



## Focus on Religious Freedom

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***"God is not only true, but truth itself." Pope Leo XIII***

### **Christian School Student-Teachers Banned in Arizona School District**

An Arizona school district says they will no longer hire student-teachers from a Christian university and voted unanimously to end their eleven-year partnership with Arizona Christian University because of the school's religious beliefs.

"We cannot continue to align ourselves with organizations that starkly contrast our values, and say that we legitimately care about diversity, equity, and inclusion and that we legitimately care about all our families," said the Washington Elementary School District president.... "While we recognize the right of individuals to practice their faith, public schools are secular institutions. ... Arizona Christian University (ACU) policies do not align with our commitment to create a safe place for our LGBTQ+ students, staff, and community." <sup>(1)</sup>

"While I full-heartedly believe in religious freedom and people being able to practice whatever faith that they have, I had some concerns regarding looking at this particular institution," said school board member Tammie Valenzuela. ... "My concerns (are) when I go to ACU website, they are committed to Jesus Christ, accomplishing his will and advancements on earth as in Heaven. Part of their values is to transform the culture with truth by promoting the Biblically-informed values that are foundational to Western civilization, including the centrality of family, traditional sexual morality, and lifelong marriage between one man and one woman. I want to know how bringing teachers from an institution that is ingrained in these values so directly brings impact to three of our board members who are part of the LGBT community. ... Because that makes me feel like I could not be safe in this school district." <sup>(2)</sup>

Arizona Christian University (ACU) filed a federal lawsuit alleging religious discrimination by the Washington Elementary School Board after the school board canceled their contract with ACU. Recently, hundreds of community members came to a school board meeting to object to its policy that the school will no longer hire graduates of ACU based on their Christian beliefs.

***"We will sometimes need to challenge laws that would impair our freedom to practice our faiths, doing so in reliance on our constitutional rights to the free exercise of religion." Elder Dallin H. Oaks, Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints***

(townhall.com, 3/7/23(1); foxnews.com, 3/3/23(2); pjmedia.com, 3/10/23; msn.com, 3/3/23; the blaze.com, 3/3/23)