

InterVarsity's Doctrinal Basis: Beautiful, Anchoring, Energizing

Beautiful, Anchoring, Energizing

How is doctrine beautiful, anchoring, energizing?

- **Beautiful** – Doctrine at its best is like a scenic lookout: it opens our eyes to a vast, beautiful theological landscape that can take our breath away as we gain new perspective on God's character and purposes.
- **Anchoring** – Doctrine is like an anchor that holds us together in unity, without requiring uniformity.
- **Energizing** – Doctrine inspires and energizes our ministry in fresh, innovative, contextualized ways.

The Tenets

Tenet 1: The Trinity and Creation

We believe in the only true God, the almighty Creator of all things, existing eternally in three persons: Father; Son; and Holy Spirit; full of love and glory.

- **Beautiful** – Our affirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity reminds us that God is full of love from eternity because God is eternally three persons.
- **Anchoring** – This doctrine unites us with the consensus of the global church in affirming that God is one in being but three in persons, each fully divine, equal and eternal, mutually interdependent.
- **Energizing** – It is this eternal, triune God of love who fuels our love for God.

Tenet 2: The Bible

We believe in the unique divine inspiration, entire trustworthiness, and the authority of the Bible.

- **Beautiful** – Jesus is the one, eternal Word of God, who by the Holy Spirit has inspired Scripture to reveal himself. We are not left in the dark about who God is; he wants us to know!
- **Anchoring** – We unite around the commitment to Scripture to hear God and together to bring our lives under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
- **Energizing** – We are committed to keeping the Bible at the center of all we do.

Tenet 3: Human Worth, Corruption & Consequences

We believe in the value and dignity of all people: created in God's image to live in love and holiness but alienated from God and each other because of our sin and guilt, and justly subject to God's wrath.

- **Beautiful** – In some way, human beings are "God's own kind," meant to specially reflect and steward God's love to one another and to all of creation.
- **Anchoring** – We are anchored in this common understanding of reality: that the world is not the way it's supposed to be and human sin is at the root of the crisis.
- **Energizing** – God's continued commitment to creation fuels our hope that God can and will bring forth his love and holiness, in our own lives and in all aspects of life, society, and creation.

Tenet 4: Jesus' Dual Nature and Completed Work

We believe in Jesus Christ, fully human and fully divine, who lived as a perfect example, who assumed the judgment due sinners by dying in our place, and who was bodily raised from the dead and ascended as Savior and Lord.

- **Beautiful** – Jesus was, and is, one undivided person with both a fully human nature and a fully divine nature.
- **Anchoring** – The miracle of Christ's dual nature in the Incarnation is what made his perfect life, atoning death and victorious resurrection possible. Out of this miracle flows forgiveness and reconciliation with God.
- **Energizing** – Our ministry, though hard, is fundamentally filled with joy, as we see and help others experience restoration of God's image in them through Jesus and renewal of calling to God's purposes in and for creation.

Tenet 5: What Jesus Made Possible

We believe in justification by God's grace to all who repent and put their faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

- **Beautiful** – God's grace is the gift of all we need for salvation. From our awareness of sin to our ability to repent, to the gift of faith and a living relationship with God, all of these are gifts of grace and cause for thanksgiving.
- **Anchoring** – We participate in the unique work that only Jesus could and did accomplish admitting that our "vandalism of God's shalom" is beyond our own power to fix, but Jesus did it for us.
- **Energizing** – We don't have to help others overcome sin and death through our own strength, or theirs; the victory has already been won, if they will only turn and accept it.

Tenet 6: The Spirit Transforms

We believe in the indwelling presence and transforming power of the Holy Spirit, who gives to all believers a new life and a new calling to obedient service.

- **Beautiful** – We have an indwelling helper even more committed than we are to our growth in Christlikeness and fruitful service.
- **Anchoring** – Our expectation of visible transformation anchors our commitment to spiritual formation.
- **Energizing** – We are energized to seek the impact of our spiritual formation in the discipleship of the mind and the integration of faith with vocation, two areas of particular relevance in our university ministry setting.

Tenet 7: The Spirit Unites

We believe in the unity of all believers in Jesus Christ, manifest in worshiping and witnessing churches making disciples throughout the world.

- **Beautiful** – As believers from a beautiful variety of worship styles, heart languages, denominational traditions, and cultures focus on and grow towards Jesus, we also grow together.
- **Anchoring** – Despite all the forces that work to pull us apart, from prejudice to social media algorithms to political positions, we are committed to seeking unity with each other.
- **Energizing** – InterVarsity strives to grow and pursue partnerships to accomplish God's mission. We can rely on the unique strengths and gifts of the many parts of the body of Christ.

Tenet 8: Jesus's Return and Judgment

We believe in the victorious reign and future personal of Jesus Christ, who will judge all people with justice and mercy, giving over the unrepentant to eternal condemnation but receiving the redeemed into eternal life.

- **Beautiful** – Jesus is coming back to undo the vandalism of shalom of his creation, and restore God's image fully in humanity.
- **Anchoring** – InterVarsity believes our work for justice now anticipates, and participates in, Jesus' just reign.
- **Energizing** – Jesus's return energizes our commitment to justice and mercy.

Tenet 9: Benediction

To God be glory forever.

- **Beautiful** – Our Creator, Savior, and Lord of all is glorious. He is the fullness of beauty from which all other beauty derives, and to which all other beauty points.
- **Anchoring** – We are united in our worship of the One God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- **Energizing** – Worshipping the Trinity forms us as we experience and express the gospel. Our lives and our ministry on campus continue that worship.

The Story of the Good News

The Doctrinal Basis tells the story of the Good News

The Doctrinal Basis taken as a whole traces the sweeping story of salvation history from beginning to end through the lens of Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Fulfillment.

To deepen your appreciation of our doctrinal basis, think of other ways you've experienced the beauty, anchoring and energizing impact of various tenets in your ministry. Each year when we all sign our doctrinal basis anew is a great opportunity to reflect on how you've experienced its benefits.

Related Resources

- [InterVarsity's Doctrinal Basis Resource List](#)
- [Supervisory or Area/Region Course Debrief Guide](#)
- [Ten Bible Studies on the Doctrinal Basis](#) (especially for use with students)
- [Deeply Rooted](#) (10-week Bible study for new believers)
- [The Bible Project](#)
- [Ministry in the Image of God: The Trinitarian Shape of Christian Service](#), Stephen Seamands (IVP)
- [Light of the Word: How Knowing the History of the Bible Illuminates Our Faith](#), Susan C. Lin (IVP)
- [The Nature of the Atonement: Four Views](#) (IVP)
- [Sculptor Spirit: Models of Sanctification from Spirit Christology](#), Leopoldo A. Sánchez M. (IVP)
- [Becoming God's Family: Why the Church Still Matters](#), Carmen Joy Imes (IVP)

Recommended Courses

- [Sharing the Gospel](#)
- [Seek Wholeness and Justice](#)
- [Depending on the Spirit](#)
- [Exploring Ethnicity, Race, and the Gospel](#)
- Women in Ministry (coming October 2026)

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