

Why Southern Baptist?

by Pastor Brian Mann

Six compelling reasons why we are Southern Baptist, and why those who are independent should consider becoming such:

1. **It's autonomous.** We are just as independent as any other Baptist church. We have no governing authority other than God's Word mediated through the spiritual decision making of our independent congregation.
2. **It's voluntary.** We are able at any time to pull out of the Southern Baptist Convention for any reason, but especially when and if doctrinal fidelity is compromised in essential areas such as the Trinity and anything that would be considered heretical by virtue of early creeds.
3. **It's productive.** We remain Southern Baptist because there are things we could not do in the same way tomorrow if we left the SBC today. For example: cooperating to support missionaries, disaster relief, retired ministers and partnering with seminaries like Southern, and our local association to encourage pastors and churches with accountability.
4. **It's loving.** If the Southern Baptist Convention crumbles it will not be good for Christianity as a whole. The SBC is the largest protestant denomination in the world. As the health of the SBC goes, it cannot but have a negative effect upon the church universal.
5. **It's doctrinally faithful.** The *Baptist Faith & Message 2000* and the *Abstract of Principles* are excellent documents to be able to build broader cooperation than our own local church convictions. Each church may say more than these documents, but they can say no less.
6. **It's biblical.** Most of all, the idea of cooperation is biblical. We were not meant to be an island, but are called to associate with churches of like faith. Biblical examples include:
 - A. The churches *accepting* each other based on biblical wisdom (Acts 15:1–29);
 - B. The churches *attending* to each other in forms of gifts both financial and gifted people (Romans 15:26; Acts 11:22; 1 Corinthians 12);
 - C. The churches being *accountable* to each other to stay above reproach (2 Corinthians 8:19).