations, and non-profit status. It also provides ongoing counsel to the Board chair and other Board leaders on steps they might take to enhance Board effectiveness. It also regularly reviews the Board's practices regarding member

participation, conflict of interest, etc., and suggests improvements as needed. It also periodically reviews and updates the Board's policy guidelines and practices.

## **II. The Finance Committee**

The finance committee is responsible to assist the Board in the detailed consideration of financial matters pertaining to the operations of CBTS. The work of the committee revolves around the following six major areas:

### **A. Staffing Plan**

It will review recommendations of the President (Dean) for staffing needs such as faculty, administration, technology, development, and any other staff resources deemed necessary to fulfill the mission of CBTS.

### **B. Compensation**

It will recommend initial compensation arrangements for new employees. It will also conduct not later than November an annual review of compensation packages (salary, benefits, etc.) for current employees. It will present compensations recommendations as part of the next year's budget. It will also review and report on other compensation matters such as payments for part-time staff, honoraria for visiting professors, expense reimbursements, and other payment arrangements.

### **C. Tuition and Fee Structure**

It will review the CBTS tuition and fee structure annually and report recommendations to the Board for approval.

### **D. Annual Budget**

It will review budgetary recommendations of the President (Dean) and assist in the preparation of the annual budget. This budget will be prepared in draft form in early November, circulated to the Board members for discussion, and adopted in the November-December Board meeting.

## **E. Review of Financial Operations**

The Finance Committee will receive and review financial reports for CBTS on a quarterly basis. It will be available to advise the President (Dean) with regard to how to respond to unexpected operational needs generally within the guidelines of the budget. Major expenditures not included in the annual budget, however, will be reported to the full Board for its approval prior to disbursement of funds. It will also oversee internal or external audits of financial records in coordination with the President (Dean). The Finance Committee will also be available to confer with the Dean on cost effectiveness and other cost-savings measures.

## **F. Policies**

The Finance Committee will prepare written policies for the areas of responsibility outlined above. Such policies will be submitted for Board review and approval.

## **III. The Development Committee**

The Development Committee shall consist of the Chairman of the CBTS Board, the President (Dean) of the Seminary, the Administrator of the Seminary, other voting members of the Board, and non-voting members.

It shall be the responsibility of the Development Committee to identify the needs of the Seminary, recommend to the Board of Directors ways and means of addressing those needs in a strategic plan, and to develop the resources (both financial and otherwise) necessary to address those needs.

## **IV. The Academic Committee**

The Academic Committee shall consist of the President (Dean) of the Seminary, the Administrator of the Seminary, other voting members of the Board, and also non-voting members.

The responsibilities of the Academic Committee include the following:

- reviewing transcripts from other Seminaries and as appropriate transferring credits from such institutions,
- overseeing the accreditation process and work for the accreditation of the Seminary,
- overseeing, updating, and approving the Academic programs of the Seminary,

- overseeing and approving the list of live classes to be offered each school year,
- overseeing and assuring the Academic quality of the education offered by the Seminary,
- and making recommendations to the CBTS Board regarding the Academic programs of the Seminary requiring Board approval.

## **V. The Operations Committee**

The Operations Committee shall consist of the President (Dean) and Administrator of the Seminary and any others they shall deem necessary. It will ordinarily meet on a weekly basis to consult about function of the Seminary and its facilities, care for its operational details, discuss the various matters which may need to be referred to its various committees, and make recommendations to the Board with regard to operational matters in things requiring Board action and approval.

## **Article 8: The Administration of the Seminary**

### **Section 1: The President of the Seminary**

The administration of the Seminary is committed by the Board to its Dean or President who shall act as its Chief Executive Officer. The President or Dean shall be hired and evaluated by the Board of Directors. The President (Dean) is accountable to the Elders of the Host-Church and to the Board of the Seminary. The President or Dean is responsible for the following matters:

- Serving as a non-voting member of the Board of Directors.
- Serving on the Operations, Governance, Development, and Academic Committees
- Overseeing all faculty, course, and curriculum decisions and plans
- Overseeing the Administrator of the Seminary and other employees of the Seminary
- Preparing and submitting the annual Dean's Report to the Board of Directors at its summer meeting
- Making recommendations for the annual budget of the Seminary in light of its staffing, technological, administrative, and developmental needs
- Leading the vision and long-range planning of the Seminary



## **Section 2: The Administrator of the Seminary**

The Administrator of the Seminary shall work with and for the President and Dean of the Seminary as its Chief Operations Officer. The Administrator shall be hired, and if necessary dismissed from employment, by the President with the formal consent of the Board of the Seminary. He shall be regularly evaluated by the President and Chairman of the Board of Directors. The position of Administrator for Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary is a salaried position.

The Administrator of the Seminary shall assure that the following responsibilities are fulfilled either by himself or by staff employed to assist him:

- The Administrator is our Registrar in charge keeping all necessary student records. This entails the ability to maintain careful institutional records.
- The Administrator is our Webmaster in charge of maintaining our website and other online facilities. This entails the kind of skills normally associated with information technology positions. He also oversees the video-recording of our classes.
- The Administrator is our Book-keeper. This requires accounting skills in order to keep our financial house in order and produce financial reports and budgets.
- The Administrator is charged by the Board to assist the President with the Development of the Seminary. This requires developing relationships with churches and institutions which facilitate fund-raising for CBTS. Under this responsibility may also be classed the overseeing of Promotional Efforts. This includes such responsibilities as Writing E-Mail Updates, Coordinating Webcasts, etc.
- The Administrator manages student affairs. This requires a commitment to be available to students and serve them in the different needs that they may bring to him.
- The Administrator is our Assistant to the Dean for Academic Affairs. He is in charge of assisting the Dean in the development and implementation of the various academic programs and courses of CBTS. He also assists him in the grading of quizzes and exams.
- The Administrator handles Student Recruitment: Receiving calls from potential students and counseling them, handling various inquiries from pastors and church leaders related to our Seminary

## **Article 9: The Faculty of the Seminary**

### **Introduction:**

Fundamental to the Mission of the Seminary are the appointments and arrangements of its faculty. The President (Dean) and Board of Directors will, therefore, exercise special care in these appointments and arrangements to insure the faithful and excellent fulfillment of the Mission of the Seminary. They will also provide for appropriate opportunities for the development of Regular Faculty and the involvement of Regular Faculty in the development of Academic-related decision-making and Academic standards.

