



# WHY DO WE HAVE A STATEMENT OF BELIEFS?

A Statement of Beliefs is a systematic list of doctrines that are fundamental to our faith.

- It is not an extension of scripture and does not, in itself, present the whole counsel of God.
- It does not replace the need and calling for a Spirit filled life and a vital relationship with God.
- While the statement lays out of the truth on which our faith is founded, the living out of that faith involves signposting this truth, through word and deed, to those around us.

There are several good reasons why we have a Statement of Beliefs:

## 1. It acknowledges that God has spoken

Ever since Adam and Eve first refused to listen to what God had said mankind has sought to either pretend that God has not spoken to us at all or to remain vague about what He has said, thereby avoiding having to admit our disobedience to it.

## 2. It binds us to what God has said and done

In subscribing to this statement, we acknowledge that God is God and that we are not the deciders of the truth. It helps us guard ourselves against any drift towards diluting our faith to just moralism, a behavioural code or some vague comforting experience.

## 3. It unites us under the gospel

The statement is both individual and corporate, it binds us together as God's people and becomes our common ground and our shared vision.

## 4. It is a testimony to our faith

This statement presents truth that demands a response, the reading of it invites the Holy Spirit to make God known. It therefore becomes a tool for evangelism wherever it is presented.

## 5. It serves a legal and constitutional purpose

The SBC "Company" Memorandum of Articles and Association (2011) refer to a Statement of Beliefs contained in an accompanying Church Handbook. This Statement of Beliefs is key to both the Churches practice and the basis for Membership as confirmed in the following extracts from the Memorandum and Articles of Association:

- The Church's Objects (the things we are corporately allowed to do) are specifically restricted to advancing the Christian faith in accordance with the **Statement of Beliefs**
- A person may only be admitted as a Church Member if they have subscribed in belief and lifestyle to the **Statement of Beliefs**