

Chapter 2: Statement of Faith

Objective: *Each participant will understand the beliefs described in the statement of faith and agree to them in writing.*

Core Concepts:

- Our core values come from the Bible, and these core values determine our vision.
- We seek partners with the same beliefs, and have all translators sign an agreement to these beliefs.
- We focus on central, defining beliefs that unite Christians, and accept that secondary beliefs may differ without changing our core values.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful (Heb. 10:23).

Intro:

We're going to talk about our Statement of Faith. These are the beliefs that guide everything we do. We want to make sure that all our partners share these beliefs.

Discuss:

- What do you think of when you hear the word **values**?

Time: 30 min.

Workbook p. 5

Materials:

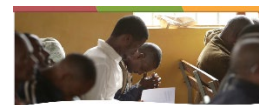
✓ Slide Deck: T3.Slides_02_Statement.of.Faith_

✓ White board

✓ Bible with place markers

The Statement of Faith is also found on p. 119 if extra copies are needed.

Teacher's Notes:



Statement of Faith

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful (Heb. 10:23).

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We talk about values in this session as guiding convictions that define the way we live and serve God. You may get ideas that are very different from your own understanding of values.

The goal is to get participants to think about their own beliefs and discuss them openly.

You've heard a little about Wycliffe Associates. Now I want to share with you the beliefs that have guided and continue to guide us as we serve God in the world.

- We believe that the Bible is the Word of God.
- The Bible changes lives and advances God's kingdom.
- We believe in the power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers.

Because we believe those things, we have the vision:
A Bible in Every Language.

And we have the mission:
Involving people in the advancement of Bible translation.

Discuss:

- **How do our vision and mission statement connect with our values?**
 - Since we believe God's Word changes lives and builds His kingdom, we believe every language should have access.
 - Because God has empowered every believer with His Spirit, we believe He will use all of us to get Scripture to the world.

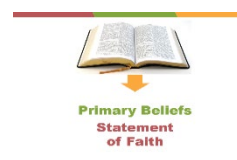
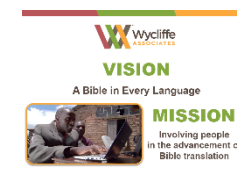
Discuss:

- **What is a "statement of faith"?**
 - A list of the core beliefs that a community agrees to.
 - Our statement of faith should always come from Scripture, the Word of God.

Notes:

- Have a volunteer make notes on the white board of any defining terms they use.
- Explain that when we talk about values, we mean the beliefs that define and guide the way we live.

Thank and have the volunteer at the whiteboard rejoin the group..



WA seeks partners like you who share our core values and beliefs.

We're going to share our core beliefs with you. Later, we'll ask you to sign a simple statement of faith that clearly states the essential beliefs of the Christian faith as we understand them from Scripture.

Please look at page 5 in your Workbook and review the Statement of Faith with me.

Statement of Faith

1. The Bible is divinely inspired by God and has final authority.

This means that the Bible came directly from God, is completely true, and should be honored above any other source.

2. God is one and exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

This means that there is only one God, and He reveals Himself to us in three different roles: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

3. Because of the fall of man, all humans are sinful and in need of salvation.

This means that everyone has done wrong, so we are all separated from God. There is nothing we can do on our own to earn eternal life, or Heaven.

4. The death of Christ is a substitute for sinners and provides for the cleansing of those who believe.

This means that Jesus died as punishment for everyone's sins. His death counts as a payment for us, so we can be forgiven.

Notes:

Be sure to take time to make sure everyone understands each item. Explain in simple terms and answer questions. Do not get into deep theological discussions.

We believe:
1. The Bible is divinely inspired by God and has final authority.
This means that the Bible came directly from God Himself, and it is completely true. It should be honored above any other source of information.
2 Timothy 3:16: All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.
John 17:17: Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

2 Timothy
3:16
John 17:17

We believe:
2. God is one and exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
This means that there is only one God, and He reveals Himself to us in three different roles. He is the Father, He is the Son Jesus Christ, and He is the Holy Spirit.
Deuteronomy 6:4: Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!
John 10:30: I and My Father are one.
1 Peter 1:18-19: Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

Deut. 6:4
John 10:30
1 Peter
1:10-11

We believe:
3. Because of the fall of man, all humans are sinful and in need of salvation.
This means that everyone has sinned, so we are all separated from God. There is nothing we can do on our own to earn life or heaven.
Romans 6:12: through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned

Romans
5:12

We believe:
4. The death of Christ is a substitute for sinners and provides for the cleansing of those who believe.
This means that Jesus died as punishment for the sins of all humanity. His death counts as payment for us so that we can be forgiven.
1 John 2:2: And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

1 John 2:2

Statement of Faith, Continued

5. By God's grace, through faith, man receives salvation as a free gift because of Jesus' death and resurrection.

This means that, because of Jesus's death, we can be forgiven. We cannot earn this, but we receive it by putting our faith in Jesus.

6. The resurrection of all—the saved to eternal life and the lost to eternal punishment.

This means that everyone will be brought back to life one day. Those who trust in Jesus will live with Him forever in Heaven, and those who do not will be punished forever.

Discuss:

- **Why do we need to discuss this list of beliefs?**
- **Do you have any questions about this list?**

Many Christians also have other, non-defining beliefs. These beliefs may be different from one church to another, but their core values are still the same. Though our secondary beliefs may be different, that doesn't keep us from working together.

Notes:

We believe:

5. By God's grace, through faith, man receives salvation as a free gift because of Jesus' death and resurrection.

This means that, because of Jesus' sacrifice, we can be forgiven and saved, but cannot earn this, but we receive it by putting our faith in Jesus.

Romans 10:24: "The living justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith."

Romans
3:24-25a

We believe:

6. The resurrection of all—the saved to eternal life and the lost to eternal punishment.

This means that everyone will be brought back to life one day. Those who trusted Jesus for salvation will live with him forever. Those who did not trust him will be punished forever.

Acts 24:15b: "...that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust."

Matthew 25:46: "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Acts 24:15b
Matthew
25:46

We believe:

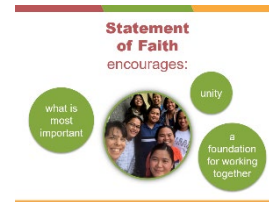
1. The Bible is divinely inspired by God and has final authority.
2. God is one and exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
3. Because of the fall of man, all humans are sinful and in need of salvation.
4. The death of Christ is a substitute for sinners and provides for the cleansing of those who believe.
5. By God's grace, through faith, man receives salvation as a free gift because of Jesus' death and resurrection.
6. The resurrection of all—the saved to eternal life and the lost to eternal punishment.

The Statement is of primary beliefs; secondary or non-primary beliefs are not included because we accept that Christians may disagree on those areas, but still be Christians. Our goal is to work with like-minded Christians, regardless of denominational affiliation or non-primary beliefs.

The term "non-primary" or "secondary" may be confusing, implying that these beliefs aren't important. Synonyms such as "surrounding", "resulting", or "accompanying" might be helpful.

The statement of faith provides us with agreement on what's most important. Our goal is not to cause division, but to build unity by focusing on these important beliefs. This is the foundation for working together.

Notes:



Confirm:

The leaders and translators who will be signing the statement of faith should understand and agree with what they are signing, in order to take full ownership of the project.