### **Section 1: The Categories of Faculty**

The faculty of the Seminary will be of two types: regular faculty and adjunct faculty.

#### **I. Regular Faculty**

Regular faculty are engaged by the Seminary to teach courses on a continuing basis. While it is understood that regular faculty may not teach live courses each semester, they are its regular instructors subject to standards and requirements to which adjunct faculty are not obligated. Regular faculty must teach a live (in-person) course at least once every two academic years to retain this status.

#### **II. Adjunct Faculty**

Adjunct faculty are visiting faculty who are invited occasionally to teach courses for the Seminary. These courses will be video-recorded for continued use as a part of the correspondence curriculum of the Seminary, but this continued use of these courses does not constitute adjunct faculty regular faculty.

### **Section 2: The Engagement of Faculty**

#### **I. The Selection of Faculty**

Regular faculty are identified and nominated by the President of the Seminary and elected by the Board of Directors. Adjunct faculty are identified and invited by the President of the Seminary. Such invitations are subject to review by the Board, but do not require previous approval by the Board of Directors. The President of the Seminary has the authority to continue, or discontinue, the service of adjunct faculty

as he so chooses. The termination of regular faculty requires a vote of the Board of Directors.

## **II. The Compensation of Faculty**

The compensation of each faculty member (regular and adjunct) is arranged by the President of the Seminary with the assistance of the Administrator. In the case of Adjunct Faculty these engagements are arranged in accordance with a compensation policy approved by the Board. In the case of Regular Faculty these arrangements must be individually approved by the Academic and Finance Committees. In addition to ordinary compensation the President with the assistance of the Administrator may approve reimbursements for expenses incurred by the faculty in the performance of their responsibilities.

### **Section 3: The Qualifications of Faculty**

#### **I. Qualifications for Regular Faculty**

Regular Faculty must hold terminal degrees in the Academic fields in which they are assigned to teach. They must also fully subscribe to the 1689 Baptist Confession. They must also be men of significant pastoral experience and ordinarily hold the office of elder (pastor) in a local church. Exceptions to the first and last of these three requirements may occasionally be approved for good cause by the Board of Directors, but in no case may such exceptions be approved with regard to full subscription to the Confession.

#### **II. Qualifications for Adjunct Faculty**

Adjunct Faculty must ordinarily hold terminal or advanced degrees in the Academic fields in which they are assigned to teach. They must also ordinarily be men of significant, pastoral experience. They must also ordinarily fully subscribe to the 1689 Baptist Confession. Any potential exceptions to such subscription must be explained to the President and assurances given to Him that the assigned course will be taught in a manner consistent with the doctrinal standard of the Seminary, the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith.

## **Article 10: The Students of the Seminary**

### **Introduction:**

The entire Mission of the Seminary focuses on its students. The goal of the Seminary is to prepare its students to serve Christ as members and officers of the church. Careful attention to every dimension of the Seminary's relation to its students is critical to its Mission.

### **Section 1: Student Relations**

The Administrator of the Seminary has for one of his foremost responsibility student relations. Good student relations require that good communication with the students of the Seminary be maintained.

### **Section 2: Student Records**

Basic to the fulfillment of the Mission of the Seminary is the careful maintenance of good student records. This is another of the foremost responsibilities of the Administrator. He shall provide that the functions of the Seminary Registrar shall be carefully maintained including the provision of student transcripts in a timely fashion to the students and administration of the Seminary in such a way as to maintain proper standards of student confidentiality.

### **Section 3: Student Qualifications**

In order to qualify to be a student at Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary the potential student must satisfy a number of conditions:

- He must complete the application process through the Seminary Administrator including the payment of the application fee.
- He must complete an entrance interview with the President (Dean) of the Seminary (or specified representative).
- He must be a true Christian manifesting repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.
- He must be sweetly submissive to studying the Scriptures from a perspective controlled by the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. (The student need not subscribe this Confession either to matriculate into or graduate from the Seminary.)

- He must be a member in good standing of a true, gospel church.
- He must, if enrolled in a pastoral track (MAPS or MDiv) program have the commendation of the pastoral leadership of his local church and be an adult male. (Students in the MATS programs need not have a pastoral recommendation, nor be an adult male.)
- He must hold a Bachelors' degree in an institution recognized by the Seminary in order to matriculate into the Seminary in a Masters' program. (Others without Bachelors' degrees may matriculate, but as Diploma or Bachelors' students and will not be awarded Masters' degrees upon their graduation.)
- He must be a visible saint as defined by 26:2 of the 1689 Baptist Confession. "(Those) not destroying their own profession by any errors everting the foundation, or unholiness of conversation, are and may be called visible saints." Should the Seminary become aware that any of its students is no longer such a visible saint it must immediately dismiss such a student.

### **Article 11: The Amendments to the Constitution of the Seminary**

The Board of the Seminary may amend the constitution of the Seminary, but such amendments require a three-fourths vote of the Board. Such amendments must be presented in written form to each Board Member one month prior to the scheduled vote of the Board on the amendment.