



James C. Peterson

# The American Scientific Affiliation Has a Stated Position

Each day of the annual meeting of the American Scientific Affiliation (ASA) began with worship: heartfelt and transforming worship. With all the diversity of academic field, hometown, language, citizenship, age, height and width and style, there was, as the Apostle Paul says, clearly one Lord, one faith, one baptism (Eph. 4:5). Brothers and sisters together worshipped the Creator revealed in Jesus Christ.

The annual meeting program states that “The ASA encourages thoughtful and provocative scientific presentations and discussions. Presenters and discussants are expected to maintain a humble and loving attitude toward individuals who have a different opinion.” The presentations then are not given as official position statements of the ASA. Sometimes several papers in a row will lean one way or another, not to represent all of ASA, but as the compelling and thoughtful perspective of those who happened to present during that particular session.

In all its variety then, the meeting as a whole, like the journal, is richly plural with perspectives, but not an infinite number of approaches. Both the annual meeting and the journal are focused by two deep commitments that bring us together. As a group we are always refining and seeking to develop our best understanding of the available science, in conversation with our best understanding of Christian theology. What does our faith, so well articulated in the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds, have to say with science about the great issues of our day, life, and thought?

The ASA website puts it this way:

1. We accept the divine inspiration, trustworthiness and authority of the Bible in matters of faith and conduct.
2. We confess the Triune God affirmed in the Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds, which we

accept as brief, faithful statements of Christian doctrine based upon Scripture.

3. We believe that in creating and preserving the universe God has endowed it with contingent order and intelligibility, the basis of scientific investigation.
4. We recognize our responsibility, as stewards of God’s creation, to use science and technology for the good of humanity and the whole world.<sup>1</sup>

The ASA website continues, “The above four statements of faith spell out the distinctive character of the ASA, and we uphold them in every activity and publication of the Affiliation.”

Publishing in the journal does not require membership in the ASA, or even affirmation of the above, but material is selected as of interest because it in some way makes informed, new, clear, and important contributions to the above purpose.

We do not think that the interaction of science and faith will be exhausted in our lifetimes, but we can make genuine progress, and we do enjoy each other, as we work together.

In sum then, the ASA does have a stated position. It is that the above commitments – to develop in dialogue our best understanding of science and Christian theology – are worth our attention and pursuit. Indeed, they make for lively and life-giving conversations in this journal, in *Diving Deeper* discussions with *PSCF* authors, at our annual international meeting, within local chapters, at the Winter Symposium ... Carry on! ▼

Note

<sup>1</sup>American Scientific Affiliation, “Our Platform of Faith Has Four Important Planks,” accessed August 4, 2022, <https://network.asa3.org/page/ASAbeliefs>.

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