

To estimate a statistically reliable sample size for the SBC based on Sunday worship attendance, you need four things:

1. Population size
2. Confidence level
3. Margin of error
4. Expected response distribution

Using the SBC Fast Facts page, the current weekly SBC worship attendance is approximately **4.3 million people**. ([SBC.net](#))

The Standard Research Benchmark

Most public opinion and organizational surveys use:

- **95% confidence level**
- **±5% margin of error**
- **50% response distribution** (most conservative assumption)

Using those standards:

Minimum Sample Size Needed

For a population of 4.3 million:

Margin of Error	Confidence Level	Recommended Sample Size
±5%	95%	~385 respondents
±4%	95%	~600 respondents
±3%	95%	~1,067 respondents
±2%	95%	~2,400 respondents

What You Actually Need

Technically:

- **385 responses** gives statistically valid national-level findings.

Realistically:

- that is NOT enough for meaningful SBC subgroup analysis.

Because you want to compare:

- pastors vs laity
- men vs women
- Reformed vs non-Reformed
- SBC vs non-denom
- South vs Midwest
- title usage vs theology
- age groups

...you need a much larger sample.

Recommended Targets

Bare Minimum Credible SBC Survey

500–750 completed responses

Enough for:

- broad directional findings
 - basic charts
 - social discussion
 - blog/publication use
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Strong Research-Level Survey

1,500–3,000 completed responses

This is where the survey becomes genuinely valuable.

You can confidently analyze:

- regional patterns
 - generational shifts
 - leadership vs layperson differences
 - theological framework correlations
 - title tolerance differences
 - SBC identity trends
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Gold Standard

5,000+ responses

At this level:

- the survey becomes highly influential
- results become difficult to dismiss
- subgroup analysis becomes extremely strong
- trend interpretation becomes more reliable

This is roughly where major evangelical polling organizations begin to gain real authority in denominational conversations.

The Bigger Issue: REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLING

The real challenge is not sample SIZE.

It is sample QUALITY.

If you only distribute through:

- Twitter/X
- ministry leaders
- SBC controversy circles
- Church Answers audiences
- Reformed networks

...your results will skew heavily.

To Improve Accuracy You Need Balance Across:

Church Size

The SBC is mostly small churches:

- 41% average under 50 attendance
- 68–70% average under 100 attendance ([Tennessee Baptist and Reflector](#))

If your responses overrepresent megachurches or conference culture, your findings distort.

Region

The SBC is heavily Southern:

- ~79% of SBC churches are in the South ([Tennessee Baptist and Reflector](#))

But regional comparison matters enormously.

Role

You should intentionally compare:

- pastors
- staff
- lay members

- seminary students

Otherwise clergy voices dominate.

Age

This issue is often sharply generational.

Younger evangelicals frequently:

- maintain complementarian theology
- while holding broader practical ministry openness

That distinction matters.

My Recommendation

If you want this survey taken seriously:

Aim for:

1,500–2,500 completed responses

AND intentionally distribute through:

- pastors
- associational networks
- women's ministry groups
- SBC churches
- non-Reformed SBC churches
- state conventions
- younger leaders
- small churches
- social media
- email lists

That would produce a legitimately useful snapshot of the current SBC landscape.

And honestly, if executed well, it could become one of the more insightful grassroots surveys on this issue because most current conversations are driven more by anecdote than actual data.