



**ASBURY'S THEOLOGICAL DISTINCTIVE**  
(Approved by the Board of Trustees 8 April 2006)

Asbury College stands in the Wesleyan theological tradition — believing that an act of God's grace can transform individual believers so that, through His mercy, they can experience holiness of life, have a heart that exhibits the love of God and become an agent of God's grace to the needs of humanity. To that end, Asbury builds on John Wesley's four-part method — called the "Quadrilateral" — of discovering God's truth:

- Scripture – the Holy Bible,
- Tradition – the history of the Church spanning two millennia,
- Reason – rational thinking and logical reasoning, and
- Experience – applying lessons learned from one's personal journey in Christ.

Thus, the Asbury experience is permeated with God's Word and builds on the accumulated wisdom of theologians and scholars throughout the ages. The goal of an Asbury education is to develop in students and graduates the ability to think rationally, reason logically and to inform and enrich each student's experience through an integration of faith, learning and living.

Asbury's founders emphasized that the gospel was not just forgiveness of sins, but a total call upon the life of the believer. If a person is to have all of God, that person must surrender all to God. John Wesley in England and Francis Asbury in America produced an explosion of evangelism and social transformation. The founders of Asbury College — John Wesley Hughes and Henry Clay Morrison — mirrored the same truths to their generation. Their passion produced Asbury College and caused it to mature into an institution that influences the world.

John Wesley's phrase was, "deliverance from inward as well as from outward sin". In other words it was possible by God's grace for Christian believers to become entirely sanctified (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Wesley never questioned that sin remained in the believer after conversion (see sermons, "On Sin in Believers" and "Repentance of Believers"). He called for repentance of the believer, equal to that demanded of the sinner before his conversion. There was grace and cleansing in the atonement of Christ to cleanse the heart from all sin. The conviction was that God would produce in the heart of the believer a single mindedness that was purely devoted to God with no rivals for His love. A believer did not have to struggle daily with doing the will of God, but could live in a relationship that desired nothing less than the will of God for his or her life.

These truths about the sanctified life require the disciplines of Bible study and prayer. These Biblical convictions also mandate standards for personal life — expected rules of

conduct that constitute a person's attempt to reflect Christ in his or her behavior and lifestyle. These expectations and a commitment to excellence in Christian liberal arts education were central to the founding of Asbury College.

Then as now, Asbury's greatness is in its mission. Asbury's Board of Trustees is entrusted with specific stewardship of that mission and is charged with the responsibility to ensure that Asbury College continues to provide leaders of integrity who live an exemplary life and whose hearts are moved toward Scriptural holiness.

The issue in the Old Testament was a 'divided heart' of affection parceled out to God, self, and the worldly pleasures. The New Testament teaches a fulfillment of the promise of the work of the Spirit available to believers that will produce 'undivided hearts' in perfect love for God and people. Salvation begins with repentance, then forgiveness of sins, and it leads to a transformed life that reflects the character of God as a light in the darkness of a world needing to experience the gospel of Jesus Christ.