



**CHARTER OF THE
FEDERATION OF
EVANGELICAL
CHRISTIAN CHURCHES
(FECE)**

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PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST TO THE WORLD WITHOUT COMPROMISE

Our Vision

Our vision comes as a response to the following observations :

- A "liberal" evolution has developed in France. Many Christians, who are committed to the teachings of God's Word, not only do not accept the sacrifice of fundamental Judeo-Christian values, but likewise refuse steadfastly to become participants in this evolution.
- More and more independent churches are being founded - often in reaction to the above situation. But they quickly find themselves isolated and become therefore potentially vulnerable. The more isolated these congregations are, the more the credibility of their teachings can be brought into doubt, especially considering the fact that oftentimes a lone pastor holds responsibility for the conduct of the church.
- Their lack of theological training is sometimes criticized, opening the door to questionable interpretations (even if it is rare, such cases are then highlighted).

Without imagining that we alone are reacting to this situation, it is our wish to make a contribution by building a Church Confederation which will meet the following criteria :

- A theological concept which will be common to all member churches, the essential elements of which are set out in Chapter I - THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS.
- Regular contact for the application of ecclesiastical discipline, fraternal but measurable with theological and administrative "audits" (mainly to verify compliance with laws) Chapter II - RELATIONSHIPS AND ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE.
- A constant search for unity of evangelical Christians (with other confederations, unions, and churches) in priority to all other gatherings. An extended hand towards isolated congregations that accept without reservation the vision of our Federation.
- A constructive contribution in local activities for our churches, whenever possible, particularly with disadvantaged people Chapter III - DEVELOPMENT.

CHAPTER I - THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS :

The member churches, pastors, and other ministries recognized by the Confederation formally and unreservedly commit themselves to teach and abide by the following points :

1 - PERTINENCE OF SCRIPTURE

We assert that, according to the Holy Scriptures, God does not change (Malachi 3.6). We therefore place ourselves under the triple authority of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the sovereign Word of God, the Father of our Lord who accomplishes all things.

We confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by the Holy Spirit, and by the Holy Scriptures (an absolute rule of faith). We recognize that our ethics must conform to this unalterable Word.

We respect those who do not share this vision but, for ourselves, we refuse to corrupt Judeo-Christian morality.

2 - SALVATION

We confess, in accordance with the Gospel, that there is salvation only in Jesus Christ (Acts 4.12), and that He is the sole intermediary between God and man (1Timothy 2.5).

We confess that salvation is possible only by faith; whereas works are nothing but the normal fruit of our faith.

We maintain that baptism has value only if it naturally follows personal repentance and a personal commitment to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. It will have value only if it meets these conditions. As according to the teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles, baptism is done by immersion at the specific request of a person who is fully capable of comprehending the scope of this decision. We respect all those who have other points of view, but nevertheless consider that the only possible means of collaboration with different religions consists in the construction of relationships based on mutual respect and peace. We refuse all syncretism which we consider to be a violation of the will of God (Hebrews 10.29, 2Timothy 2.16).

3 - THE CHURCH

We consider that no church or religious organization has the right to place itself above another, neither as model, and most certainly not as a «means of salvation». The Church belongs to Jesus Christ, and He alone is its head. (Ephesians 1.22 and 5.23). As ecclesiastical structures are nothing but supports in the lives of God's People, each local community will organize itself according to what the Holy Spirit expresses to it. Our relations between the member churches of the Confederation, as also with other denominations, shall be conditioned by respect, and by our love for the souls of all men.

The coming together of born-again Christians is therefore something we view as positive. However, we refuse any associations for which the purpose would be to corrupt the essential doctrine put forth in the Word of God (2 Timothy 4.3). This relates to ethics, in particular to the debates regarding homosexuality, the right to life, genetic manipulations, etc... Though we reject any form of homophobia, we intend to honor the precepts of the sacred institution of marriage in our churches and reject any form of homophobia, we intend to honor the precepts of the sacred institution of marriage in our churches and for ourselves, and this exclusively between persons of different sexes (Leviticus 18).

