



## The Burning Bush—Online article archive

### US Baptists break with denomination because of tolerance of sodomy



**American Baptist churches in Southern California and the Southwest declared their intention to break formally from their national denomination by Dec. 31, and a second group in West Virginia likely will do the same next month.**

Both groups cite the unwillingness of the American Baptist Churches (USA) to enforce the denomination's official stance against homosexuality.

Leaders of the Pacific Southwest Region, composed of some 300 churches, said in a statement on Sept. 12 that the denomination's national leadership had been unresponsive to repeated calls from conservative churches to implement a 1992 resolution which declared that "the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching," Brian Scrivens, president of the region's executive board, said in a letter posted on the group's Web site.

At issue, however, are the claims of the Pacific Southwest Region's leaders that biblical principles have been ignored as groups such as the Wisconsin-based Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists, composed largely of sodomite members, have been allowed to participate in denominational life.