

OCC Statement of Religious Beliefs on Human Life, Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality

Statement of Religious Beliefs

- The ultimate mission of Ozark Christian College is to glorify God and his Son Jesus Christ, which includes living in accordance with the truth revealed in his Written Word.
- We believe this requires that the college set forth clear positions, based on our understanding of God's Word, to govern the behavior of our students and employees in our living and learning environment. These positions are grounded in our long-standing institutional religious identity as part of the Protestant Evangelical theological tradition known as the Restoration Movement.
- We affirm that the Ozark Christian College Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. We affirm that the Bible itself—as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind—is the sole and final source of all we believe. (2 Tim 3:16)
- For purposes of the college's religious belief, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the Ozark Christian College Board of Trustees is the final interpretive authority on the meaning and application of the Bible.
- We believe that all employees represent the college and serve as ministers, teachers, mentors, and biblical role models to the Ozark Christian College students and community. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22.)

Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life

- We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in his image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, and those with special needs.
- We are called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Psalm 139)

Statement of Religious Belief on Gender

- We believe that man and woman were created by God to be two distinct, complementary genders—male and female—possessing equal value, made to glorify Him and who together reflect the image of God.
- However, as a result of living in a fallen world, we understand that some people experience gender confusion (i.e. perceived gender identity that is different from their biological birth gender).
- We affirm that those who experience gender confusion are image-bearers of God, and we are called to extend to them our compassion and care.
- We believe that God's design for all people is to live out their biological birth gender, and we are opposed to any efforts to alter one's identity to conform with a perceived gender (e.g., cross-dressing, hormone therapy, gender reassignment surgery). (Gen 1:26-27; Matt 19:4).

Statement of Religious Belief on Marriage and Sexuality

- We believe that God has ordained marriage as a covenant relationship to bring him glory.
- We believe that the Bible teaches that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive, permanent union as taught in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-24.) By "man" and "woman," we believe the Bible is referring to each individual's biological birth gender.
- We believe that God intends intimate sexual activity to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4.)
- We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of such a marriage, and therefore that any form of sexual immorality (including sexual activity

outside of biblical marriage, homosexual practice, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is prohibited. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Gen 2:24; Ex 20:14, 17; Lev 18:22-23; Matt 19:4-6; Rom. 1:18-31; 1 Cor 6:15-20; 1 Tim 1:8-11; Jude 7).

- We desire Ozark Christian College to be an atmosphere of grace, trust and freedom, and we encourage those who struggle with same-sex attraction, as well as those who struggle with other sexual temptations, to share this with trusted spiritual mentors for encouragement, counsel and prayer. (James 5:16)
- We believe that God's standard for sexual activity outside of biblical marriage is celibacy. We believe that celibacy is a gift from God, possible through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, which allows the unmarried to live a life of sexual purity. (1 Cor 7:7-9)

Conclusion

Ozark Christian College will make institutional decisions consistent with these positions for employment, hiring, retention, student admissions, discipline and all other matters.

Approved by Board of Trustees; December 4, 2015