

THE CHURCH OF GOD (ANDERSON, INDIANA)

OUR BELIEFS

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THE CHURCH OF GOD (Anderson, Indiana) is a global movement of people seeking to fulfill God's mission in the world. We're committed to studying the Word of God and faithfully living it out. We're committed to the mission that Jesus Christ gave every believer: to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:18–20).

The Church of God movement appeared in the 1880s in the midst of the broader American Holiness Revival. The pioneers of the Church of God hoped to restore a more biblical understanding and practice of what it means to be the church. One of our early church songs says: "The Bible is our rule of faith and Christ alone is Lord." This lyric still summarizes the core belief of Church of God people. We have not issued any official belief statement, and we have no formal creed. Yet, the following statements reflect the heart of the Church of God:

JESUS IS LORD. The singularity, the exclusivity, the divinity of the one Lord Jesus is central to who we are. He is the Bread of Life. The Water of Life. The Lamb of God. The Way, the Truth, and the Life. The one Mediator between God and humankind. The Lord of lords, the King of kings. The Son of Man. The Son of God. The Word become Flesh. The Name at which every knee shall bow. Jesus is the subject (Acts 2:36).

HOLINESS. The Person, the work, and the power of the Holy Spirit is fundamental to who we are as a people. We unabashedly own the truth that the Spirit can transform us, possess us, equip us, and empower us. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that sanctifies us, makes us holy, sets us apart for sacred service, and seals us for eternity's sake. It is the Spirit that convicts us of sin and enables us to overcome sin. It is the Holy Spirit that can breathe supernatural gifts into us, for Jesus' sake. He is the Comforter promised by Jesus and the witness of our redemption (Gal 5:22–23).

UNITY. We are a people uniquely called by God to be a catalyst for Christian unity, believing that the division of the body of Christ is hell's greatest weapon to thwart heaven's ends in this world. We are convinced that the splintering of the body is not the Lord's work, but the enemy's; we believe that hell trembles at the prospect of a people united, redeemed by the blood, and possessed by the Spirit (John 17:21).

THE GREAT COMMANDMENTS. Love God with your whole self. And, love your neighbors as yourself. The Scripture tells us this is the sum of the Law and the Prophets. When a teacher of the Law sought to test Jesus (Luke 10), asking,

“What must I do to have eternal life?” Jesus asked him what he read in the Scripture. When the man replied with the Great Commandments, Jesus approved, saying, “You have answered well; do this and you will live.” It was this exchange that birthed the seminal parable of the Good Samaritan. As a people in the pursuit of holiness, the Great Commandments clothe us.

THE SUPREMACY OF SCRIPTURE. We are a people of the Bible—the Old and New Testaments, supernaturally inspired, preserved across time, cultures, and continents, delivered to us, useful for reproof and instruction, for righteousness. The Scripture is our backstop, the ultimate field of inquiry and judgment, the measure of conduct, faith, and practice. Whatever the question, whatever the test, whatever comes before us, in the end, it is the Scripture, above all other disciplines, that informs and defines us. All other sources of knowledge fall beneath its shadow (2 Tim 3:14–17).

GREAT COMMISSION. To go and make disciples is the divine privilege and responsibility given to each of us. We champion the work of evangelism and discipleship in our own neighborhood, as well as the sending of international and home missionaries to places beyond our individual reach (Matt 28:19–20).

KINGDOM OF GOD. The rule and reign of God is a present reality to be embraced and experienced today. His kingdom is not of this world, and will therefore never be about earthly politics. As children of God, the spiritual riches of the King of kings are ours to claim and steward as we preach the good news of the kingdom to the world (Luke 17:20–21)

THE TRINITY. Thought difficult for the human mind to fully comprehend, our one God expresses himself in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person of the Trinity serves a unique role to bring God glory and accomplish his purposes in the world (Gen 1:26; 2 Cor 13:14)

WOMEN IN MINISTRY. The distributions of gifts by the Holy Spirit for the edification of the body of Christ is not determined by gender. God has poured out his Spirit on all people, and both sons and daughters will prophesy—and teach, and shepherd the flock. In Christ, in the kingdom of God, that which once divided us—Jew, Gentile; slave, free; male, female—no longer separate. From the earliest days of the Church of God movement, we’ve celebrated the ministry leadership of outstanding women clergy and continue to do so (Acts 2:17; Gal 3:28)

You will find a great diversity of convictions and practices within the Church of God. Though we have differences, we share a common story of faith, growing together into the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13). We worship and serve as citizens of God’s kingdom. We celebrate our life in Christ and accept our call to be the body of Christ in our world—all to the glory of God.