4 - COMMUNION

Communion takes its full meaning in the Last Supper. We draw attention to the importance for each and every to participate in this remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, in full understanding, and not as simple ritual (1 Corinthians 11.29). We demonstrate our fraternal love by inviting visiting Christians to share in the bread and the wine, should they so wish.

5 - FREEDOM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

It is understood that the Holy Spirit comes upon all the members of the Church to make them into living witnesses of Jesus Christ. The Spirit will pass « where and when He wishes » (1 Corinthians 12.7-11). It is not for us to judge another through a comparison of spiritual gifts. We are, however, called to be zealous in the seeking of these gifts (1 Corinthians 14.12) so that the Church be edified.

6 - CHRIST'S RETURN

We believe that God has set a time for the return of Christ. Though it is not given to us to know the date of His return, we have been shown signs so that we be kept awake and alert. We believe that He will give the Church a refuge so that it might celebrate the wedding of the Lamb (1 Thessalonians 4.16-17), and we prepare ourselves for when this promise comes to pass. (2 Timothy 4.8).

7 - MINISTRIES

All those who exercise a ministry should strive to be holy, for themselves and equally for the testimony they give (1 Timothy 3.2 and 3.12).

Ministries are brought forth by the Spirit of God and are acknowledged by the sitting elders (Acts 13.2). All self-proclaimed ministries are therefore subject to doubt. The freedom of the Holy Spirit may also consist in moving an established ministry, changing or replacing it when necessary. Every Christian must therefore occupy the place which Holy Spirit assigns him in the Church at the time. The pastor, more than any other, needs to seek the will of the Lord and encourage the emergence of new vocations.

The Church is not to be managed like a company; nor is it to be a family affair. A pastor must be ready to leave his place to a successor at the appropriate time. He is to help his successor move in and prepare the passage of responsibilities so that the transition is not perceived as a rupture, neither by the local church, nor by himself.

CHAPTER II - RELATIONSHIPS AND ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE :

Our relationships must be transparent.

8 - RECOGNITION OF MINISTRIES

When a ministry is revealed in the local Church, it will be subject to recognition by the Confederation. For this to take place, the President needs to be informed by the local pastor. After consultation with the Board of Directors, and if the majority of its members confirm the ministry, it will then be presented before a general meeting which holds sole authority to take the final decision in the name of the Confederation. A probationary period may be decided upon, or a consultation period, should doubts surface in some quarters. In this situation, and if the Board of Directors maintains its support at the end of the probationary or consultation period, the case will once again be placed before the General Meeting for a final decision.

The consecration will be formalized in the candidate's local church, in the presence of several attendants, of whom one at least will be a member of the Board of Directors.

9 - AUDITS

Every member acknowledges the right of the Confederation's Board of Directors to perform an audit of the local Church, which may examine the following :

That the accounting ledgers and legal documents are up to date, that teaching is of good quality, and also to eventually help find solutions to specific problems.

These audits must take place at regular intervals in each member association and these associations assume the obligation to accept them.

In the event of a refusal, or following the discovery of an important and indisputable anomaly, should the association refuse to take the necessary corrective measures; the case shall be presented before the Board of Directors which, after follow-up contacts with the member association, will be empowered to consider such case to be a serious breach, and therefore subject to the applicable dispositions of the statutes of the Confederation.

CHAPTER III - DEVELOPMENT

The Vision is the development of the impact of the Gospel, dependant upon the specific callings of each, or upon vocations.

10 - DEVELOPMENT OF ASSOCIATIONS

As cultural associations not being authorized to have objectives other than the exercise of worship, it becomes necessary to create '1901 Associations':

- From cultural associations, as long as their object is in relation with the development of the Christian faith,
- And/or from associations having the vocation to bring help to the needy.

That these associations collaborate amongst themselves is encouraged, and the Confederation also carries the vocation to act as an intermediary to assist them within the limits of its possibilities.