

An Alphabet of Issues Facing Churches

John Greening, GARBC National Representative

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A – Authority

The long-term effects of modernism and postmodernism undermine a commitment to Biblical authority (*sola scriptura*).

B – Baptist Heritage

A growing acceptance of a generic nondenominational identity threatens the perpetuating of our Biblical distinctives and Baptist legacy.

C – Charismatic Influence

An emphasis on personal experience over Biblical knowledge influences worship, testimonies, and the decision-making process.

D - Dispensationalism

A blurring of the distinction between Israel and the church results in an increasing emphasis on societal reformation and a decreasing emphasis on regeneration.

E - Ethics

A disregard of Biblical authority results in a growing confusion in moral choices within society.

F - Finances

A sluggish economy, shifting job market, and an aging population leave many churches short on funds.

G - Globalism

The possibilities of international partnering among like-minded churches changes the paradigm of conventional missions.

H - Hermeneutics

Literary deconstructionism undermines a commitment to determine authorial intent in Biblical interpretation.

I - Individualism

An inability or lack of commitment to work together diminishes the potential of cooperative initiatives in an interdependent fellowship.

J - Judicial Decisions

Court rulings that are contrary to Biblical ethics continue the process of America's shift into a post-Christian culture.

K - Kerygma

The challenge grows of preaching the Word with relevance in a contemporary culture while remaining true to the text.

L - Literacy

A decrease in Biblical literacy within society in general and churches in particular requires a greater need for entry-level instruction.

M - Multiculturalism

An expansion in cultural diversity in communities forces churches to think like missionaries when designing mission strategies.

N - Networking

Churches face the decision of whom they will work with and how they will cooperate in pursuing their goals.

O - Obscenity

The pervasiveness of pornography and the lack of moral shame in lifestyle practices dull the spiritual passion of the people of God.

P - Polity

A shift to hierarchical governance consolidates the authority in the church in the hands of a few rather than in the congregation.

Q - Questions

A need abounds for the church to be adequately informed and equipped to contend for the faith in response to culture's questions.

R - Reverence

An informal approach in worship and ministry creates casualness toward the faith and a growing disregard toward God's supreme authority.

S - Syncretism

A personalized mixing of religions and lifestyles redefines the content and practices of Christianity.

T - Turnover

A constant change in church membership escalates because of members' job relocation or their lack of long-term allegiance.

U - Universalism

The assumption that everyone will eventually be saved diminishes evangelistic passion and the exclusivity of the gospel.

V - Versions

The debate over acceptable Bible translations creates lines of division among people of otherwise sound doctrinal conviction.

W - Worldliness

Conduct within the church evidences of growing acceptance of the world's standards and the loss of commitment to personal holiness.

X - Xenophobia

The vestiges of racism and nationalism surface in a reluctance to reach people of differing ethnic backgrounds and a resistance to welcome them into the church.

Y - Youth

A lack of intergenerational acceptance, respect, and intentional mentoring disenfranchises young people.

Z - Zealotry

The fanaticism of extremists in other religions threatens the practice of orthodox Christianity.