

# What We Believe

Our Identity and Values in Community

*God First Since 1899*





## Mission Statement

### Forming disciples through Christ-centered academic excellence in transformational community.

Jesus Christ is the foundation of our faith and the center of our mission. As a comprehensive, Christ-centered university, we educate and form students as disciples, scholars, and workers who follow Jesus, live the truth of God's Word, lead with the Holy Spirit, love others, and live out their calling, all for the glory of God. (Colossians 1:15-21; Philippians 2:5-11; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 9:23-26; Matthew 7:24-27; John 14:21-25; Galatians 5:22-25; Romans 11:33-36)

## University Motto

### *God First*

Recognizing the supremacy of God and God's Word over all things, APU places *God First* in all things, holding fast to its core identity, mission, and purpose. *God First* reflects a clear, deep commitment to discipleship and to being a university that is spiritually alive and vitally Christian. (Colossians 1:16-17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12-13; Philippians 3:7-14; Matthew 28:16-20; Ephesians 2:1-10; Galatians 2:20)

## Articles of Faith

Azusa Pacific University joyfully affirms the Gospel of Jesus Christ and stands in the historic stream of biblical Christianity. We confess that truth is not merely an idea, but is revealed fully and finally in the Person of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God. Therefore:

**We believe** in one God, the maker of heaven and earth, who eternally exists in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1; John 1:1-4; Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

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**We believe** that Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, was born of a virgin, lived without sin, performed mighty works and miracles, died a substitutionary and atoning death on the cross, rose bodily from the grave, ascended to the Father's right hand, where He reigns with supreme authority over all things, and will return one day in glory and power. (Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15-23; Acts 10:36-43; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:15-23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

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**We believe** that the Holy Spirit indwells all followers of Jesus and is constantly at work, guiding us toward holiness. Through the Spirit's presence and our obedience, followers of Christ are continually sanctified by God's truth and empowered to live holy lives in service to others. (John 14:16-17; Romans 8:1-27; 1 Peter 1:2; Acts 1:8, 2 Corinthians 3:17,18)

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**We believe** that the Bible is God's inspired, infallible Word. It is completely trustworthy. It is the ultimate expression of God's authority and is the supreme source of truth. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Matthew 5:17-19; John 17:17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 4:12-13)

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**We believe** that Christ will return again in Glory to judge the living and the dead, and His Kingdom will have no end. Believers will experience the joy of His presence, and nonbelievers eternal separation from Him. (Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10)

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**We believe** that all people are made in God's image and all are separated from Him by sin. We affirm that Jesus Christ is the only way to the Father and that through the grace of Jesus Christ and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, all who repent of their sins and trust in Christ are declared righteous before God and made new. They have been rescued and forgiven, and are empowered to live God-honoring lives of holiness, purpose, and service. (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 3; Romans 3:23; John 14:6; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:8-15; Titus 3:3-8; Galatians 5:16-17; 2 Peter 1:1-11)

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**We believe** that all who trust in Jesus Christ are united as one family—His Church. (Ephesians 1:15-23; 1 Corinthians 1:2-3; Ephesians 3:10-21; Galatians 3:26-29)



## Four Cornerstones

Central to APU's mission are four defining cornerstones: Christ, Scholarship, Community, and Service.

### Christ

The person of Jesus Christ is central to APU's identity. Our affirmation of Christ's supremacy over all creation informs all aspects of university life and work. (Colossians 1:15-20; Colossians 3:1-17)

### Scholarship

APU is called to academic excellence, with a deep commitment to faith integration in our teaching and scholarly pursuits. Scholarship at APU unites critical thinking, skilled practice, and holistic formation under the authority of Scripture and in service to God and others. (2 Timothy 2:15, 3:16-17; Colossians 3:23-24)

### Community

APU values every member of the university community and encourages faculty, staff, and students to love and serve one another and to fulfill God's call on their lives. (Romans 12; 1 Peter 4:8-11; Ephesians 2:10)

### Service

APU is called by God to make disciples who serve as the hands and feet of Jesus. As a people of the Gospel, we believe that Jesus transforms lives, renews minds, and restores what is broken. We participate in this work through intentional outreach as active participants in the Great Commission. (Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 12; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Matthew 28:16-20)

## Identity Statements

We seek truth through the authoritative Word of God. In active dialogue with reason, tradition, and experience, and consistent with our Wesleyan Holiness roots, we embrace the importance of right belief, right living, and a right heart, where faith expresses itself through obedience, love, learning, and service. Our identity statements are anchored in the Word of God, aligned with our Articles of Faith, and provide biblically grounded guidance on key questions for life. (John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Matthew 22:37; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17; Jeremiah 6:16; 2 Timothy 1:9-14; Romans 8:16; James 2:14-26)

### Evangelical Commitment

We believe that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is available to all who put their faith and trust in Him. As an evangelical, Christ-centered university, APU embraces the saving work of God through Jesus Christ; the supremacy and trustworthiness of Scripture; the need for evangelism, new life in Christ, and discipleship that leads to spiritual transformation and acts of love, including service on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised; and the community of believers, the Church, empowered by the Holy Spirit. (John 3:16; Romans 1:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Colossians 2:11-15; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Romans 10:13-15; Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Galatians 2:10; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 3:10-21; Acts 1:8)



## **Image of God**

We believe that every human being is created in the image of God and therefore has intrinsic value and worth. The diversity of cultures, languages, and redeemed lived experiences reflects the creativity of God, our Creator. We affirm that God uniquely gifts, empowers, and calls individuals to all levels of ministry, service, and professional life across differences of race, ethnicity, age, sex, socioeconomic status, and ability. As a Christ-centered learning community, we treat one another with love and respect, seek unity amidst diversity, and act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. (Genesis 1:26, 27; Psalm 139:13-14; Revelation 7:9; Galatians 3:26-28; Colossians 3:9-17; Isaiah 58:6-11; Matthew 23:23, Micah 6:8)

## **Human Sexuality and Marriage**

We adhere to a biblical understanding that God created human beings as male and female according to His good design. We commit to live faithfully within this reality as we are formed by Scripture and the work of God's grace. We believe that sexual intimacy is created by God and designed to be experienced in the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman. Outside of this covenant of marriage, we practice sexual purity. Inside marriage, we practice sexual faithfulness. (Genesis 1:26-27; Mark 10:6-8; Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20; Titus 2:11-15)

## **Sanctity of Human Life**

We believe that all human life is sacred and holds intrinsic dignity because every person is created in the image of God. We believe that conception marks the start of human life, and that every individual has a right to life and protection from harm. (Genesis 1:26-27; Job 33:4; Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Proverbs 31:8-9; 1 Samuel 2:6)

## **Conclusion**

Guided by these convictions, we commit ourselves to the pursuit of shalom—the biblical vision of peace and flourishing—and the holistic restoration of all things under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We seek to participate in God's redemptive work by fostering human flourishing in our classrooms, relationships, and endeavors. As a community shaped by Scripture, we are not to conform to the patterns of this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds as we form disciples, scholars, and workers who will engage in their families and communities as agents of renewal and faithful service. In all we do, we aspire to bear witness to the truth of the Gospel through lives marked by love, integrity, and hope, trusting God to bring healing where there is brokenness and restoration where there is loss. All of this we pursue for the glory of God and the good of others.

