

American Council of Christian Churches
84th Annual Convention, October 21-23, 2025
Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC
Resolution on Eastern Orthodoxy

On April 9, 2017, Hank Hanegraaff, President of the Christian Research Institute and self-proclaimed “Bible Answer Man,” stunned the Evangelical world with his conversion to the Greek Orthodox Church. Appropriately, many accused him of abandoning “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). Hanegraaff responded to these accusations on one of his broadcasts by reciting the Nicene Creed and affirming, “I am as deeply committed to championing mere Christianity and the essentials of the historic Christian faith, as I have ever been.”¹

Hanegraaff’s departure is not an isolated case, but it represents a broader trend of defections from Evangelicalism to Eastern Orthodoxy. Nationwide surveys indicate that Orthodox congregations experienced a nearly 80 percent rise in new converts in 2022, as compared with 2019. Moreover, a shift has taken place since 2020. Men, once joining the Orthodox Church in equal proportion with women, now outnumber them significantly among new members.² Several factors contribute to these defections: the shallow, consumer-driven character of many megachurches; the absence of deep, systematic doctrinal preaching in Bible-believing congregations; and a cultural drift away from what feels transient toward that which alluringly appears stable and enduring.

Whatever the case, God calls biblical churches to have no concord with a false religious system, which actively promotes belief in a continuing oral tradition equal to Scripture (Mt. 15:3-9; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17), a defective view of Christ’s atonement, which diminishes the sufficiency of His once-for-all sacrifice at Calvary (Heb. 9:26-28; 10:10-18), the veneration of icons (Exod. 20:4-5; Isa. 42:8), prayers to Mary and other departed saints (1 Tim. 2:5), sacramental regeneration in baptism (Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5), and other such tenets of Eastern Orthodoxy, which stand in direct opposition to the holy Scriptures.

Moreover, believers today must guard against false ecumenism that seeks to unite people merely around the Nicene Creed. While this creed rightly condemned Arianism, it did not (and could not) exhaustively address all matters of orthodoxy. Other heresies have arisen since the fourth century, which necessitate more theological precision and clarity, particularly on the doctrine of justification. Christians, therefore, must seek fellowship with those who affirm not only the Nicene Creed, but also the vital truths articulated during the Protestant Reformation. As the Apostle Paul clearly states in Gal. 1:8, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

Therefore, the American Council of Christian Churches at its 84th annual convention, October 21-23, 2025, at Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC, resolves to reject the growing acceptance and accommodation of Eastern Orthodox beliefs and practices and to reaffirm its commitment to the sufficiency and authority of Holy Scripture, the exclusivity of Jesus Christ as the only mediator between God and man, and the biblical gospel of salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. We reject any effort that downplays the Reformation to promote an ecumenical fellowship solely based on the Nicene Creed. Furthermore, we call on churches, pastors, and individual believers to guard the flock against teachings and traditions that undermine the truth of God’s Word, and to lovingly, boldly, and clearly proclaim the unchanging gospel to all, including those ensnared by the false religion of Eastern Orthodoxy.

¹Fr. John, “‘Bible Answer Man’ Hank Hanegraaff Joins the Orthodox Church” (journeytoorthodoxy.com, 4/11/2017).

²Rikki Schlott, “Young Men Leaving Traditional Churches for ‘Masculine’ Orthodox Christianity in Droves” (nypost.com, 12/3/2024).



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